

first:utility

Andrew Burgess
Head of Enforcement and Competition Policy
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets
9 Millbank
London
SW1P 3GE
11 May 2009

Dear Andrew

Direct Debit Arrangements Consultation

First Utility is a small independent supplier to consumer and business customers in the non half hourly market. Central to our business model is the use of smart meters to provide accurate and timely consumption information and billing. We bill customers on a monthly basis and collect outstanding amounts using variable direct debit.

We strongly believe that customers should only pay for the energy that they use, and that accurate billing based on actual meter reads is essential. From your investigations it is evident that yet again customers are on the receiving end of poor service (transparency and communication) from large suppliers who have to date been unwilling or unable to address the core problem in their industry – inaccurate billing.

First Utility supports the introduction of a standard licence condition which sets out the high level expectations with regard to customer payments and payment plans (option B). We also believe that this condition should apply to all suppliers and customer groups in the energy market.

Please contact me if you would like to discuss this matter further or you believe we can be of any further assistance.

Yours sincerely

Rob Hill
Head of Commercial

Tel: 0845 215 1814
Email: rob.hill@first-utility.com