**From:** Gail Power <Gail.Power@shropshire.gov.uk>
**Sent:** 11 August 2020 13:47
**Subject:** BT Payphone removal consultation begins in Shropshire

Dear all

Shropshire Council has received a listing from BT of [56 payphones](https://shropshire.gov.uk/media/15818/bt-listings-august-2020-consultation.pdf) in the Shropshire area that BT propose to permanently remove from service.

BT has an obligation to consult with Shropshire Council with regard to the proposed removal.  A formal 90 day consultation has therefore commenced with the Council, as set out by Ofcom, which concludes on 11 November 2020.

The Council would like to hear from people by 4pm on Tuesday 29 September, after which a provisional view has to be issued and sent to Government referencing the comments and views received by that date and time. There is then a further one month in which any further views are encouraged, taking us up to 4pm on Monday 9 November. A final decision will then be issued by the deadline of 11 November 2020.

During the 90 day period, the job of the Council as the Local Planning Authority is to seek views from local town and parish councils and to include any views from local councillors, residents, and so forth, in order to help us to reach a decision in each case as to whether to Consent to removal of the service and kiosk; Object in order to keep the service operational, or Consent to removal of the telephony and retention of the kiosk itself where the local parish or town council wish to adopt.

Councillor Gwilym Butler, Portfolio Holder said:

***“Many of these BT kiosks were on the large scale consultation in autumn 2019 and have reappeared on this list. Whilst this consultation presents a real opportunity for local communities to think about the usage of their payphones, we absolutely appreciate that local communities are focussed at this time upon seeking to deal with the pandemic and its consequences across our area.***

***“Officers have therefore drawn up a listing that includes all the comments made last time around, in order to assist in saving everyone some time, and in so doing helping us to reach a collective up-to-date decision on behalf of the local communities in each case.***

***“Could I please ask people to have a think about whether they consider that the kiosks on the list need to remain operational to serve residents and visitors, perhaps because they are in an isolated rural area or an area with poor mobile coverage, or whether the local community may perhaps find benefit from their removal or from adopting them for a community use such as defibrillator storage. “***

The necessary arrangements are being made with local town and parish councils and elected Shropshire Council councillors accordingly, in order to seek views on behalf of the local community in each area affected. These include publicising the details so that any members of the public who wish to comment will be able to do so.

Online resources, including the full listing, are available on the Council website under   <https://shropshire.gov.uk/shropshire-council/bt-payphones/>

There are only ten of the 56 that were not on previous recent listings. The kiosks are a mix of the traditional red K6 style kiosk, and the modern style KX100, and are spread across the whole of the Shropshire Council area.

For feedback on your views, please contact the lead coordinating officer, Mrs Lois Dale, via email to ensure that we have a written record of these views. The address is; **lois.dale@shropshire.gov.uk**.

**Further information**

The stated starting position of Shropshire Council, as a predominantly rural county with a dispersed population, is to Object to removal of telephony at kiosks unless local feedback suggests otherwise, due to concerns over things like emergency access, physical access where the next nearest payphone may be some distance away for those with mobility problems, and concerns over consistency and quality of mobile phone coverage.

Equally, the Council is looking to consider factors in favour of removal of the payphone where the views of the local community are that its use is no longer warranted, or that adoption would be a better option in that area, perhaps for defibrillator storage, or that there has been repeated vandalism or misuse of the kiosk.

The date of the poster in a local kiosk is the date that the poster was placed, rather than the commencement date of the 90 day formal consultation that they are required to have with us. BT have added this to the listing.

The listing will also go to Clerks for all town and parish councils. Online resources include details about what to do if a local parish council or town council wants to think about adopting the kiosk for a use such as a defibrillator store. Individuals are not permitted to adopt kiosks, but they can also be adopted by community organisations, and we will include the criteria on that.

We also include advice from the historic environment team about what can or cannot be done if the kiosk is a listed structure, and how to ask if there are queries about conservation considerations.

For more details, please click the link to see the listing and other resources on the website at <https://shropshire.gov.uk/shropshire-council/bt-payphones/>

Regards

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