South Gloucestershire Council

First Notification of Decision

Notification under section 49(4) of the Communications Act 2003

Contents

Introduction……...2

Notification purpose, methodology and response……..3

Schedule……..4

Public Response to the Removal of BT Payphones……..……....5

Introduction

Draft decision by South Gloucestershire Council in response to the proposal by British Telecommunications plc for the removal of 7 public call boxes pursuant to Part 2 of the Schedule to a Direction published by Ofcom on 14 March 2006 ('the Direction').

1. South Gloucestershire Council, in accordance with section 49(4) of the Communications Act 2003 ('the Act'), hereby make the following draft decision in response to a proposal by British Telecommunications for the removal of public call boxes pursuant to Part 2 of the Direction.
2. The draft decision is set out in the Schedule to this Notification
3. The effect of, and South Gloucestershire Council's reasons for making, the draft decision is set out in the Schedule of this Notification
4. South Gloucestershire Council confirm that the draft decision complies with the requirements of sections 45 to 50 of the Act, as appropriate and relevant to the proposal.
5. In making the draft decision, South Gloucestershire Council has considered and acted in accordance with the six community requirements in section 4 of the Act
6. Representation may be made to South Gloucestershire Council about the draft decision by 9am on 10th June 2025
7. The Schedule to this Notification shall form part of this Notification.

South Gloucestershire Council

3rd June 2025

Notificaiton Purpose, Methodology and Response

This notification provides an initial decision on BT's proposal to remove 7 payphones from South Gloucestershire. South Gloucestershire council has made this draft decision based on public consultation and the decision is open to further consultation before a final decision is made.

The consultation process was supported by a dedicated consultation webpage which hosted all consultation documents (https://payphones2025.commonplace.is/). As part of the consultation we welcomed comments made by letter, email, and over the telephone. These contact methods were promoted on consultation literature, and made use of by consultees to raise questions or provide their views.

Consultation information was sent to Town and Parish Councils, South Gloucestershire councillors and local voluntary and community organisations. All libraries and One-Stop Shops were also notified of the consultation details and asked to cascade the information to any interested parties.

The first stage of this consultation was open from 02 April 2025 until 25 May 2025.

153 visitors were recorded on the consultation website, 20 individuals responded with feedback on the website and South Gloucestershire Council received one email in response to the consultation.

Schedule

Table 1 contains the draft decision by South Gloucestershire Council in response to a proposal by British Telecommunications plc for the removal of public call boxes pursuant to Part 2 of the Schedule to a Direction published by Ofcom on 14 March 2006 ('the Direction').

Telephone number	Address	Post code	Calls in last year	Agree / Adopt / Object
01454612756	O/S OFFICE OF RETAIL DEVELOP PCO1 PEAR TREE ROAD BRADLEY STOKE BRISTOL	BS32 0BQ	28	**Agree**
01179311409	PCO1 WEBBS WOOD ROAD BRADLEY STOKE BRISTOL	BS32 8EJ	14	**Agree**
01179372535	PCO1 O/S SUB POST OFFICE WESTERLEIGH ROAD PUCKLECHURCH BRISTOL	BS16 9RB	1	**Agree**
01454260205	PCO1 OPP THE CHURCH SUNDAYSHILL LANE FALFIELD WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE	GL12 8DQ	14	**Agree**
01454218231	PCO1 LITTLE BADMINTON, BADMINTON	GL9 1AB	20	**Agree**
01454238611	PCO1 HIGH STREET HAWKESBURY UPTON BADMINTON	GL9 1AU	5	**Agree**
01454294234	PCO1 JUNCTION OF NORTH ST HIGH STREET WICKWAR WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE	GL12 8NE	8	**Agree**

Public Response to the Removal of BT Payphones

Out of the 20 responses to the online survey, seven respondents said that they do not object to any of the payphones being removed. Two respondents objected to any/ all payphones being removed, because they believed payphones should exist even if there is no present usage or need, in case there is a future need. And 12 respondents provided feedback on why they believed the specific payphone in the area they live should be kept.

One email was received regarding the removal of the payphones, from a South Gloucestershire Council Conservation Officer, to note that while there were no objections to removal of the telephone equipment, the kiosks which are listed buildings cannot be removed.

There were no requests to adopt any of the kiosks

Council Response to Objections / Reason for Decision

1. O/S OFFICE OF RETAIL DEVELOP PCO1 PEAR TREE ROAD, BRADLEY STOKE, BRISTOL (01454612756)
   In 2020 the council received a similar objection from Bradley Stoke Town Council to the removal of the payphone on Pear Tree Road in Bradley Stoke, on the basis of potential need from those suffering from domestic abuse. In our previous response, South Gloucestershire Council stated that due to the potential harm to domestic violence victims if the payphone was removed, the payphone could remain as long as usage remained above an average of 1 call per week (52 calls per year). The payphone has been used 28 times in the last 12 months and there are 3 other payphones within 800m, so the need for the payphone has reduced in the last five years, and since there are alternative payphones still available nearby, we consider it possible to remove this particular payphone, with minimal risk of potential inconvenience or harm.

2. PCO1 O/S SUB POST OFFICE WESTERLEIGH ROAD PUCKLECHURCH BRISTOL (01179372535)
   The Parish Council stated the concern that the payphone may have had low usage because the door has been painted shut for some time. This could be the case, but may also be a demonstration of how infrequently the facility needs to be accessed. The Parish Council also highlighted that the payphone is in a rural location with an elderly population and that not all residents have a mobile phone,

however it's unclear why these residents would be unable to use a landline or why a rural location is in more need of a payphone than an urban location would be.

3. PCO1 HIGH STREET HAWKESBURY UPTON BADMINTON (01454238611)
   This payphone received the most responses from residents who live nearby (5 respondents) stating that a working payphone is still needed in the village. However this is still a very small response and the council was not presented with enough evidence of reasonable need: 3 responses mentioned that mobile signal can be poor in the village, however BT research showed mobile signal is satisfactory with the four main networks of EE, Three, 02 and Vodafone. 2 responses mentioned frequent power cuts in the area, making it impossible to make calls by digital-only landlines during a power cut. However current low usage suggests almost all residents are able to work around these issues the majority of the time.

We appreciate payphone users would have to find other means to make telephone calls. It is not known what the purpose, nature or context of these calls are, or how many individuals have used each payphone, so it is difficult to estimate the impact of this decision. However BT have found that none of the payphones have been used for emergency needs, and none of these payphones are within a priority neighbourhood so the socioeconomic limitations on being able to have a landline or mobile phone should be minimal.

We welcome comments in response to our initial decision, and are open to consultation until 10th June 2025. South Gloucestershire Council will consider all feedback and can revise the draft decision. The final decision will be published on 11th June 2025.