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BT Payphones  
PP 05A23  
Delta Point  
Wellesley Road  
CROYDON  
CR9 2YZ

Dear Sir/Madam,

### **Removal of public payphones**

This is the Moray Council's official response to the consultation on BT's proposed removal of 26 public payphones from Moray.

The Moray Council opposes the removal of all 26 of these phones. I have detailed the reasons for the Council's objection below.

#### Poor mobile phone reception

Eleven of the payphones are in areas which have poor or no mobile phone reception (see attached spreadsheet). We particularly oppose removals where there is poor mobile phone reception as this leaves the local community with no means of communication which may have dangerous ramifications in emergency situations.

#### Usage

BT have provided The Moray Council with usage figures for these phones (see attached spreadsheet). We note that many of the phones receive regular usage and are therefore obviously in demand by the local public. We note that five of the payphones have been used over one hundred times in the last month and one has been used over one thousand times (Mosstodloch Filling Station).

#### Rurality

The payphones proposed for removal are all in rural locations (with an average of 6km to the nearest alternative payphone). This will further isolate local people and will again be a danger in emergency situations. These areas rely on tourism and often payphones are a means to arrange travel and accommodation. In harsher winter months access to these payphones is imperative as delays and breakdowns occur.

#### School Transport

The Council also objects to the removals because of the proximity of the payphones to school transport areas. Drivers rely on the payphones in emergency situations,

especially where there is no mobile phone reception, as is the case in eleven of the payphones in Moray (see attached spreadsheet).

#### Rothiemay Post Office

The small, rural, town of Rothiemay which is earmarked for having its payphone removed has also been earmarked for having its post office reduced to an outreach service (with opening hours reducing from 21 hours a week to 5 hours a week). This is a double blow to the sustainability of this fragile rural community.

#### Community Council objections

The Moray Council invited local community councils and area forums to send in their comments on your proposals. **I have enclosed a copy of their responses**. We note the following:

- Drybridge Heritage Group requested that the historic red phone box (01542 832083) be donated to the Heritage Group. They pledged to pay for its maintenance. They did not object to the removal of the phone within the box.
- Kingston community group object to the removal of their historic red phone box (01343 870234).
- People in Orton area objected to the removal of their phone box (01343 880238) which they feel is useful in emergency situations for their nearby village hall which hosts public events.
- An objection was received to the removal of the two phone boxes in Cabrach (01466 700377 & 702246) by the driver of the children's school bus who relies on them in emergencies because there is no mobile phone reception in the area.
- An objection was received to the removal of the Knockando phone box (01340 810308) because the area is frequented by people taking part in outdoor sports so it is necessary in emergency situations.

Yours faithfully,

Alan MacBeth  
Development Officer  
The Moray Council