

Report of the Cabinet Member for Community, Public Health, Transportation and Environmental Services

1. Introduction

Following a recent Cabinet item, I have had several queries from Members about provision of bus shelters across the County, so I thought it might be useful to bring all Members up to date with current arrangements.

2. Exeter City

In Exeter, the County and City Councils have a joint twenty-year arrangement with Clear Channel for the supply and maintenance of bus shelters. Shelters are installed and maintained at no cost to either authority in return for Clear Channel having the right to install advertising panels on some shelters.

The agreement specifies a replacement programme for existing shelters which is currently progressing. Beyond this number of shelters, the agreement requires Clear Channel to supply and maintain, also at no cost to either authority, a further two shelters a year, the location of which will be determined by the Exeter Highways & Traffic Orders Committee.

A supplement to the original agreement allows Clear Channel to install digital advertising screens at selected shelter sites and requires them to pay the two authorities a share of the additional advertising revenue arising. The County Council's share of this revenue is to be spent on further additional shelters, to be agreed by Exeter HATOC. The use of the City Council's share is yet to be confirmed (as at 26th September).

In summary, neither the County nor City Council has any budget for the installation or maintenance of bus shelters in Exeter - other than the shared revenue arising from digital advertising at certain sites, the County Council share of which is to be put back into the acquisition of additional shelters.

3. Devon Outside Exeter City

The pattern of ownership of bus shelters has evolved over many years. Most shelters are owned and maintained by the parish council. Some are district council-owned. A very small number, mostly originating as part of a highway scheme, are owned by the County Council.

With permission from the County Council as highway authority, any parish or district council may acquire a new shelter on the understanding that the parish or district will take on all future maintenance and liabilities. Financial assistance may be available from the County Council towards acquisition and installation, but not maintenance.

The market for advertising on shelters in rural Devon is limited - hence the County Council assisting with acquisition. However, throughout the County outside Exeter, the County Council has an arrangement with a company called Fernbank. Fernbank have taken on a number of existing shelters in some towns and on key routes and have installed advertising panels at some sites, thereby relieving parishes and districts of the maintenance responsibility. In some cases, shelters have been replaced or refurbished.

In summary, the County Council has a specified budget to assist parishes or districts with the installation of new bus shelters on condition that the parish or district takes on maintenance. Alternatively, Fernbank may be willing to take on the shelter, or even install a new one, and maintain it thereafter, with the possible inclusion of an advertising panel.

Initial enquiries about possible shelters are best addressed to Mark Phillips in the Transport Co-ordination Service who will liaise with Highways as necessary or facilitate discussions with Clear Channel or Fernbank as appropriate.

Councillor Roger Croad
Cabinet Member for Communities, Public Health, Transportation and
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