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| <b>Committee</b>  | <b>Dated:</b>                |
| West Ham Park Committee   | 13 February 2022             |
| <b>Subject:</b><br>Assistant Directors Update   | Public                       |
| <b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b> | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 12 |
| <b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>                                  | No                           |
| <b>If so, how much?</b>   | N/A                          |
| <b>What is the source of Funding?</b>   | N/A                          |
| <b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?</b>                             | N/A                          |
| <b>Report of:</b> Juliemma McLoughlin, Executive Director<br>Environment Department                       | <b>For Information</b>       |
| <b>Report author:</b> Ricky O'Garro, West Ham Park Acting Supervisor                                      |                              |

### Summary

This report provides an update to Members of the West Ham Park Committee on management and operational activities at West Ham Park since December. The funding for the work stated is met through the West Ham Park local risk budget (City's Cash).

### Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the content of the report.

### Main Report

#### Nature recovery and Biodiversity

1. Two bird walks were led by the Friends of West Ham Park on the 21st and 22nd January. This annual event aims to teach local people how to spot and identify birds ahead of the RSPB's "Big Garden Bird Watch" at the end of January. 50 people and families attended over the weekend despite the freezing temperatures. Both days brought new families that have not visited the park before.
2. Officers are exploring a possibility to include West Ham Park as part of the Queen's Green Canopy (QGC) initiative with the planting of a dedicated tree. The QGC tree planting initiative was created to mark Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee in 2022. With the sad passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the scheme is now being considered as memorial planting and extended to March 2023.

## **Friends of West Ham Park (FoWHP)**

3. The Friends have continued to be active running a series of walks, talks and events in the park. They held a food bank collection on Saturday 3rd December on the bandstand. Despite the bad weather they received much needed donations from park users and locals and were able to hand a car load of goods to the Stratford Food Bank.

## **Sport and engagement**

4. Football has continued throughout December and January by both home teams.
5. An improvement of the tennis courts is being considered to tackle a localised algae problem using a deep clean whirl-away method which uses a system of jets to remove moss, algae and silt from the pores in the surfacing.
6. With the cricket season starting in the spring the groundsmen are starting to prepare the pitches for the coming games. The scorching summer sun caused some damage to the pitch and the autumn renovations have worked very well in bringing the area up to standard
7. The Assistant Director has undertaken a review of corporate volunteering within other open spaces and assessed different models working across the division. At Hampstead Heath, the corporate volunteering is managed through a separate charity called Heath Hands, consistent with the model at West Ham Park who uses a third party provider. The provider engages with companies and administers the engagement process. The link to the livery companies has been explored and discussions are in place with the third party provider on how to maximise opportunities.

## **Events**

8. Park in the Dark on the 2nd December was a great success with nearly 200 attendees, the highest the park as ever seen. The participants enjoyed making lanterns using battery operated tea lights and glow sticks and then a walk to the bandstand illuminated by their creations. Upon arrival to the bandstand the procession was greeted Park Primary School Choir singing carols, and everyone enjoyed hot chocolate and mince pies.
9. Officers will be working with the Friends of West Ham who are planning to hold an event over the weekend of 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> May to celebrate the upcoming coronation of Kings Charles III, The Event will consist of family picnics with craft stalls games and planting in the vegetable garden.

## **Learning programme**

10. The learning programme continues to be busy even over the winter months. Below are the sessions that were carried out and planned for the winter period:
  - December – 9 sessions to 260 children, plus a fire session for the AAA group (Ambition Aspire Achieve) during the Christmas holidays.
  - January – 14 sessions taught to 420 children, plus continuing Nature learning sessions with special needs groups that come regularly.

- February – There are currently 19 sessions booked for February (usually about 30 children per session). Half term runs from 13th -17th Feb but we have the AAA group coming to the park again for a session during that week.
- There are also 5 local schools / nurseries that use the teaching gardens on a regular basis every week.

## **Playground**

11. From the 10th January, the playground contractor, Warwick Landscapes has been working in the playground to remedy the problem of the Breedon Gravel not binding correctly. The contractor worked for over a week removing the old gravel and replacing with a more suitable batch. The playground was closed during the works and was due to open on Saturday 21st January but due to the icy conditions the playground opened the following Tuesday

## **Corporate and Strategic Implications**

### Strategic Implications

12. The works and activities outlined in this report contributes towards the achievement of the three aims set out in the City of London Corporate Plan 2018-23. Contribute to a flourishing society (1-4), Support a thriving economy (5) and Shape outstanding environments (9-12).

### Financial Implications

13. N/A.

### Legal Implications

14. N/A.

### Risk Implications

15. Risks are recorded and monitored via the Departmental Risk Register.

### Equality Implications

16. N/A

### Climate Implications

17. The City of London Corporation has a Climate Action Strategy which seeks to achieve Net 0 by 2040. There will be a range of measures implemented to realise this including increasing carbon sequestration and storage across the Open Spaces alongside biodiversity enhancement and resilience measures.

## **Conclusion**

18. The park is proving to be a great asset for community participation with successful engagements of businesses and schools. The Friends of West Ham Park continue to be a key partner to keep the park well managed and to involve the local communities. Staff is remaining engaged in the implementation of the wider Natural Environment strategic framework which includes nature recovery and community engagement.

### **Ricky O'Garro**

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