

*These notes refer to the Utilities Act 2000 (c.27)  
which received Royal Assent on 28th July 2000*

# **UTILITIES ACT 2000**

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## **EXPLANATORY NOTES**

### **SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND**

#### ***Consumer provisions***

- a new principal objective for the Gas and Electricity Markets Authority to protect the interests of consumers, wherever appropriate, by promoting effective competition;
- a requirement for the Authority, in performing its functions, to have regard to the interests of low income consumers, the chronically sick, the disabled, pensioners and consumers in rural areas;
- powers for the Authority to impose financial penalties on utility companies for breaches of licence conditions and other specified statutory requirements;
- the establishment of an independent Gas and Electricity Consumer Council with the job of seeking to resolve complaints, providing information of use to consumers, and advocating the interests of all consumers to the regulatory authorities, Government, utility companies and anyone else whose activities can affect the interests of consumers;
- powers for the Council to publish utility information where this is in the interests of consumers and does not seriously and prejudicially affect persons to whom it relates;
- a requirement for price-regulated gas and electricity utilities to disclose any links between directors' pay and customer service standards;