
BT's INVITATION TO "ADOPT" RED TELEPHONE BOXES

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Council has been notified of an invitation from BT to consider adopting red telephone kiosks within the local area. Responses to the consultation must be received by 23rd January 2010.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider the request made by BT and make suitable replies to the company in regard to identified telephone boxes in the Bute and Cowal area.

3.0 DETAIL

- 3.1 The Council has been approached by BT in regard to the company's scheme of having local communities "adopt" red telephone kiosks in their areas. The scheme has been devised following representation made by communities about the traditional phone boxes, which are seen as a British cultural design icon.
- 3.2 Where communities agree to adopt the boxes, BT will remove all telephony, leaving the kiosk to be put to whatever use the community wishes.
- 3.3 The cost of adopting a kiosk is only £1 per unit.
- 3.4 BT are asking for communities to consider this scheme before they move forward with any further requests for the removal of Public Call Boxes in the future, but the invitation paper is not clear on the future of those boxes where there is no local appetite to adopt them.
- 3.5 The specific boxes in Bute and Cowal included in the adoption invitation are:
- PCO at Lochhead Cottages, Ormidale, Glendaruel
 - Opposite the School at Glendaruel
 - Two boxes identified at Glendaruel (location not clear)

Ardlamont, Kames, Tighnabruaich
Post Office, Otter Ferry
Kiosk No 6 at Kilfinan
Sub Post Office, Clachaig
PCO Innellan (no location given)
Lodge Gates, Invercholain
PCO Strathlachlan
Nr Petrol Pump, St Catherines

3.6 Previous consultations from BT on the matter of removal of phone boxes have resulted in Members raising the following generic issues with the company:

- In remote and rural communities facilities to contact emergency services **MUST** be retained
- Before pay phones are removed from the area the mobile phone network coverage must be improved to provide 100% effective cover
- In light of the diminishing number of public pay phones in communities in general, the Government should be exploring the provision of a network of emergency phones which would enable local communities to always be able to contact the emergency services.

4 CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Members will wish to consider the potential impact of removal of phone boxes from some of our remote and rural locations, and may wish to consider the merit in retaining empty phone boxes rather than working facilities, particularly for older members of communities, and in locations where mobile phone coverage is not universal.

Policy:	In line with Council Policy to support vibrant communities.
Financial:	None
Personnel:	None
Equal Opportunities:	None

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