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22 May 2025

## **Changes to payments for your energy invoices – Action Required by 21<sup>st</sup> June 2025**

Dear Sir / Madam,

We are writing to inform you of a change to the processing and payment of your energy invoices.

Currently your gas and electricity services are provided under Birmingham City Council's contract with West Mercia Energy (WME) and payments for these services are managed through the Council's finance system on your behalf.

However, from 31<sup>st</sup> August 2025, although your gas and electricity services will continue to be provided under the Council's contract with WME, this will no longer be managed through the Council's finance system and the Council will no longer process energy payments. As a result from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025, your school will be required to pay for its energy invoices directly to WME via Direct Debit.

Direct Debit is a simple and convenient way for you to pay invoices saving time and reducing administration costs as well as being a safe and secure method of payment.

### **The benefits of Direct Debit**

- **Reduced administration** - payments are made automatically, bills are never forgotten, lost in the post or delayed by postal problems and there's no risk of late payment charges.
- **Peace of mind** - Direct Debit is one of the safest and most reassuring ways of paying your bills - organisations which offer the Direct Debit scheme have to pass a careful vetting process, and are closely monitored by the banking industry.
- **Direct Debit Guarantee** - this protects you and your money and is offered by all banks and building societies that take part in the scheme. It provides:
  - An immediate money back guarantee from your bank in the event of an error in the payment of your Direct Debit.
  - Advance notice of the date and amount that will be collected.
  - The right to cancel at any time.

**Other features of Direct Debit**

- Actual amounts invoiced are collected so no under/over payment arises.
- Payment isn't collected until 28 days after the invoice date.
- Complete transparency; each invoice states when payment will be collected and an e-mail is sent prior to collection with a detailed breakdown.
- WME will not collect payment for disputed invoices until the issue has been resolved.
- WME will automatically provide refunds when your account is in credit.

A Direct Debit Instruction form is enclosed with this letter for your completion and return to WME, via email [finance@westmerciaenergy.co.uk](mailto:finance@westmerciaenergy.co.uk) by 21<sup>st</sup> June 2025.

Should you have any queries, or require further assistance regarding the direct debit collections, please contact WME directly using the email address above.

Your sincerely,

**The procurement service**