



Thursday 15 May 2025

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## **CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES DECISION MEETING**

A meeting of the Cabinet Member for Communities Decision Meeting will be held in the Council Chamber - Council Offices, Trinity Road, Cirencester, GL7 1PX on **Friday, 23 May 2025 at 2.00 pm.**

Rob Weaver  
Chief Executive

To: Members of the Cabinet Member for Communities Decision Meeting  
(Councillor Claire Bloomer )

Recording of Proceedings – The law allows the public proceedings of Council, Cabinet, and Committee Meetings to be recorded, which includes filming as well as audio-recording. Photography is also permitted.

As a matter of courtesy, if you intend to record any part of the proceedings please let the Committee Administrator know prior to the date of the meeting.

# AGENDA

1. **Cabinet Member Introduction**

Welcome to the meeting and introduction of participants.  
Confirmation of any comments received by the Officer or Democratic Services.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

To receive any declarations of interest from the Cabinet Member present.

3. **Officer overview of the report** (Pages 5 - 22)

The Cabinet Member may allow members of the public present at the meeting to speak or make representations. However, all questions must relate directly to the decision being discussed. If a question is deemed irrelevant by the Cabinet Member the member of the public will be advised where to direct their question.

Purpose

The purpose of the report is to agree a response to the British Telecommunications consultation on the removal of payphones from 16 locations across Cotswold District, in the light of consultation responses submitted to the Council.

Recommendation(s)

That the Cabinet member for Communities resolves to:

1. Agree the Council response for each affected kiosk
2. Agree to encourage British Telecommunications Ltd to keep open the offer of community adoption for telephone kiosks retained after this process has concluded.

4. **Confirmation of comments**

Confirmation of comments received by officer or Democratic Services.

5. **Public questions**

The Cabinet Member may allow members of the public present at the meeting to speak or make representations. However, all questions must relate directly to the decision being discussed. If a question is deemed irrelevant by the Cabinet Member the member of the public will be advised where to direct their question.

6. **Cabinet Member questions**

The Cabinet Member may request clarification of the report and the proposed decision, including any alternative options for consideration.

7. **Decision**

The Cabinet Member will verbally confirm their decision, stating whether they:

- a) Accept the officer's recommendation
- b) Make a different decision contrary to the recommendation, or
- c) Refer the decision to a Cabinet meeting.

The Cabinet Member must inform the Democratic Services Officer of the reason for the decision, which will be officially recorded on the Decision Notice.

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**COTSWOLD**  
District Council

Council name	<b>COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>
Name and date of Committee	<b>CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES DECISION MEETING, 23 MAY 2025</b>
Subject	<b>Response to British Telecommunications Consultation on the Removal of Payphones at 16 locations across Cotswold District</b>
Wards affected	Abbey, Campden & Vale, Chedworth and Churn Valley, Coln Valley, Ermin, Fossebridge, Grumbolds Ash, Sandywell, Stow, Tetbury East and Rural, Thameshead, Watermoor
Accountable member	Councillor Claire Bloomer, Cabinet Member for Communities Email: <a href="mailto:Claire.Bloomer@cotswold.gov.uk">Claire.Bloomer@cotswold.gov.uk</a>
Accountable officer	Joseph Walker, Head of Economic Development and Communities Email: <a href="mailto:Joseph.Walker@Cotswold.gov.uk">Joseph.Walker@Cotswold.gov.uk</a>
Report author	Joseph Walker, Head of Economic Development and Communities Email: <a href="mailto:Joseph.Walker@Cotswold.gov.uk">Joseph.Walker@Cotswold.gov.uk</a>
Summary/Purpose	To agree a response to the British Telecommunications consultation on the removal of payphones from 16 locations across Cotswold District, in the light of consultation responses submitted to the Council.
Annexes	Annex A – Copy of the payphone notice Annex B – Copy of the consultation schedule, with summary responses attached. Annex C – Consultation responses.
Recommendation(s)	That the Cabinet member for Communities resolves to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Agree the Council response for each affected kiosk</li> <li>2. Agree to encourage British Telecommunications Ltd to keep open the offer of community adoption for telephone kiosks retained after this process has concluded.</li> </ol>
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting Communities</li> </ul>



Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	<p>This decision relates to a consultation run by British Telecommunications Ltd, in line with procedures required by OFCOM. The consultation is open to all, via notices posted in affected telephone kiosks, and affected parishes are invited to comment directly or invite public response. All responses are provided at Annex C, including representation from private residents and parish councils.</p>



## **1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1** On 26 February 2025, British Telecommunications Ltd (BT) contacted the Council to advise that they were launching a consultation on the removal of telephony from 16 telephone kiosks across the district. This report captures the consultation response, to inform the Council's decision on its own response to BT.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1** Over the past 15 or so years, BT has sought to reduce the number of telephone kiosks in the district. As mobile phone ownership has increased, and coverage improved, there has been a significant reduction in the use of public telephones, so the network has been reduced to reflect this. The approach is governed by procedures put in place by OFCOM, the industry regulator, last revised in 2023. These procedures set out the circumstances where fixed line telephony should be protected, but also where provision may be reviewed.

## **3. MAIN POINTS**

- 3.1** In line with the latest OFCOM procedure, BT have launched a consultation on the removal of telephony at 16 locations in Cotswold District. As part of this consultation process the local community has the option to seek to adopt the kiosk, where the local community takes on responsibility for the box (but not the telephony, which is removed). 11 of the 16 kiosks are listed, so the kiosk will be retained no matter the outcome. At the remaining 5, subject to the consultation outcome and any adoption, both the box and the telephony could be removed.
- 3.2** The Council is a statutory consultee, and is expected to provide a local response taking into account representations received from local people/organisations. The Council no longer has a veto on the removal of kiosks, but its consent is still required for community adoptions.
- 3.3** Accordingly, the Council notified the directly affected parish councils of the consultation on 10 March 2025. BT also posted a notice in the kiosks, a copy of which is attached at Annex A. The Council has received responses from the parishes of all except three of the boxes, and has received 5 public responses. These are provided at Exempt Annex C. The three parishes that have not responded contain listed kiosks, where the box will be retained in the event the telephony is removed.



- 3.4** With previous consultation of this nature, the Council has been keen to reflect the knowledge and ambitions of parish councils: requests for adoption have been supported, as this allows kiosks to be retained and continue to serve a community purpose. Similarly, where a cogent argument for retention has been made, usually reflecting local experience of mobile phone coverage, the Council has supported such cases.
- 3.5** Annex B, along with itemising the affected boxes, also contains the summarised responses, which it is recommended should form the core of the Council response.
- 3.6** In two scenarios, the telephony may be decommissioned, but listed boxes may be retained by BT, who propose to simply remove the telephone and lock the box; scenario A, where the community agrees with BT, but does not seek adoption, and scenario B, where the community objects, but BT's decision is still to decommission the box. While both are valid outcomes of the process, this leaves a situation where a box is retained but not used, with a risk that it will no longer serve a community purpose or fall into dereliction.
- 3.7** The officer recommendation is to append to the Council's response on individual boxes a request that BT hold open the offer of adoption of the kiosk on any boxes that are decommissioned but retained on site.

#### **4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 4.1** The Council does not have a legal obligation to respond to this consultation. However, the Ofcom process places the burden of collating a local response reflecting local representations upon the Council, so in the light of comments received, not responding would undermine this process

#### **5. CONCLUSIONS**

- 5.1** Most affected parishes have responded, and provided an evidence-based local perspective on the future of affected kiosks. The officer recommendation would be to support their positions, and to also request that BT hold open the offer of adoption on any retained but decommissioned kiosks.





## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1** None direct. The Council will have no obligation towards the affected kiosks. As the process rolls forward, it may be that parishes seek support on plans for any adopted boxes, such as installation of defibrillators, for which the Council currently has a small grant pot.

## **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1** None. The Council will not take on ownership or any other obligation towards affected kiosks. Essentially, the Council role is restricted to this consultation and response.

## **8. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 8.1** As the Council takes on neither legal nor financial responsibilities, the sole risk would be reputational, a risk mitigated by responding to BT reflecting the local opinions expressed during the consultation.

## **9. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

- 9.1** None. The consultation process is run under the terms set by Ofcom, which consider the impact on the universal service obligation as it still applies to telecommunications providers. BT have considered social factors in identifying which boxes can be decommissioned.

## **10. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1** None. Telephone boxes in general are no longer essential local infrastructure, so their removal is highly unlikely to create any travel burden or other environmental cost.

## **11. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

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Notice date:



# We're planning to remove this payphone

Unfortunately, it just isn't used enough for us to carry on running it.

If you think it should stay, please contact your local authority within 90 days of the date on this notice.

Call **0800 661 610** (option 1) to find out how to contact your local authority.

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1 Braham Street, London, E1 8EE. Registered in England No. 1800000.

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Ref.	Call box ID	Address	Post Code		Parish	Relevant Public Body	Removal proposal sent	Representation period ends	Listed	Response received	Parish Position	Proposed CDC position
1	01242890214	PCO PCO1 SUB POST OFFICE WITHINGTON ROAD ANDOVERSFORD CHELTENHAM	GL54 4LL	Sandywell	Withington	Cotswold District	26/02/2025	27/05/2025	y	y	object, limited mobile phone coverage	object (sharing evidence)
2	01285641348	PCO PCO1 TESCOS CAR PARK CRIPPS ROAD CIRENCESTER	GL7 1HN	Watermoor	Cirencester	Cotswold District	26/02/2025	27/05/2025	n	y	remove	agree
3	01285641379	PCO PCO1 SCHOOL LANE CIRENCESTER	GL7 1JU	Watermoor	Cirencester	Cotswold District	26/02/2025	27/05/2025	n	y	remove	agree
4	01285641392	PCO PCO1 SPITALGATE LANE CIRENCESTER	GL7 2DE	Abbey	Cirencester	Cotswold District	26/02/2025	27/05/2025	n	y	remove	agree
5	01285740283	P NR OLD POST OFFICE PCO1 ARLINGTON CIRENCESTER	GL7 5NL	Coln Valley	Bibury	Cotswold District	26/02/2025	27/05/2025	y	y	adopt	adopt
6	01285740307	PCO PCO1 ABLINGTON BIBURY CIRENCESTER	GL7 5NZ	Coln Valley	Bibury	Cotswold District	26/02/2025	27/05/2025	y	y	adopt	adopt
7	01285760340	PCO PCO1 SAPPERTON CIRENCESTER	GL7 6LE	Ermin	Sapperton	Cotswold District	26/02/2025	27/05/2025	y	y	adopt	adopt
8	01285770236	PCO PCO1 AT OLD POST OFFICE COATES LANE COATES CIRENCESTER	GL7 6JU	Thameshead	Coates	Cotswold District	26/02/2025	27/05/2025	n	y	Do not wish to comment	agree
9	01285831353	PCO PCO1 BAGENDON CIRENCESTER	GL7 7DU	Chedworth and Churn Valley	Bagendon	Cotswold District	26/02/2025	27/05/2025	y	y	adopt	adopt
10	01386438201	PCO PCO1 HIGH STREET MICKLETON CHIPPING CAMPDEN	GL55 6RX	Campden and Vale	Mickleton	Cotswold District	26/02/2025	27/05/2025	y	y	agree	agree
11	01386840544	PCO1 LITTLEWORTH CHIPPING CAMPDEN	GL55 6BE	Campden and Vale	Chipping Campden	Cotswold District	26/02/2025	27/05/2025	n	y	adopt	adopt
12	01451830307	PCO PCO1 FOSSEWAY STOW ON THE WOLD CHELTENHAM	GL54 1DW	Stow	Stow-on-the-Wold	Cotswold District	26/02/2025	27/05/2025	y	y	object, supported by 5 resident representations	object (sharing evidence)
13	01451860301	PCO PCO1 TURKDEAN CHELTENHAM	GL54 3NT	Sandywell	Turkdean	Cotswold District	26/02/2025	27/05/2025	y	n		agree
14	01454238220	PCO PCO1 THE STREET DIDMARTON BADMINTON	GL9 1DT	Grumbolds Ash	Didmarton	Cotswold District	26/02/2025	27/05/2025	y	n		agree
15	01608658294	PCO PCO1 DAYLESFORD MORETON- IN-MARSH	GL56 0YG	Fosseridge	Adlestrop	Cotswold District	26/02/2025	27/05/2025	y	n		agree
16	01666502382	PCO PCO1 O/S THE POST OFFICE MARKET PLACE TETBURY	GL8 8DA	Tetbury East and Rural	Tetbury	Cotswold District	26/02/2025	27/05/2025	y	y	adopt	adopt

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## Annex C

### Consultation responses, with contact information redacted

#### Withington

Thank you for your helpful email.

The Parish Council would like to object to the removal of the payphone from the BT kiosk in Withington on the following grounds:

- The location as described in the address section of BT's annex sent with the notification is incorrect. The postcode cited in BT's document is GL54 4LL whereas the actual location of the Kiosk is <https://w3w.co/tailed.trick.efficient> which is within the postcode GL54 4BE. Please see the attached map showing both locations which are some 2.053 kilometres apart as the crow flies
- In their spreadsheet, BT have assigned a grade of 4 out of 4 for mobile coverage across all the networks with a summary of mobile coverage being okay. This is possibly on the basis of Ofcom's coverage checker (<https://checker.ofcom.org.uk/>) which grades the outdoor signal as "likely" across all networks for this postcode as per the attached. Were the correct postcode to be utilised on this website, Vodafone becomes the network with limited coverage as per the attached screenshot
- Ofgem's mobile checker website makes clear that the "results are predictions and not a guarantee. Actual services available may be different depending on the particular circumstances and the precise location of the user". Comparing the actual mobile coverage outside BT's kiosk in the village with the Ofcom's coverage checker results, a very different picture emerges; only EE phones receive a signal with all other networks not being able to connect at all. Please see the attached screenshots taken from phones connected to each of the four network providers outside BT's kiosk

It is on this basis that Withington Parish Council do not agree with the BT's proposal to remove the payphone from their kiosk in the village as contrary to their assertion, mobile coverage is not "okay" across all networks.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards

Parish Clerk of Withington Parish Council

**Resident response:** Thank you for your detailed and encouraging response Joseph. We'd appreciate CDC adding a request regarding applications to invite adoption before any action is taken by BT.

**Cirencester**

Members of CTCs Planning Committee considered the options presented in BTs consultation and based on evidence provided concerning usage levels, locations and existing mobile coverage, unanimously agreed to the removal of the 3 kiosks in question.

Planning Officer

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**Bibury**

I confirm that Bibury Parish Council have no objection to the telephony being removed from these kiosks. The Council has emailed BT with regard to adopting these kiosks.

Kind Regards

Bibury Parish Clerk

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**Sapperton**

I am a parish councillor for Sapperton and Frampton Mansell. Thank you for your email to the council re the removal of telephony from phone kiosks in Cotswold District. The kiosk in Sapperton is listed so will not be removed and the parish council has agreed to adopt it. We intend to use it as a book exchange as we already have a defibrillator in the village. The kiosk in Frampton Mansell was adopted several years ago and that does house a defibrillator.

I will contact BT and put the adoption process in motion.

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**Coates**

Coates Parish Council do NOT want to make any representations on this issue.

Regards

Parish clerk



## **Bagendon**

Bagendon Parish Council would like to keep the phone box facility but appreciate that we have no strong convincing argument for this, the only things raised from the community were poor mobile signal in case of emergencies.

However the actual phone box has been earmarked as a potential location for a defibrillator so if possible we would like to keep the box itself and would be happy to adopt the box itself without the services.

Thanks

Bagendon Parish Clerk

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## **Mickleton**

We raised this at the parish assembly and there were no thoughts as to how this could be used and no other groups came forward to adopt the kiosk. Before the council makes a decision, it would like to know:

Would MPC own this and would it have to insurance the kiosk, as this may mean an increase in insurance premium?

Does it require any immediate cost to make it safe? Are there any concerns re lead paint? Any such costs should be carried out by BT before potential handover.

The issue the council has is that it does not know what to do with it, as the main uses for kiosks are already covered in the village: we have a 'library' at the village hall and a defibrillator very close at the shop and an information shelter in the village (the latter two are within sight of the kiosk).

Council agrees that it would be a shame if we lost it as an historical element of our village, but if it is locked and not removed it would still be present.

Best wishes

Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

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## **Chipping Campden**

[Redacted] my understanding is that Chipping Campden have previously applied to adopt the phone box at Littleworth, GL556BE (Tel No: 01386 840544).

If this is not the case could we please register our interest in adopting this phone box (final use to be determined, but probably a defibrillator)?

What is the process to formally adopt the phone box or will details be sent to me following the consultation period?

Thanks in advance for your assistance

Regards

**Stow-on-the-Wold**

**Letter from Town Council at the end of this document**

**Resident responses:**

Please don't remove the phone booth in Stow on the Wold by the old Fountain. So many have been re-purposed so that we don't forget our past. It could be used to hold a defibrillator, or as others have suggested, on Facebook, a book exchange or for visitor information.

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Dear Sir / Madam,

I write you today regarding BTs decision to close the public payphone box at the Fountain, Stow-on-the-Wold. Due to poor mobile phone reception (and we use BTs mobile alliance tied to EEs mobile service) there have been many occasions over the years that I have had to rely on this phone box for urgent phone calls and would like to raise my objection to the removal of a highly visible and important red box. As far as I am aware all other phone boxes in Stow have had their telephony removed. It is important to keep some basic landline services open for emergencies since all domestic lines are switched/switching over to broadband and mobile reception including frequent outages in the area are unacceptable.

Please raise our objection with BT.

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[Redacted] a resident of Stow-on-the-Wold for 58 years.

A suggestion that the red phone Box is being removed from the fountain at Stow-on-the-Wold as its not being used much.

I fully understand this but would like the Box to stay but remove the internal phone.

Maybe a suggestion to keep the box alone and hand it over to Stow Town council. It then could be painted every 5 years to keep it looking tidy.

A lot of tourists have there pictures taken stood next to it as some youngsters have never seen one before. It would be sad to see the box removed.

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Good Morning,

I have just noticed a sign about removing a telephone box from The Fountain Fosseway Stow.

This is a huge tourist attraction as there are so few around these days, it would be a huge shame to see it go, and I think most of Stow would agree with this.

Please reconsider this

Thank you,

**Tetbury**

Thank you for your email.

This correspondence was noted at our Full Council meeting held on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2025. The Council have resolved to adopt the telephone box at Market Place and looking into the idea of becoming a noticeboard and to provide visitors with history of Tetbury – for example the telephone box is at the top of Gumstool Hill and for many years this is the start of the Woolsack Races which takes place in May.

Kind regards

**Chief Executive Officer**



## Stow-on-the-Wold Town Council

Stow Youth Centre, Fosseway,  
Stow on the Wold, Gloucestershire GL54 1DW

Telephone: 01451 832 585  
Email: [clerk@stowonthewold-tc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@stowonthewold-tc.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.stowonthewold-tc.gov.uk](http://www.stowonthewold-tc.gov.uk)

Town Clerk & RFO: Marie Pawley

1 April 2025

Joseph Walker  
Community Partnership Officer  
Planning Department  
Cotswold District Council

By email: [joseph.walker@cotswold.gov.uk](mailto:joseph.walker@cotswold.gov.uk)

Dear Joseph

### **British Telecommunications Consultation on proposed decommissioning of the BT telephone kiosk on the Fosseway, Stow on the Wold**

Council is writing to formally express its opposition to the proposed decommissioning of the public telephone box at the Fountain Junction in Stow on the Wold.

According to the latest statistics from BT, this telephone box is being used by residents and visitors who need to make urgent or emergency calls or do not have access to mobile phones. The number of calls in the previous 12 months was 25.

Council notes that telephone boxes with fewer than 52 calls in 12 months are generally able to be decommissioned. However Council believes that several factors make this location exceptional and justify retaining the telephone box, and asks that the following be taken into account:

- Stow on the Wold has significant and increasing numbers of residents and visitors in older age groups who are less likely to use mobile phones.
- There is no other public telephone box within 400m of this one. The nearest is approximately 600m away on Sheep Street.
- The telephone box is by a junction of three main roads where several traffic accidents have occurred recently. Over the past few years Council has had to report vehicles damaging the pedestrian safety barriers several times, and a number of these have crashed through the railings, over the pavement and into the adjacent properties.

Removing this phone box would deprive residents, visitors and other members of the public of a vital service and potentially endanger their safety.



We hope that the Town Council's views will be taken into account by Cotswold District Council and BT.

Yours sincerely



Marie Pawley  
Town Clerk and RFO

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