

## **BRITISH TELECOM CONSULTATION ON THE INTENDED REMOVAL OF A PUBLIC PAYPHONE WITHIN THE DISTRICT**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Council has been consulted by British Telecom (BT) on a proposal to remove a Public Payphone from within the District. The Council is able to raise objection to the removal of any of these payphones, provided such objections can be justified by reference to specified criteria and whilst having regard to the interests of telecommunication providers. It does not relate to the removal of the call box.
- 1.2 This report gives details of the consultation exercise that has been undertaken and provides an assessment for the payphone affected in light of the response received. Approval is sought to issue a decision notice which does not require its retention. Once issued, the decision notice is published and submitted to BT and the Secretary of State. BT has a right to challenge the Council's decision through an appeal process.

### **2. DETAILS**

- 2.1 BT wishes to remove the payphone located on Gorley Road close to the parade of shops on the corner of Gorley Road and Butlers Lane, Ringwood.
- 2.2 The NFDC reference for this case is ENQ/23/20227.

### **3. CONSULTATION**

- 3.1 BT has displayed a notice on the call box to tell the public:
- i) that BT is planning to remove the payphone
  - ii) the name of the Local Planning Authority to whom people can send any comments (within 90 days)
  - iii) a Freephone number for people to call to contact their local authority
- 3.2. In addition, the affected Town Council and Local Members have been consulted on BT's proposed payphone to be removed. They have also been advised of BT's scheme whereby individuals or community groups, including Parish Councils, may 'adopt' a call box for £1. The 'adopt a box' scheme is a matter for the individual or organisation that wishes to adopt the call box and BT itself. The scheme has no bearing on the recommendations in this report, however it has been mentioned under the 'Town Council Response' section of the assessment if the Town Council have informed us of their wish to adopt a box.
- 3.3 In response to consultation the Council has not received any letters from local residents in relation to any payphones. The following Town Council has responded to the consultation:
- Ringwood Town Council: Payphone number (01425) 479839 - No objection: This consultation was considered by the Council today and I can report that there is no

objection to the removal of the payphone, and the Council does not wish to adopt the kiosk.

3.4 No Local Members have responded to the consultation.

#### 4. ASSESSMENT

4.1 The following factors are of relevance in assessing whether the payphone should be retained:

i.Usage. How many times has the payphone been used in the last 12 months?

ii.Emergency calls. What is the likelihood that the payphone may be required in the case of an emergency to contact services? Is the call box near a traffic accident black spot?

iii.The demographic of the area. Does the social composition of the area indicate that a payphone may be required for residents who cannot afford their own home phone or mobile phone?

iv.Mobile phone coverage. What is the quality of mobile phone provision for making voice calls?

4.2 The payphone has been assessed using these criteria and the conclusions are set out below. The assessment takes account of the consultation response received.

4.3 The payphone has been used 32 times in the last 12 months, none of these calls were Helpline calls. There have been no recorded accidents in the area within the last 12 months (crashmap.com). There are 2 Council owned properties approximately 200m from the payphone (Forestmap) and the four main mobile providers all benefit from good reception in this area (Ofcom).



## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no relevant financial considerations for this consultation.

## **6. CRIME & DISORDER, ENVIRONMENTAL AND EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are none.

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

7.1 That the Council issues a decision for publication which raises no objection to the removal of the payphone identified in the assessment.

## **8. PORTFOLIO HOLDER ENDORSEMENT**

**I have agreed to the recommendation of this report.**

**Sign:** Cllr Derek Tipp

**Date:** 30 October 2023

### **For further information contact:**

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### **Background Papers:**

Relevant payphone and accompanying  
email from BT

Date on which notice given of this Decision – 30 October 2023

Last date for call in – 6 November 2023