

APPENDIX 2 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Provision of National Transport Tokens

Members will be aware that the Council has a statutory duty to offer residents of pensionable age a free half fare bus pass. This was introduced in the current financial year. In addition, the Council offers an alternative provision, National Transport Tokens (NTT), to anyone who is of state pensionable age or who is registered disabled. This was introduced about 17 years ago. Residents can only benefit from one scheme.

Residents are able to purchase NTTs (on an annual basis) to the value of £35 for £12 and they are available from the Council Offices and sub post offices. NTTs can be used on buses, trains and taxis.

No. of Residents Purchasing Tokens	Year	Cost to the Council £
864	2001/02 (to date)	19,872*
865	2000/01	19,895*
863	1999/00	11,219
891	1998/99	11,583

*Members resolved to increase the amount of NTTs from £25 to £35, hence the substantial increase in cost to the Council. This was the first increase for many years.

Only two other authorities in Essex offer this alternative provision, Colchester and Braintree.

Response to a Flooding Emergency and Land Drainage Expenditure

The budget for land drainage works was introduced in 1998/99 to enable the Council to carry out small items of work that, though not the Council's direct responsibility, would be difficult to pursue with riparian owners for various reasons. For example it has been used to build the grid over the culvert at Cophall Lane, Thaxted, although this was in part recovered from the developer; to resolve drainage problems on Mill Hill, Stansted and to carry out small catchment surveys. Initially the budget was set at £3000 but for the past two years has been £5000. This year it will be used to finance the condition surveys on the Slade culverts in Saffron Walden and the catchment study of the Madgate Slade from the Anglo-American Playing Fields through to the River Cam. The cost of the two Slade surveys is £2600 and tenders are still awaited for the catchment study.

The overall cost to the Council of the emergency response to the flooding events of October 2000, February, March and October 2001 has been over £16,000.

Extension of Contract of Gardener/Environmental Taskforce Supervisor

The original appointment was a fixed term contract of 12 months and it has been subsequently extended for a further year to 14 May 2002. At its meeting on 5 November 2001 (minute BEG108) the Bridge End Gardens Working Party agreed to advise this Committee that it supported that the post be added to the estimates for 2002/03 and, subject to the necessary budget provision and the securing of lottery funding, the contract be extended to May, 2005. If Heritage Lottery funding was not secured, or the outcome of such funding was unknown, the contract should be extended for a further year until 2003.

Since that meeting Members have been advised that the Heritage Lottery Fund has awarded a stage I pass. This is important progress. It has given the Council a grant of £20,600 in development funding to work up its proposals. This is a positive indication that the project is likely to receive the full grant.

The projected net costs of the post are:-

2002/03	£12,190
2003/04	£16,530
2004/05	£17,530

Car Parking Charges

The draft revenue estimates include increased income from car parking charges. They total about £80,000. These are shown in the attached table at Appendix 3. In order to implement these changes Members are being recommended to determine the new charges as from 1 April, 2002.