

Additional comments:

I agree with the original issues of concern expressed to Ofcom in the 2011 consultation ie 382 relevant responses. 251 responses were opposed, 117 expressed concerns (principally in relation to the lack of an option for consumers to opt out of the scheme. In particular I note that only 14 responses were favourable. I am of the view that the principal issues raised by respondents remain to be appropriately addressed and the opt out system which involves stickering is inappropriate.:

I continue to have concerns about the security of valuable and confidential items left with neighbours; the mechanism to opt out from allowing items to be left with neighbours (technology should address this matter, not stickering); and the lack of clarity as to who would constitute a neighbour;

While Royal Mail have agreed to take legal responsibility for items, what is the position regarding 'signed for' mail that might subsequently be mislaid or for some reason not be delivered to the addressee in time (communications from solicitors, banks etc) or intact? These issues remain to be fully addressed and resolved. I also wish to express concern about the conduct of this consultation - the first I became aware of it was this morning - four days before close - when the royal mail leaflet arrived in the post. Furthermore, the poor performance of postal staff should not be the basis for any policy change - it should be dealt with as a training issue in order that royal mail may seek to improve performance and not transfer organisational responsibility to the customers. In turn customers should also be urged to consider their own responsibility re. delivery when ordering items such that deliveries might be made to other family members or work premises for example.

Question 1:Do you agree that Ofcom should grant approval to Royal Mail for the Delivery to Neighbour service? If not please explain your answer. :

No. However, given the leaflet put through my letterbox this morning it appears that the system is going ahead in any case, this is very poor practice in my view! I think it essential for the security of mail items that Royal Mail and not neighbours should take responsibility for the safe delivery of items to the addressee. I am not prepared to take responsibility for items left at my property for neighbours and I am very unhappy about the opt out proposal regarding affixing stickers to my letterbox at the front of my property indicating my unwillingness to do so. There should be a suitable technological solution to this matter in these days of digital communication.

Question 2:Are there other consequences following the roll out of the service across the UK that we have not included in our assessment? If so, please explain.:

Has any estimate been made of the cost savings to Royal Mail under this scheme and may I have these details under Freedom of Information please? Publishing a six week consultation in Northern Ireland during the holiday period does not allow sufficient time for considered response. I was only aware of the trial and proposal to roll out the service today - 4 days prior to close of consultation period - because royal mail are telling me it is going ahead anyway. I am very concerned about the conduct of this consultation.

Question 3:Do you have any comments on the scope and wording of the proposed Notification and approval:

Recorded delivery items should not under any circumstances be included in a procedure which cannot guarantee security whether royal mail say they will take legal responsibility or not - we pay an additional rate of postage (and I am happy so to do) to guarantee that the letter arrives at the address intended and is signed for by a person who lives there or by an employee at a business. How can we guarantee that such correspondence has been delivered to the right person when 'somebody up the street' has signed for it?? I consider this a dereliction of duty and service and am very concerned that the proposed procedure is a further indicator that national standards in the UK are falling. I do appreciate that competitors are operating in this way but I can usually indicate my preferences re. delivery with online ordering or in the event complain to the appropriate authority with the carrier organisation and have it stopped.

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