

St Paul Malmesbury Without Parish Council

Report #02.2

Corston Local Nature Reserve (LNR) equipment maintenance

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To invite the council to agree to fund the maintenance of an important piece of equipment used in the upkeep of the Corston LNR.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Corston LNR is owned by the council. It is maintained and looked after to a high standard by a dedicated group of volunteers ably led by a local resident as manager.
- 2.2 In early January this year the volunteers were in action getting to grips with the growth in general vegetation, including grass, brambles, and encroaching scrub. This work would be significantly more arduous and labour intensive without the use of a mechanical brushcutter, purchased some years ago with grant funding.
- 2.3 All mechanical equipment requires regular maintenance to keep it in good working order. The brushcutter now requires a service which can be undertaken by Ratcliffe's in Malmesbury. It is estimated that such a service would cost between £150 and £200.
- 2.4 Unfortunately there is not a budget item for Corston LNR maintenance in the 2023/24 budget; this has been rectified in the 2024/25 budget. Hence, according to para 4.2 of the council's Financial Regulations, council approval is required to cover the cost of this necessary maintenance.

3. Options

- 3.1 Not to maintain this equipment in good working order.
- 3.2 To agree a sum of up to £200 from the council's General Reserve to cover this expenditure.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 The approval of this expenditure will not reduce the amount in general reserve below the required 50% of annual precept.

5. Recommendation

- 5.1 The council is recommended to support Option 3.2.

Cllr David Briggs
Chair Finance Committee
09.02.2024