

Emailed to: debt.review@ofcom.org.uk

12 May 2022

Consultation: Treating vulnerable customers fairly guide – proposals to amend the guide to help ensure customers in debt or struggling to pay are treated fairly.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Ofcom's consultation on proposals to amend the guide to help ensure that customers in debt or struggling to pay are treated fairly.

Question 1: Do you agree with the proposed revisions to our guide? Please provide your views with supporting evidence.

We agree with the proposed revisions to the guide. We think that the proposals made, particularly in section 4.51 – 4.59, will help to provide clarity to communication providers on what best practice looks like and act fairly when a consumer is in debt or struggling to pay. Emphasising the support and advice they can offer, strengthening links to debt advice organisations as well as ensuring they communicate through the right channels for each consumer will be important, especially as consumers deal with the cost-of-living crisis. It is sensible to recommend limiting the use of service restrictions as a means of effecting payment where possible, particularly where this may exacerbate already difficult circumstances. We also think that it is sensible for providers to be pro-active in informing consumers of any available social tariffs and eligibility criteria.

Although the General Conditions are not being amended at this time, we think it is sensible to continue to monitor the extent to which providers treat financially vulnerable customers fairly and give them the support they need and keep this approach under review. We will continue to provide any data and insights in this area.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you would like further information regarding our response. Our response is not confidential.

For more information regarding this consultation please contact:

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