

Hello Penny

Public Phone Kiosk Station Road Wem

I have heard back from BT, and I am sorry to say it is not good news.

I need to get back to them before 7th May if we wish to appeal against their current decision, which is to pursue removal of the kiosk and telephony.

Please could you seek views of the Town Council to see if this is an action they wish me to take?

I cannot guarantee this will be successful but am happy to press our point, in which case we could do with further local data on accidents in the area. I will have a look myself as well, if you would like me to follow this one up, and wonder if you have any further local knowledge yourselves?.

By way of reminder on usage, we are way below the 52-call criterion at 13 calls in the last twelvemonth, so we cannot use that angle.

I will wait to hear back, and in meantime here is what they have said:

“The objection asserts that the payphone is located in a high accident-risk area and would provide a vital emergency communication function in the event of incidents at the level crossing or nearby recreation ground. However, no supporting evidence has been provided to demonstrate that this location has a history of accidents or emergencies requiring reliance on the payphone. Our own review of available accident data within the vicinity of the kiosk does not identify a level of reported incidents that would substantiate the claim of a safety-critical location.

Ofcom’s guidance requires that safety-based objections be supported by evidence of actual risk or recorded incidents specific to the location, rather than hypothetical or precautionary scenarios. While the concerns raised are acknowledged, they do not demonstrate a continuing reasonable need for the payphone to remain operational under the USO.

Having regard to the information available, and in line with Ofcom’s established approach, we do not consider that the objection justifies retention of the payphone. We therefore confirm our decision to proceed with the proposed removal.”

Here is what we said in making an objection to removal:

SC supports TC stance to object to removal of this payphone as it is in a high accident-risk area next to the railway level crossing and an open children's recreation ground; it presents as a vital emergency communication mechanism where there are accidents on the level crossing; where the level crossing barriers are stuck, as they often are, leading to congestion on a narrow road and heightened risk of accidents; and where children who do not have mobile phones need to use the payphone if there are accidents either on the recreation ground, or as a result of children darting out into traffic or onto the railway line. There is therefore a local reasonable need, and evidence for this, for the payphone to remain operational.

Thank you

Regards

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