



Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee

House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA

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Chris Laverty, Trevor O'Sullivan and Helen Dale

Grant Thornton UK LLP

30 Finsbury Square

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31 March 2020

Dear Chris, Trevor and Helen,

I am writing to you as the administrators of Caversham Finance Ltd in relation to BrightHouse. I am concerned that as administrators that you consider the position of vulnerable BrightHouse customers who may struggle to make payments if their incomes are adversely affected during the coronavirus crisis. As you will appreciate, even if some customers are furloughed they may see a drop of 20% in their incomes which could make it impossible for them to make payments, especially if they are in low paid jobs. In addition, it should be noted that BrightHouse customers, as with many customers of other rent-to-own companies, are already facing high APR interest rates (69.9% for BrightHouse) for their household goods. This means that such customers, whose goods are much more expensive than if they had acquired them from cheaper alternatives, are already facing financial problems.

Please can you confirm the following:

- You will not use bailiffs to seize goods during the present crisis?
- Protections provided by the Financial Conduct Authority for vulnerable customers will be maintained, such as dealing fairly with customers in arrears or default, forbearance and due consideration and proportionality?
- You will consider fairly the amount of redress monies owed to BrightHouse customers when considering creditors' claims

Could I also ask that you signpost BrightHouse customers who are experiencing problems with making payments to Citizens Advice? Support and reassurance for vulnerable customers is particularly important during the present crisis.

I would appreciate a reply by Monday 6 April.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Rachel Reeves." The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, elegant 'R' and a trailing flourish.

Rachel Reeves MP

Chair of the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee