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FROM:

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REF: ADDITIONAL CHARGES

Thank you for the copy of the Consultation document. It makes interesting reading. However, there is one noticable omission and that is the lack of reference to customers who pay their bills by B.T. Payment Card.

It is fair to say that some customers who have a B.T. payment card will still pay their bills late. This may be deliberate or it may be due to lack of available cash when a bill is received.

It is also fair to say that the decision by B.T. to make a charge for customers who do not pay their bills by Direct Debit was ill-conceived, badly thought out, and generally assumed that all customers not on a Direct Debit mandate were bad payers. Big mistake.

People who habitually delay or avoid payment of bills will not be deterred by such a charge, and it is my opinion that this scheme was devised to raise more money for B.T. and not as a way to coerce customers into paying by Direct Debit. The claim to target late and non-payers is just a smokescreen to disguise the actual reason for the levy.

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persistent late and non-payers. Disconnection of the phoneline.

My own situation is that I make weekly payments at my local Post Office by B.T. Card and these payments ensure that when my phone bill is due there is enough money to cover the bill.

In fact when I receive my bill it is already paid and I am informed that I am in credit.

This money is already in B.T.'s possession and requires no transaction effort at all on B.T.'s part so I cannot understand what costs they refer to when processing cash payments.

I would like them to give a detailed account of what costs are involved and how these costs are arrived at.

Also, because they are in receipt of my money before the phone bill is due they must be accruing interest on this money which is not passed onto me via reductions on my phone bill.

I am incensed by the statement made in the Companies response in 'Charges if you don't pay by Direct Debit' Page 3 of the consultation document. Page 4, paragraph 3 I quote 'Customers who don't pay by Direct Debit are more likely to end up not paying at all' unquote.

This is a disgraceful comment and if it is attributed to BT it should elicit an apology to all the B.T. customers who do pay on time.

I have a press article that I cut from a newspaper that says B.T. won a legal case that allows it to charge

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process cash payments, but you already know my thoughts on that. I would hope that this decision will be overturned and that B.T. are ordered to cease making this unwanted and unwarranted levy on many loyal customers, who, like myself have resisted many offers from rival companies to change suppliers.

Would it be too much to hope for that B.T. would be ordered to repay all the charges they have so far imposed.

This is the only argument I have with B.T. I am happy to pay for other items that are of benefit to me like serviced billing.

I hope these comments will be of some help to you and that the eventual outcome of the consultation will benefit the majority of genuine customers.

Yours etc.