



Adrian Essex <omotng@gmail.com>

Berkeley's retrospective charges briefing to the WDCO Executive Committee

6 messages

**Adrian Essex** <omotng@gmail.com>

5 October 2023 at 09:59

To: Michael.Pamment@berkeleygroup.co.uk

Bcc: Kalu Amogu <akamogu@hotmail.com>, andrea Anderson <andrea.anderson9@hotmail.com>, "Phil.cookewdco@outlook.com" <phil.cookewdco@outlook.com>, Jackie Myers <jackiemyers68@gmail.com>, William Sheehy <williamsheehy@outlook.com>, "Leonora.williams@gmail.com" <leonora.williams@gmail.com>, Kristina Zagar <k_zagar@yahoo.co.uk>, Roda Hassan <roda.hassan@publicvoice.london>, Simon Slater <simon.slater@publicvoice.london>, Oonagh Gormley <oonagh_gormley@hotmail.com>, Hilary Britton <hcbritton@aol.com>, Cathy Garnier-Ramirez <cathynoulondon@hotmail.com>

Michael

As a member of the WDCO executive I received a forwarded copy of the briefing you sent to the Executive.

I am responding here as a private individual. I do not have the authority of the WDCO board or its Executive to do so.

I believe that I can share your briefing more widely as it is not marked confidential, and will be of interest to Residents' Associations and others to whom I have addressed it using bcc:. I can let you have a full list of recipients if you wish.

My responses to your points are interspersed below.

The following set of requests were discussed at the Executive meeting and should have been sent to you already and will appear in the minutes.

We ask that BH/Insite

- *engage fully with residents' legitimate and strongly held concerns*
- *immediately suspend the 25% surcharge*
- *set out in detail the dates of changes to the gas supply contract and the rates achieved*
- *provide copies of the terms and conditions / leasehold clauses which justify this backdating of bills*
- *explain clearly how any bad debts might be dealt with*
- *improve the Insite service, especially in respect of usage statements*

Regards

Adrian

Dear Roda,

Thank you for the attached.

In regard to the Agenda item for Insite Billing (BH), I felt it would helpful to provide a summary update prior to the meeting this evening.

As everyone is aware, the utility markets have been very difficult to predict and quite volatile over the last 2 years. Wholesale supply costs have changed dramatically over different periods due to varying different factors, with the largest contributor the war in Ukraine. The decision had been made that while the market had been evolving and the pressure placed on billing agents, that any increase in gas costs would not be passed on to residents straight away and we would wait for the market to settle before reconciliation took place.

Once Berkeley homes have struck a deal with the market there is no volatility until the contract ends. Volatility should not be a factor in your dealings with residents. By entering into a contract you effectively settled the market for a time. This was not a good decision. Who made this decision, and how was it passed on to residents?

Subsequently, Insite have recently written to residents across both phase 1 and 2 to advise that the reconciliation of the differing heat tariff periods had now concluded, following the reconciliation Insite have applied any under collection of the supply costs for the period.

What reconciliation? A reconciliation occurs when two or more different approaches to a calculation lead to two or more different results. Reconciliation is a euphemism for retrospectively applying charges.

The decision behind this strategy had been due to a number of different factors, with the first being that the market difficulties outlined above made it difficult to predict how cost would increase/decrease during supply contract renewals. The other had been the sheer volume of tariff reviews and reconciliations required by billing agents across the industry. To place this in perspective, Woodberry has 1600 properties that require reconciliation, and is just one scheme in 100s (perhaps check this) that Insite look after.

The number of dwellings is surely irrelevant. Insite does not carry out a price calculation for each dwelling but for each building. The calculation for each building is predefined and straightforward. Once the new figures have been arrived at Insite simply applies to the Pay as You Go meters. No one is asking you to make predictions.

To mitigate large heat bills and avoid constant changes to tariffs, the decision was made to reconcile the supply following the market somewhat stabilising. This has been communicated with residents as we have moved through this process, for transparency I have attached our comms timeline that outlines the changes in tariff costs as well.

Delaying the application of the revised charges does nothing to mitigate costs, it merely delays their application. Indeed, the most effective form of mitigation for most residents would be to turn the thermostat down or to reduce the number of hours of heating, moves we could only make if we were aware of the actual price changes. The delay has for many people done the opposite of mitigation, it has increased the amount spent on heating.

We will be arranging surgeries with residents from w/c 16th October, with Insite and BH representatives in attendance to discuss any outstanding queries or concerns.

Kind Regards,

Michael

Michael Pamment
Estates Manager - Berkeley Homes NEL

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Adrian Essex
07970705411

Onagh Gormley <oonagh_gormley@hotmail.com>
To: Adrian Essex <omotng@gmail.com>

5 October 2023 at 12:38

Excellent. I think the last point is our strongest - by not warning us that prices went up four months previously, we had no opportunity to change our usage behaviour. This is the part I think may be illegal - they effectively increased the price without telling us.

From: Adrian Essex <omotng@gmail.com>
Sent: 05 October 2023 09:59
To: Michael.Pamment@berkeleygroup.co.uk <Michael.Pamment@berkeleygroup.co.uk>
Subject: Berkeley's retrospective charges briefing to the WDCO Executive Committee

[Quoted text hidden]

hcbritton <hcbritton@aol.com>
To: Adrian Essex <omotng@gmail.com>

5 October 2023 at 13:27

Thanks Adrian. Very useful to see that. I am in Japan at present and so can only watch from a distance but did you also sent this to Oonagh,? Regards, Hilary

Sent from my Galaxy



----- Original message -----

From: Adrian Essex <omotng@gmail.com>
Date: 05/10/2023 17:59 (GMT+09:00)
To: Michael.Pamment@berkeleygroup.co.uk
Subject: Berkeley's retrospective charges briefing to the WDCO Executive Committee

[Quoted text hidden]

Adrian Essex <omotng@gmail.com>
To: hcbritton <hcbritton@aol.com>

5 October 2023 at 13:34

Hilary
I enjoyed Japan very much when I was there. I hope you are enjoying it too.

Oonagh did get a copy, as did Cathy from the other KSS and every member of the Exec. I also posted it on Parkra website with a link from the stropky WhatsApp group.

A
[Quoted text hidden]
--
Adrian Essex
07970705411

Cathy Garnier-Ramirez <cathynoulondon@hotmail.com>
To: Adrian Essex <omotng@gmail.com>
Cc: James Warren <jamescampbellwarren@gmail.com>

5 October 2023 at 21:23

Hi Adrian,
Thank you for cc'ing me in this email.
Please keep us posted of any development.
KSS1 RA should have a meeting with WDCO soon.
We need to decide our next step.
So far BH responses have been really strong and showed no possible negotiation.
A letter has been sent to the CMA with the RA support.
We hope that all this noise will give some results.
Kind regards
Cathy
Sent from my iPhone

On 5 Oct 2023, at 09:59, Adrian Essex <omotng@gmail.com> wrote:

[Quoted text hidden]

Hilary Britton <hcbritton@aol.com>
To: Adrian Essex <omotng@gmail.com>

6 October 2023 at 01:43

Thanks Adrian.

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