

SPSO decision report

Case: 201205252, Business Stream

Sector: water

Subject: incorrect billing

Outcome: no decision reached

Summary

Mrs C complained about water charges. She said that, despite having told Business Stream in advance that the business for which she worked would be moving premises, there was a delay before they received the first bill for the new premises. That meant that the business was being charged for longer than would otherwise have been necessary, on a more expensive rate.

We explained to Mrs C why Business Stream could not backdate the charges in question (essentially, because of money that Business Stream themselves had paid in advance) but said that if there had been errors they might offer her an ex gratia payment. When we investigated this, Business Stream disputed that they had been told of the move in advance, and we found no evidence in their files of advance notification. However, they did acknowledge that, when they were told of the move, they did not open an account for the new premises for some months, which meant that Mrs C did not have the chance to apply earlier for charging at a more advantageous rate. In recognition of that, Business Stream offered her an ex gratia payment. We considered this to be a good outcome, and closed our file without coming to a decision on the complaint.