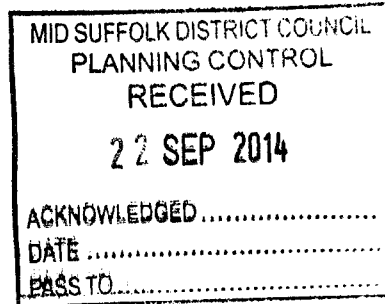


2995/14



Chief Planning Officer
Mid Suffolk District Council
131 High Street
Needham Market
Ipswich
IP6 8DL



22nd September 2014

TIME SENSITIVE - 90 Day Consultation period end date: 21st December 2014

Dear Chief Planner,

BT is writing to you as part of a formal consultation process regarding BT's current programme of proposed public payphone removals. This letter formally starts our consultation with you and the local community.

There are currently 18 public payphones which have very low usage levels and proposed by BT for removal under full consultation. Details of these payphones are shown on the enclosed sheets which include telephone number and addresses.

BT has placed consultation notices in the relevant payphone kiosks. Ensuring that the local community are fully informed and a sample notice is enclosed. Also enclosed is a list that details the payphones which BT wishes to consult on within Mid Suffolk District Council area.

The consultation period will close on 21st December 2014. Responses received after this date will not be accepted. Please allow at least two days for postal delivery, and kindly note that proof of postage may be required in instances of dispute. If you are responding by email, please retain proof of despatch or apply a read receipt. Payphones will normally be removed as soon as practicable after the consultation period has ended.

Over the past seven years there has been a decline of 93% in payphone usage as a result of significant changes in communication in the UK. 94% of all UK adults now own or have regular access to a mobile phone and 85% of all adults in the UK have access to a landline and 96% of those who don't have a fixed line do have a mobile.

Significantly, it is now possible to call emergency service from any mobile phone even when there is no credit or you are not a customer of a particular mobile network. Mobile networks have very extensive coverage throughout the country and are the preferred communication method of people out and about. Additionally, you may want to consider the recent Ofcom affordability report which found that most people do not view payphones as essential for most consumers in most circumstances.

http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/research/affordability/affordability_report.pdf

BT regularly reviews payphone usage, with recent figures confirming that less than 6% of all UK adults claim to have used a payphone within the last year. 71% of public payphones in Great Britain no longer cover their costs.

BT has managed to keep its payphone business viable by careful management. However occasionally it is necessary to re-align the public payphone provision to reflect present day demand.

BT offers to Parish councils and registered charities the facility to adopt a kiosk, taking ownership of the kiosk for just £1 thereby protecting the heritage of the community.

<http://business.bt.com/phone-services/payphone-services/adopt-a-kiosk/>

On the 14th March 2006 the Office of Communications (Ofcom) published a statement following their 2005 review of universal service in the Telecommunications market, which includes a requirement for payphone provision to meet reasonable needs. Part of that statement amended BT's obligations with regard to the removal of payphone service. http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/consultations/uso/uso_statement/

As stated in Ofcom's 2005 review, it is the responsibility of the local authority to initiate its own consultation process to canvas the views of the local community. They would normally expect these consultations to involve other public organisations such as the parish or community councils and work within the terms of the Communications Act 2003. This means that they must be able to objectively justify their decisions.

Full guidance on the removal process can be viewed at:

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

a plain English version is available at:

http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/consultations/uso/statement/removing_callboxes.pdf

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

What you need to do next:-

Please complete and return the attached annex with your decision on each payphone:

- If the decision is to 'adopt', please provide the name of the adopting body and their contact details OR
- If you wish to 'object', you'll need to complete the last column with your reasons, having reviewed the factors set out in Annex 1 of Ofcom's guidance (see link above).

If there are any blank rows, we'll assume 'agree' and there's no wish to adopt and no objection to removal.

All correspondence should be addressed to us at:

BT Payphones, 4TH FLOOR, Monument TE, 11-13 Great Tower Street, London, EC3R 5AQ

or via email to bt.authorisation.team@bt.com. Please note that all responses should be collated and channelled via a single point of contact for your authority.

Yours sincerely

Linda Kennedy
BT Payphones

