

5<sup>th</sup> June 2025

**RE: Energy Retail Code of Practice review - Response from Community Information & Support Merri-bek**

We welcome the opportunity to comment on the Energy Consumer Reforms proposed by the ESC. As a local organisation working with people experiencing financial and social disadvantage, we support changes that make energy more affordable and fairer. We believe that these changes are driven by a genuine desire to help people experiencing financial hardship, and applaud the work of the ESC to this end.

For individuals and families doing it tough, access to simple, fair and affordable energy is not just a financial issue, it impacts their health, wellbeing, and dignity.

In particular, we support:

- Automatically giving customers experiencing payment difficulty the best available energy deal, with the option to opt out
- Making it simpler and easier for people to switch plans
- Helping customers access the concessions they are eligible for
- Including contact details for help services like EWOV on energy bills
- Phasing out old contracts with unfair conditions or penalties

These reforms would help reduce cost pressures and support the wellbeing of the communities we work with.

Yours sincerely,

Claire Kartsidimas

Branch Coordinator

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