

## Business Case Application for "Invest to Save Funding"

Title	Purchase of tractor and accessories for grass cutting etc. of Council owned land	Saving or Income ? ("X")	Saving	Income	
			X		
<b>Total amount required from the Invest to Save Fund</b>	Apprx £30K Excluding flail/collector and back hoe arm		<b>Investment Required</b>	<b>Net Cashable Saving/Income</b>	<b>Payback Period (Years)</b>
<b>Is the investment required capital or revenue?</b>	C	<b>Month 1-12</b>	Apprx £30K	Apprx. £6-10K	Not confident to state at this time.
		<b>Month 13-24</b>	£0	Apprx. £6-10K	
<b>Will the resultant savings / income be capital or revenue ?</b>	R	<b>Month 25-36</b>	£0	Apprx. £6-10K recurring	
		<b>Total</b>	<b>£30K</b>	<b>£18-30K</b>	

**The Proposal**

*Subject to feasibility.* Purchase of a tractor to cut grass and carry out other maintenance on Council owned land e.g. Bobbingworth Nature Reserve, the Council's Flood Storage Areas, top of North Weald bund, Country care projects such as Linders Field, Home Mead, Old Shire Lane and potentially other areas. With appropriate attachments there is also the potential to use the plant for other works such as clearing heavier items/ blockages from ditches, cutting of hedges etc. Discussion held with Grounds Maintenance and Country care.

If a number of obstacles can be overcome, the figures stack up and a solid business case can be proven there may be the possibility of hiring out both the Council operative/s and the plant to other land owners.

**The Financial Benefit Explained**

Given the frequency that different sites need to be cut (weather dependent, type of cover on site etc.) it is a little difficult to predict the overall financial gain over a set period of time. However, the Council is paying contractors from the revenue budget, to carry out the work which can not only be expensive (£4,850 spent on grass cutting at Bobbingworth 2014/2015) but often delays occur when the work needs to be carried out. This is due to the fact that farmers need their land cut at the same time of the year. Phil Hawkins advises that many farmers use contractors to carry out this type of work because it is seen as a cheaper option; owning expensive items of machinery can be uneconomic if only used for part of the year. As a consequence, it can be difficult to get competitive quotes from contractors and delays often occur getting them on site due to the high demand at the same time.

**Alignment with the Corporate Plan and/or Additional (Non-Financial) Benefits**

The land can be cut at the optimum time and to the correct levels which will maximise the ecological, bio- diversity and environmental benefits. Country care are keen to ensure that areas are cut at the right time and in the correct manner – not too early so that the wildflowers have set seed, or too late, after undesirable flowers have.

**Potential Obstacles to be Overcome**

Staff resource to operate plant	Maintenance of plant
Storage of tractor and accessories	Insurance
Transport of plant to site	Plant will be dormant over the winter months
H & S issues (lone working)	Absence of staff resource will mean the plant cannot be used
Training re use of plant	Disposal of arisings

**Risks (Financial and Others)**

H & S, Insurance(theft), Maintenance and break down costs

**Key Milestones and Target Timescales (from approval)**

Milestone	Target Period from Approval Date (Months)
1) Feasibility	6 months
2) Tender	12 months
3)	

<b>Proposal by</b>	Susan Stranders Ex 4197	<b>Directorate</b>	Neighbourhoods
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