

My comments are not confidential – but I wouldn't want my email address to be made public (please) as I'm only a member of the public – but hopefully we're allowed to comment...

I have to admit that I simply haven't been able to read all of the documents, but feel strongly enough about it that I have to share a few thoughts:

We're always being told to switch to get the best deal and, if only the pricing structure was simpler, customers probably would – and we wouldn't need all these comparison websites (can you really trust them? The insurance companies are often saying "we're not on comparison websites" - so that's certainly no easier)

When you buy a tin of beans you know how much it is. You can compare the four big supermarkets and make your choice – there's none of the nonsense like:

- "well it depends how many beans you're going to eat"
- "the first few spoonfuls are this much, and then it'll change to that much"
- "it's cheaper to eat beans in the summer than it is in the winter"
- "where do you live?"
- "are you paying cash or by card" (accepting someone somewhere in the process is paying if you use a card) or
- "we can do you a fixed price deal"

I really believe that as a minimum, the big six companies should be forced to provide the cost of their electricity and gas to Ofgem (and each other), and then a simple table can be displayed on everybody's website so that we can compare – without all the switching website nonsense. For example:

	<b>Best price for dual supply</b>			
	<b>Electricity</b>		<b>Gas</b>	
	Variable rate	Fixed rate	Variable rate	Fixed rate
BG	12.78p/unit	1 year 15p/unit	6.01p/kwh	2 years 9.55p/kwh
EDF	12.85p/unit	2 years 14p/unit	8.02p/kwh	1 year 8.72p/kwh
E.ON	12.80p/unit	1 year 18p/unit	6.53p/kwh	2 years 10.00p/kwh
npower	13.01p/unit	5 years 19p/unit	7.04p/kwh	3 years 17.50p/kwh
SSE	10.95p/unit	2 years 14p/unit	6.00p/kwh	2 years 9.45p/kwh
ScottishPower	11.66p/unit	3 years 16p/unit	7.01p/kwh	1 year 8.00p/kwh

I'm presuming that most people will have both a gas and electricity supply but, if that isn't the case, then there would need to be an extra table for gas and another for electricity, based on single supply prices (which in itself might be quite eye opening as a comparative tool?)

As a general rule I feel there are too many tariffs however if, for example, they want to offer more than one fixed rate period, then they can - providing the table shows the cheapest price per unit available

The companies seem to offer reductions for things like "paperless bills" and "paying by direct debit" – which they can still do, they just need to indicate that an additional discount (and how much) would be available if that's how you choose to pay/have your bill

They shouldn't be allowed to charge people who have a prepaid meter (who the media lead us to believe have a meter because they're less able to pay) anymore than the standard variable rate – that's just unfair

Neither should they be allowed to charge more in the winter than the summer – that's just ridiculous. How can it cost them more to burn coal (or whatever) to produce electricity in the winter than the summer?

I'm not a big fan of it costing you more for your energy in some parts of the country than others either – I thought we had a "national" grid? (I do recognise though that there must be cost implications for places like The Highlands and Islands, the Brecon Beacons etc – so maybe I'd have to compromise on that one)

Regards,