



Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	CABINET – 1 MARCH 2021
Report Number	AGENDA ITEM 9
Subject	PROPERTY ACQUISITION OF THE TELEPHONE BOX IN SALPERTON
Wards affected	Sandywell/St Michaels/Abbey
Accountable member	<p>Cllr Mike Every - Deputy Leader Email: mike.every@cotswold.gov.uk</p> <p>Cllr Jenny Forde - Cabinet member for Health & Wellbeing Email: jenny.forde@cotswold.gov.uk</p>
Accountable officer	<p>Jasmine McWilliams, Asset Manager Tel: 01285 623255 Email: jasmine.mcwilliams@publicagroup.uk</p> <p>Joseph Walker, Community Partnership Officer Tel: 01285 623146 Email joseph.walker@publicagroup.uk</p>
Summary/Purpose	To decide whether the Council should acquire the telephone box at Salperton from British Telecom
Annexes	<p>Annex A - Location Plan of Salperton Telephone Box</p> <p>Annex B - Photos of Telephone Box</p>
Recommendation/s	<p>That Cabinet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) decides whether to acquire the telephone box at Salperton and transfer it to Cirencester Town Council for relocation to the Market Place in Cirencester in a joint project. b) gives the Group Manager for Commissioning in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and the Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing delegated authority to agree the final terms for the acquisition of the telephone box and any subsequent transfer to Cirencester Town Council.
Corporate priorities	Working with communities to meet the current and future needs and aspirations of residents.
Key Decision	No
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	Senior Officers and Cabinet members

I. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 British Telecom (“BT”) consulted mid 2020 on the removal of 12 telephone boxes around the district. Under the OFCOM process there were no telephony grounds for the Council to object to the removal of the box at Salperton.
- 1.2 Hazleton & Salperton Parish Meeting did not indicate an interest in acquiring the box , a process that BT describes as adoption. In order to save the asset the Council expressed an interest, in principle, of adopting the box in the Council’s consultation response.
- 1.3 The Council now has until 31st March 2021 to confirm to BT whether it wishes to adopt the box at Salperton. If the Council agrees to adopt the box BT would decommission it which would involve removing the equipment and wiring to the box.
- 1.4 Cirencester Town Council (“CTC”) have advised that they wish to accommodate the box in the Market Place in Cirencester as a feature, community use and/or a tourist/visitor purpose. There would be opportunity within the crowdfunding application proposal to engage with the public for specific ideas.

2. MAIN POINTS

2.1. Condition of the Telephone Box

Photographs of the box are shown at Annex B. The overall condition of the box is poor and essential repairs including replacing broken glass and door hinges are required to prevent further deterioration and moisture ingress. Minimal repairs have been carried out by BT to keep the box operational and some of these purely practical repairs are not in keeping with the original design such as the addition of perspex panels. If the box were to be restored to its original condition a full refurbishment is required. Once restored a 5 year cyclical paint and repair programme is advised.

2.2 Cirencester Town Council Proposal

Cirencester Town Council have expressed interest in taking ownership of the telephone box and relocating it to Cirencester Market Place. The Town Council have proposed that the project be a joint proposal and are able to provide £1,000 towards the relocation costs and the refurbishment costs. The proposal would involve a joint crowdfunding/fundraising campaign to raise the funds to refurbish the box, which are estimated at £2,500-£3,000. The Town Council would then be responsible for the telephone box after relocation and refurbishment.

2.3 Planning Advice

The telephone box does not appear to be listed, or subject to any other relevant constraints which would affect the proposed relocation (from Salperton only, as the proposed location is unknown). The box is within the Salperton Conservation Area, however this should not affect the proposed relocation.

Class A of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) allows for 'Development by local

authorities'. The development permitted is **'The erection or construction and the maintenance, improvement or other alteration by a local authority or by an urban development corporation of (a) any small ancillary building, works or equipment on land belonging to or maintained by them required for the purposes of any function exercised by them on that land otherwise than as statutory undertakers; [or/and] (b) lamp standards, information kiosks, passenger shelters, public shelters and seats, telephone boxes, fire alarms, public drinking fountains, horse troughs, refuse bins or baskets, barriers for the control of people waiting to enter public service vehicles, electric vehicle charging points and any associated infrastructure, and similar structures or works required in connection with the operation of any public service administered by them.'**

The reference in Class A to any small ancillary building, works or equipment is a reference to any ancillary building, works or equipment not exceeding 4 metres in height or 200 cubic metres in capacity.

A 'Local Authority' does not include a Town or Parish Council and relates to development by Cotswold District Council. If the Council is not entirely satisfied that the proposed development meets the criteria set out in Schedule 2, Part 12, Class A of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), a planning application should be submitted for consideration.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 If the Council wishes to proceed with the Cirencester Town Council proposal there would be an application for funding from the Cotswold Community Fund, already allocated by the Council, through Cotswold Crowdfund for the cost of refurbishment, estimated at £2,500 - £3,000 plus haulage costs of £500.
- 3.2 If Cirencester Town Council does not relocate the telephone box it could remain in Salperton. Cotswold District Council would then be responsible for it. The essential repairs are estimated at £200 to £300 and redecoration between £500 and £600, totalling £700 to £900. However if this approach was taken without carrying out more extensive repairs to glazing and damage to frames then this could lead to further deterioration due to moisture ingress in the future. Funding for these costs can be found within existing revenue budgets.
- 3.3 Alternatively If Cirencester Town Council does not relocate the telephone box the Council could look to transfer/sell the box to another party which would have no cost and the potential for income subject to the terms of the adoption from BT.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 If the Council takes a transfer of the telephone box it would become the owner of the box only and not the land.
- 4.2 BT is not able to offer the telephone box directly to Cirencester Town Council as it can only offer the box to local authorities linked directly to Salperton.

- 4.3 The Council would be prevented from selling the box to another telecommunications provider following completion.

5. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 If Cirencester Town Council does not relocate the telephone box it would remain in Salperton and the responsibility of Cotswold District Council. The responsibility for maintenance, insurance and responsive repair, such as vandalism, would lie with the Council.
- 5.2 To mitigate any costs the Council could look to sell/transfer to another party if Cirencester Town Council does not relocate the box subject to the terms of the adoption from BT.

6. EQUALITIES ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 N/A.

7. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 No implications are envisaged in respect of this decision

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 8.1 The Council could choose not to take a transfer of the telephone box and BT would remove it.
- 8.2 If the Council takes a transfer of the box and if it is not relocated to the Market Place in Cirencester it could sell the box or transfer to another party subject to the terms of the adoption from BT.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1 None.

(END)