

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201201210, Business Stream Ltd  
**Sector:** water  
**Subject:** debt recovery / payment fees  
**Outcome:** some upheld, action taken by body to remedy, recommendations

### Summary

Mr C complained on behalf of a golf club about Business Stream. He complained that Business Stream had sent the club an unexpected bill, after an audit identified that they had never been charged for drainage and wastewater charges.

During our investigation, Business Stream told us that the charges were for services that the golf club had used, but for which they had not previously been charged. They said that the club had benefited from this, as they were not being charged for part of the period involved. However, despite Mr C's request, we found that Business Stream had not in fact provided him with a full explanation about how the problem had occurred.

Part of Mr C's complaint was that that Business Stream rejected his offer to repay the money over four years. Business Stream told us that 24 months is the longest period they offer for repayment and that they were acting in line with the relevant policy on this.

In order to try to resolve the matter, we asked Business Stream if they could make an exception in this case and extend the repayment period to 36 months. Business Stream responded to our request saying that they would be willing to extend the repayment period to 36 months due to the relatively small balance, and in order to assist the club. They said this although this action was outwith their normal process, they wished to resolve the issue and hoped this action went some way to achieve this.

### Recommendations

We recommended that Business Stream Ltd:

- remind staff that they should provide customers with satisfactory explanations about why their bills have increased when such information is requested; and
- apologise to Mr C for their failure to provide him with sufficient detail about how the problem occurred, in their response to his complaint.