

<b>Council</b>	<b>Agenda Item 52(d)</b>
29 January 2009	Brighton & Hove City Council

## **NOTICE OF MOTION**

### **LABOUR GROUP**

#### **CONDEMN UNFAIR PREPAYMENT METER ENERGY PRICES**

Since being appointed to the Department of Energy and Climate Change, Ed Miliband has made tackling unfair fuel pricing one of his main priorities.

Ed Miliband MP (Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change) warned,

"The recent Ofgem report found that millions of vulnerable customers were losing out who were on pre-payment meters, off the gas grid, or served by companies that used to be the local monopoly.

"There can be no excuse for these practices, and unless all energy companies accept their responsibility for ending them, we will use our powers to do so."

Energy regulator Ofgem and the National Housing Federation have recently highlighted the unjustified overcharging for energy of those not on gas mains and those with prepayment meters.

The National Housing Federation report stated that customers using these meters typically paid £150 more a year than those paying by direct debit, and around £60 more than those who paid quarterly by cash or cheque.

This motion asks that all members of the council;

- Welcome Ed Miliband's objectives when he calls for energy companies to act more responsibly.
- Support tougher action, in the form of legislation if energy companies fail to fairly regulate their energy prices, and refuse to stop targeting the most vulnerable members of our community.
- Support the positive action taken by companies like Scottish Power who have already moved their prepayment tariffs in line with all other price plans.
- Welcome the increase in Winter Fuel Allowance in 2008 which ensured that all people over 60 received up to £250 and up to £400 for people over 80.
- Welcome action by energy companies that have set up energy trusts or charities, such as British Gas energy trust and EDF energy trust which offer financial assistance and advice to low income families and individuals that are struggling to pay their bills.

- Support the government-funded Warm Front scheme which aims to make homes warmer and more energy-efficient, by providing packages of insulation and heating improvements up to the value of £2,700 (or £4,000 if oil central heating is recommended).

Proposed by: Cllr Anne Meadows

Seconded by: Cllr Mo Marsh

Supported by: Cllrs Gill Mitchell, Christine Simpson, Jeane Lepper, Warren Morgan, Juliet McCaffery, Les Hamilton, Pat Hawkes