



PLANNING COMMITTEE – 9 NOVEMBER 2016

SUBJECT: BT PAYPHONE BOXES
REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR - COMMUNITY SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider a consultation from BT about the closure and removal of their telephone boxes in the borough.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 BT has consulted this Council about the closure and removal of its telephone boxes. All the members of the Council and the clerks of the community councils have been advised of the proposals.
- 2.2 Only one objection has been raised to the removal of a specific phone box.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The report takes account of the adopted Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan up 2021.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 A consultation was received from BT on 5 September 2016 about the removal of 41 public payphones. The period for consultation responses closes on 3 December 2016. The payphones in question are:

Address	Post code	No. of calls in last 12 months
High Street, Nelson	CF46 6HB	69
Hengoed Avenue, Cefn Hengoed	CF82 7HT	0
Penybryn Terrace, Penybryn	CF82 7GG	7
Main Road, Maesycwmmmer	CF82 7PJ	7
The Square, Glan y Nant	NP12 3XF	102
Highfield Crescent, Aberbargoed	CF81 9DW	0
Gwerthonor Place, Gilfach	CF81 8JQ	29

New Road, Deri	CF81 9GJ	40
Upper Gelligroes	NP12 2HT	0
High Street, Argoed	NP12 0HQ	1
Woodland Road, Pontllanfraith	NP12 2LS	0
Glen View, Hollybush	NP12 0SQ	0
Groveside Road, Oakdale	NP12 0DN	48
Fleur de Lys Ave, Pontllanfraith	NP12 2NU	148
The Crown, Pontllanfraith	NP12 2HE	1

Newbridge Road, Pontllanfraith	NP12 2LB	1
Hafodyrynys	NP11 5BE	110
Treowen Road, Newbridge	NP11 3DL	0
Old Pant Road, Newbridge	NP11 5BZ	8
West End, Abercarn	NP11 4TG	8
St Lukes Surgery, Abercarn	NP11 5GR	168
Main Street, Crumlin	NP11 4PT	4
Twyn Place, Abercarn	NP11 5JX	0

John Street, Cwmcarn	NP11 7EH	0
Duffryn Terrace, Wattsville	NP11 7QN	0
Commercial Road, Machen	CF83 8PG	0
Herbert Avenue, Risca	NP11 6JS	0
Meadow Crescent, Risca	NP11 6NN	0
Maerdy View, Rhymney	NP22 5LH	0
Carno Street, Rhymney	NP22 5QP	0
Hill Street, Rhymney	NP22 5JE	3

Moores Row, Fochriw	CF81 9JT	7
Caerphilly Road, Senghenydd	CF83 4FW	1
Porset Drive, Caerphilly	CF83 1PJ	37
Garth Place, Rudry	CF83 3DL	0
Pandy Road, Bedwas	CF83 8EH	9
First Avenue, Caerphilly	CF83 2SD	0
Rudry, Caerphilly	CF83 3EB	0
Van Terrace, Rudry	CF83 3EE	0

Bowls Terrace, Caerphilly	CF83 2RD	53
Court Road, Caerphilly	CF83 2QW	2

- 4.2 The letter from BT advises that they placed a notice in each box in early August inviting comments about its closure to be sent to the local planning authority. No comments have been received as a result of that publicity. Local communities can adopt a red box for £1. BT also advises that the use of payphones has declined by over 90% in the last decade due to the use of mobile phones. They draw attention to an Ofcom report which found that most people do not view payphones for most consumers in most circumstances.
- 4.3 The next stage in the process is to express an intention to adopt a payphone, or to object or to raise no objections to its removal.
- 4.4 Members and the clerks to the community councils were consulted about this matter on 7 and 8 September 2016 respectively. Responses have been received from three local members stating the following:
- there is still a role for telephone boxes as not everyone has a mobile phone, there are also blind spots for mobiles in a lot of areas
 - it is difficult to argue with the figures regarding the usage of the payphones
 - will the cable connection be taken away, or left to be reinstated if ever needed?

There has been one verbal request from a member about the possibility of listing telephone boxes. There are 2 telephone boxes (both listed grade II) within Caerphilly county borough that have been listed by Cadw.

- Telephone call-box on Groeswen Road, Groeswen (K6 type introduced in 1936)
- Telephone call-box outside the former Pioneer Hotel, Ynysddu (also K6)

Cadw is not currently commissioning fieldworkers throughout Wales to survey buildings and structures with a view to them being 'listed'. It is very rare now to come across ones that have not been considered. It is probable that when the re-surveying was being undertaken by Cadw (1996-2005), they would have considered all during that 'sweep' to see if any met the criteria, and only those mentioned above qualified.

- 4.5 Gelligaer Community Council has raised an objection to the removal of the box at Glan y Nant because of the level of usage (102 calls in the last 12 months). They have made this comment directly to BT and if their objection is not upheld they have expressed a wish to adopt the box. BT have noted the objection pending this Council's reply.
- 4.6 In view of the limited response to the consultation process, and the difficulties the Council would face in objecting to their removal because of the low usage levels it would be hard to justify their retention. The intention would be to remove the boxes permanently. It is recommended that no objections are raised. However, the objections raised by Gelligaer Community Council should be passed on to BT.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no equalities implications in respect of the Council's role and decision on this matter.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None.

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 None.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 That objections are raised on behalf of Gelligaer Community Council to the removal of the telephone box at Glan y Nant on the basis of its usage and its contribution to the character of the area.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 As set out in the report above.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and related acts and statutes.

Author: Tim Stephens - Interim Head of Planning

Consultees: All members, and clerks to the community councils.

Background Papers: None.