

Case: 201103260, Business Stream Ltd
Sector: Scottish Government and devolved administration
Subject: leakage
Outcome: not upheld, action taken by body to remedy, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C owns a small business. He complained that Business Stream failed to investigate a leaking pipe properly and delayed in acting, which resulted in him receiving excessive bills for water use. Mr C had noted that his bills substantially increased when a water meter was installed at his premises and when he took this up with Business Stream, he says he was told that this would 'settle down'. Mr C said that there was a delay in investigating the matter properly and, when a plumber he engaged investigated, he identified the problem and laid a new pipe. After this, the bill from Business Stream reduced greatly.

We did not uphold this complaint. We looked at the evidence and the comments provided by Business Stream, and took advice from one of the Ombudsman's advisers. We found that there was a delay in checking and confirming that there was no leak on the meter installation. This established that the problem was not the responsibility of Business Stream but of the owner. However, the most significant contributing factor to such a high bill was the length of time that Mr C was aware of the high charge and high consumption before formally raising his concerns.

As part of our investigation, we also looked at the way Business Stream had handled Mr C's formal complaint. In responding to our enquiries, they confirmed that there was no evidence to show that this was dealt with in line with their service standards (ie to give a written response to a complaint within five working days). As they, therefore, credited £20 to Mr C's account, we did not make any recommendation about this.