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Alan Pridmore
Ofcom
Riverside House
2a Southwark Bridge Road
London SE1 9HA

Dear Mr Pridmore

Universal Service Obligation Consultation

In response to the above consultation my Council is strongly of the view that the local veto over the removal of the last telephone call box in a particular locality should be retained. This is especially important in rural areas where a box, whilst only serving a relatively small community, may be the only one within a very large area.

In relation to who in local government should have the veto, it is considered that this should be the lowest tier authority, i.e. the parish or town council, or if there is no parish council the district or unitary council.

Whilst not objecting to the principle of having guidelines on dealing with proposals to remove telephone boxes, there is concern that these could be set at levels of usage that would enable BT to remove virtually all rural boxes. Telephone boxes in rural areas are a vital public service and financial profitability should not be the determinant of whether or not they are retained.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. J. Lindsell'.

Peter Lindsell
Head of Development Policy
Development Services Department