

Report of Maria Akers

Report to: Chief Officer Parks and Countryside

Date: 5.6.17

Subject: Replacement Bale Wrapper Home Farm Temple Newsam

Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, name(s) of ward(s):	Yes	X No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	X No
Is the decision eligible for call-in?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	X No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, access to information procedure rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	X No

Summary of main issues

1. Home Farm, Temple Newsam harvests a grass crop in the form of silage to feed the animals and manage the grass of the estate. The work is undertaken in-house.
2. The bale wrapper is essential to plastic wrap silage for livestock feed. The existing bale wrapper is 13 years old and requires replacement. There is no contract in place for the supply of this type of equipment.
3. The existing wrapper has been powered by a tractor borrowed from the workshops, which is no longer available.
4. Quotes have been obtained for contract services to undertake the wrapping which are not economically advantageous over the life-span of a purchased machine.
5. Three quotes have been obtained for a McHale 991 TBER bale wrapper, judged to be the most efficient option; this has an integrated engine removing the need for an additional tractor to run the operation.
6. The quotes for a new wrapper range from £11,800 to £15,000 +VAT (attached)

Recommendations

1. The Chief Officer is requested to approve expenditure and provide authority to spend for the sum of £11,800 (+VAT) with Russell Group, Selby Road, Goole.

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To identify the need for a new piece of equipment to enable the Home Farm to harvest this year's grass crop. The report then seeks the approval of the Chief Officer of Parks and Countryside to spend funds from the Home Farm revenue budget 22 144, where there is financial provision.

2. Background information

- 2.1 Home Farm is a key element of the Temple Newsam visitor attraction, with an admissions income of over £233,000 in 2016/17. In addition the farming operation manages approximately 150 hectares of land. The land forms part of the historic setting of Temple Newsam Estate and includes two scheduled ancient monuments; most of the land is managed under the Higher Level Stewardship Scheme providing habitat for wildlife.
- 2.2 Each year the farm produces all of the stored grass feed for the livestock at Temple Newsam and the Red Deer at Lotherton.
- 2.3 A major review of the farming operation in 2011/12 concluded that in-house production was the most beneficial to the authority. The specialist Home Farm equipment is not on a standard replacement schedule.
- 2.4 Home Farm has sufficient funds within the equipment budget 22 144 203 of £25,500.

3. Main issues

- 3.1 The existing wrapping machine is now 13 years old and requires ongoing maintenance. Down time for repairs can be costly due to overtime costs and because of the narrow weather windows in which the harvesting must be done.
- 3.2 The current wrapper requires an additional tractor to drive it as it has no integrated engine. A spare tractor was available from the workshops in the past but this has now been disposed of. Borrowing a tractor from another section is not an option as harvesting coincides with the main grass cutting season. Workshops have advised the hire of a tractor at £515 per week; the season for harvesting the grass could be between 12 and 16 weeks depending upon the weather, resulting in a hire spend between £6,180 £8,240 for one year.
- 3.3 The service has considered contract wrapping services which have been quoted as £5.73 per bale; for an estimated 1200 bales this would be £6,876 per year.
- 3.4 The service has identified a bale wrap with an integrated engine, for which the cheapest quote was £11,800.
- 3.5 Considering all of the above the purchase of a new bale wrapper with integrated engine would offer best value to the authority.

2. Corporate considerations

2.1 Consultation and engagement

- 2.1.1 No consultation required.

2.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

2.2.1 There are no diversity considerations for this purchase.

2.3 Council policies and best council plan

2.3.1 The Vision for Leeds 2011 to 2030 is to be the best city in the UK by 2030. It has specific aims that the economy will be prosperous and sustainable and that all Leeds' communities will be successful, where there are high quality buildings, places and green spaces, which are clean, looked after and respect the City's heritage.

2.3.2 Effective replacement of this equipment will enable Parks and Countryside to sustain existing revenue streams from the management of Home Farm as well as ensuring effective management of the historic estate.

2.4 Resources and value for money

2.4.1 The major farming review of 2011/2012 led to an overall reduction in the size of the farming operation. The review recommended the use of in-house staff and equipment was judged as the most economical way to manage the land of Temple Newsam Estate.

2.4.2 Hire costs versus purchase costs have been investigated and outright purchase offers better value.

2.5 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in

2.5.1 The decisions taken within this report constitute a significant operational decision and as such the decision is not eligible for call in.

2.6 Risk management

2.6.1 This purchase will be managed directly by the Parks and Countryside service.

3. Conclusions

3.1 The purchase of a new bale wrapper will enable the Temple Newsam fodder crop to be harvested and stored efficiently.

3.2 Outright purchase offers better value than either contracting out the work or hiring equipment.

4. Recommendations

4.1 The Chief Officer is requested to approve expenditure and provide authority to spend for the sum of £11,800 (+VAT) with Russell Group, Selby Road, Goole.

5. Background documents¹

5.1 Quotes from agricultural equipment suppliers.

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.