

Councillors Briefing Note No. 19-033

Service: Economic Development and Planning

Further Enquiries to: Mary Moore

Date Prepared: October 2019

Direct Line: 01225 770230

Payphones Consultation

The council has received notification from BT regarding consultation on its current programme of proposed public payphone removals.

There are currently 71 public payphones which have very low usage levels and BT propose to remove them following a full consultation. Details of these payphones are shown on the enclosed sheets which include telephone number and addresses. BT has also placed consultation notices in the relevant payphone kiosks.

As the local authority, we are required to carry out our own consultation process to canvas the views of the local community. Therefore, we are seeking the views of parish councils, Wiltshire councillors and other groups and organisations representing the community on the removal of these payphones.

Please provide reasons for any objections to the removal of specific phones, as a blanket objection is unlikely to carry much weight.

BT has provided some examples of factors that may be relevant (refer to their guidance at bottom of page):

- If there is predominantly privately rented or council housing in the area, this suggests people on a lower income without access to mobile and fixed telephones and supports the view that a public call box should be retained.
- There may be concerns about access to telephone services in areas with low population densities.
- The payphone may be sited in an area of poor mobile phone coverage.
- There may be a higher than average need to access emergency services, including breakdown services due to specific local factors for example, the call box is near a known accident black-spot.

BT offers the opportunity for parish councils and registered charities to adopt a kiosk for just £1, thereby protecting the heritage of the community.

Details about this can be found at <http://business.bt.com/phone-services/payphone-services/adopt-a-kiosk/>

The consultation period will close on **28 January 2020**, so please return your comments by **14 January 2020**. All responses will be collated and directed to a single point of contact.

Your response should be returned to Mary Moore at Wiltshire Council who will co-ordinate the response on behalf of the council:

Mary Moore
Development Officer, Regeneration
Economic Development and Planning
Wiltshire Council
Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, BA14 8JN
Tel: 01225 770230
Mary.Moore@wiltshire.gov.uk

BT will remove payphones as soon as possible after the consultation period has ended.

Full guidance on the removal process can be viewed at:

<http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/consultations/uso/statement/removals.pdf>

The guidance also details the appeals process BT is required to follow, in cases of unreasonable objections.

Wiltshire Council will submit a response to BT on each proposed payphone removal.

All correspondence to BT should be addressed to:

BT Payphones, 4TH FLOOR, Monument TE, 11-13 Great Tower Street, London, EC3R 5AQ
or via email to btp.authorisation.team@bt.com