

CAMPAIGN RESPONSE 2

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to respond to the findings of Ofgem's non-domestic market review, published on 26 July 2023.

Hospitality businesses like mine have been significantly affected by rising energy costs, the practices of energy suppliers and the lack of competition in the market. We're currently tied into an extremely excessive electricity contract we're currently tied to with [REDACTED]

Like many others in the hospitality & leisure sector, our utility contract for our [REDACTED] came to an end in the final quarter of 2022. We, therefore, had to renew at a time of prohibitively expensive out of contract rates, and so commercially had no other choice but to take on this contract and rely on Government support. Since that support has been radically reduced we no longer receive any, and our costs have spiralled. We are now paying well over 3 times year on year what we were. We approached [REDACTED] to ask for support, and their response was entirely unsympathetic and uncommercial.

As a result, Ofgem's findings and recommendations are very welcome, in particular the recognition of the challenges faced by hospitality businesses specifically and the measures Ofgem proposes to rectify these. In response to the consultation, we would like to make the below points which will help our business in the short, long and medium term:

- Ofgem should move rapidly to fulfil its recommendation to encourage suppliers to work with hospitality businesses to resolve issues many are facing with prices fixed at levels far above current market rates. This should include direct, immediate communication to suppliers from Ofgem.
- Urgently enact Ofgem's proposed changes to offer greater transparency to customers, deliver more timely responses to customer complaints and drive better practice in setting deemed rates.
- Deliver wider access to the energy ombudsman to redress the imbalance of power between energy suppliers and businesses, which currently lies too heavily with the suppliers.
- Put in place measures to prevent the blacklisting of entire sectors, particularly hospitality, as this dramatically reduces competition and unfairly penalises businesses.
- Improve regulation of energy brokers, including extending protections to more businesses, the introduction of a formal redress scheme and greater transparency around fees.

I hope the above feedback is helpful.

Yours sincerely,
[REDACTED]