

Emailed to: [RetailStakeholderTeam@ofgem.gov.uk](mailto:RetailStakeholderTeam@ofgem.gov.uk)

31 May 2023

**Ofgem Consultation on a framework for consumer standards and policy options to address priority customer service issues**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Ofgem consultation on framework for consumers standards and policy options to address priority customer service issues as well as to attend the stakeholder engagement session held on 23 May.

We support the proposals set out in Ofgem's consultation and the use of a consumer standards framework that combines a principle and rule-based approach to achieve better outcomes in both the domestic and non-domestic markets. It is important to ensure that measures are reviewed to make sure they are having a positive impact on the consumer experience and that evidence is drawn from a wide range of metrics to help inform that view of how the market is working. There has to be alignment of monitoring, policy, compliance, and enforcement activities to identify and prioritise areas of greatest consumer harm. (Q6/7)

We agree with the suggested outcomes of what good looks like for contact ease and support and advice for consumers who are struggling to pay. We think it's also important for suppliers to deliver what they have promised and look into a consumer's issue before chasing for debt. (Q1)

We support building on current standards to make it easier for consumers who need additional support to be able to contact their supplier. We think it is important for all consumers to be able to locate a contact number easily. We think it makes sense to include specific triggers such as missed payments or a consumer contacting a supplier to say they are struggling to pay to prompt suppliers to offer suitable debt repayment plans. We support the minimum repayment being removed. We think it will be important to review all measures to ensure they are leading to better outcomes for consumers. (Q2/3)

We agree with the proposal to introduce a new rule requiring suppliers to clearly display details of website hyperlinks to customer service data from a specified third party organisation such as Citizens Advice, prominently on their websites. Linking to customer service data is helpful for consumers to be able to compare not only on price. We also suggest that Ofgem considers how they future-proof this licence condition so that links to other third parties with useful information could be considered, as required. For example, this may be a third party relevant to a particular country or location or could be information from the Energy Ombudsman. (Q4)

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you would like further information regarding our response. Our response is not confidential.

**For more information regarding this consultation please contact:**

David Pilling  
Senior Leader – Policy and Public Affairs  
t: 07842 317974 e: [dpilling@ombudsman-services.org](mailto:dpilling@ombudsman-services.org)