

Council	Agenda Item 91(e)
22 March 2012	Brighton & Hove City Council

NOTICE OF MOTION

GREEN GROUP

'END THE BIG SIX ENERGY FIX'

"This council notes with concern the oligopoly in the energy market, which sees excessive profiteering by the Big Six energy suppliers who control more than 99% of the market. *(i)

It also notes an OFGEM report that the Big Six are increasing the margins on their bills above the increase in fossil fuel price rises, and that a recent think-tank report found the Big Six overcharge as many as 5.6 million customers through their pricing policies. Furthermore, complex pricing systems mean many people, often the most vulnerable, are stuck on tariffs that don't offer them the best deal. As a result, the poor pay more.

This is a particular concern for Brighton & Hove, where many homes are not energy efficient and the number of households living in fuel poverty has increased during the last three years - mainly as a result of the price of domestic energy almost doubling during this period.

This council therefore resolves to:

- Join Friends of the Earth, Oxfam, the NUT, War on Want, and Church Action on Poverty among others, in supporting the 'End the Big Six Energy Fix' campaign.
- Ask the City Council's Chief Executive to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Secretary of State for the Department of Energy and Climate Change urging them to consider the following actions, supported by a majority of voters in a recent poll: *(ii)
 - o Impose a levy on the Big Six and ring-fence the proceeds for investment in home insulation and energy efficiency programmes, lifting the poorest out of fuel poverty and creating thousands of jobs.
 - o Give OFGEM the power to cap and control energy. Any price cap could be linked to the wholesale price of energy to make energy costs fairer.
 - o Launch an independent public inquiry into the Big Six energy companies in order to identify other market reforms that could help make energy prices fairer, reduce fuel poverty and increase trust between consumers and companies."

Proposed by: Cllr Ollie Sykes

Seconded by: Cllr Bill Randall

Supported by: Cllrs Bowden, Buckley, Davey, Deane, Duncan, Follett, Hawtree, Jarrett, Jones, Kennedy, A Kitcat, J Kitcat, Littman, Mac Cafferty, Phillips, Powell, Rufus, Shanks, Summers, Wakefield, West.

Notes

- (i) *Department for Energy and Climate Change figures on market share.*
- (ii) *A YouGov poll commissioned by Compass and Friends of the Earth found that:*
 - *71% of voters support a levy on the profits on the Big Six.*
 - *77% of voters support the money raised from a levy being spent on home insulation and energy efficiency measures to remove people from fuel poverty.*
 - *And an overwhelming 86% of voters support an independent public inquiry.*