

SPSO decision report

Case: 201302899, Business Stream
Sector: water
Subject: charging method / calculation
Outcome: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained that Business Stream delayed issuing their invoice to him and was unhappy with their charges. Business Stream originally billed Mr C for water, waste water and drainage. However, when his landlord told them that Mr C paid water charges to him they amended their invoice to drainage charges only. Mr C was unhappy that the drainage charges were based on his property's rateable value rather than his actual usage.

In terms of the time taken to issue their invoice, Business Stream confirmed that their wholesaler, Scottish Water, had given them Mr C's details in December 2010. However, Business Stream did not take the necessary steps on receipt of this information and Mr C's account was not opened until November 2012, when they sent him an invoice backdated to December 2010.

Our investigation found that although Mr C might not have known that Business Stream were the default provider of water services, that did not in itself make their charges invalid. However, we saw no evidence that Business Stream took any significant action when they were given Mr C's details in December 2010 and on balance we upheld his complaint about the delay in issuing the invoice. In terms of charges, Business Stream showed us that they had acted in accordance with their policy by invoicing Mr C on the basis of his rateable value, and we did not uphold his second complaint.

Recommendations

We recommended that Business Stream:

- apologise to Mr C for the delay in issuing their initial invoice.