

SPSO decision report

Case: 201203392, Business Stream
Sector: water
Subject: charging method / calculation
Outcome: upheld, with recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained that Business Stream delayed in reading the water meter in the business premises he rented and in submitting an account for their services. Mr C said that he had budgeted for this but when the bill arrived, he was shocked at the amount being demanded. He had occupied the premises since June 2011 but it was spring 2012 before Business Stream read the water meter, and the bill was issued in July 2012.

We upheld Mr C's complaint, as Business Stream had already acknowledged that there had been delay in opening the account after the meter was read, and in recognition of this they had removed the recovery charge that had been applied to the account. However, Business Stream were satisfied that the charges were correct. Our investigation found that Business Stream had not been notified when Mr C took over the lease of the premises, and they had only become aware of this in December 2011. There had been delay after this, but there was no requirement or target time for Business Stream to issue an invoice after the meter was read. Business Stream were, however, able to confirm that a similar situation should not now arise because of improvements to their service.

Recommendations

We recommended that Business Stream:

apologise; and

provide confirmation that the procedures were reviewed and information about any training issues or improvements that have resulted from the review.