

# OpenVoiceNews

Transparent. Unbiased. Yours.

## UK Government Criticised Over High Energy Costs in Moray

August 18, 2025

— Categories: General News



The UK Government has been criticised by Moray West, Nairn and Strathspey MP Graham Leadbitter over what he describes as “cripplingly expensive” energy bills in the north of Scotland, warning the situation threatens key community facilities.

Concerns were raised after Moray Leisure Centre, which operates Elgin Ice Rink, announced it would shut the rink on 4 August due to soaring energy costs. The rink is the only one of its kind in Moray and serves local families, curling teams, ice hockey clubs, and figure skaters.

Following public pressure, the closure has been described as temporary, with a planned reopening on 5 October while discussions continue.

Mr Leadbitter wrote to Energy Secretary Ed Miliband on 21 July, stressing that the facility's energy bills had doubled in recent years. He said the closure would leave residents with no nearby options, as the next available rinks are in Inverness and Aberdeen.

"Younger users often practice before school, which would be unsustainable or impossible if they had to travel to Inverness or Aberdeen," he warned.

The MP also called on the Government to address what he described as "excessive" regional energy costs, which he said are among the highest in the UK, despite the north of Scotland being a major producer of clean energy.

A reply from Dr Miatta Fahnbulleh, Minister for Energy Consumers, was issued on 13 August. While expressing sympathy for the situation, the Minister said the Government could not intervene in specific contracts and advised the leisure centre to continue discussions with its supplier. The response also highlighted the Government's commitment to clean power by 2030 and noted that new opportunities and partnerships were being explored.

Mr Leadbitter criticised the reply as inadequate. "The response I've received from the UK Government tells me they have no intention of taking ownership for their failures that every day harm businesses and homes in this part of the country more than anywhere else," he said.

Calling the rink a "vital local facility," the MP said all levels of government should be working together to keep it open. He also argued it was unfair that communities producing surplus clean energy face some of the highest bills in the UK.

Mr Leadbitter confirmed he will continue to press both local and national government in the hope that a long-term solution can be found.