

SPSO decision report

Case: 201202654, Business Stream
Sector: water
Subject: debt recovery / payment fees
Outcome: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

Ms C runs a dog grooming business from home. She complained that Business Stream phoned her and asked for details of her business without giving reasons for the call, then emailed her saying that they were the licensed provider for the water and waste water services for the business element of her property. She then received demands for payment for 2011 to 2013. Ms C complained of delay in notifying her that she was liable for these services, and that the charges were inaccurate and Business Stream would not engage reasonably with her to resolve the matter. Ms C complained also about the handling of her complaint.

Our investigation found that, although there was a gap between the date the account was opened and their first contact with Ms C, there was no delay on Business Stream's part in processing and issuing their invoices. While the unexpected bill clearly caused Ms C concern, there was nothing to suggest that the charges were incorrect, and we did not uphold her complaints about this. We did find that there were instances where Business Stream failed to handle Ms C's complaint in accordance with their service standards, and so we upheld this aspect of her complaint.

Recommendations

We recommended that Business Stream:

- apologise for the failure to respond to Ms C in accordance with their service standards; and
- reduce Ms C's account as compensation for these shortcomings.