

SPSO decision report

Case: 201303428, Business Stream
Sector: water
Subject: meter reading
Outcome: upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained that Business Stream charged him for two meters in his business property. Business Stream had sent Mr C his first bill six months after he moved in. He noticed that there were two meters registered, which meant that he was paying two sets of fixed charges for them. He applied to have one of the meters removed, but was unhappy that this was only done six months later. Business Stream then charged him for the full period that the second meter was in place.

We found that there had been two separate water supplies to Mr C's property when he moved in and two meters were required to ensure that all of the consumption was captured. When Mr C applied to have the second meter removed, he was told that he would have to make changes to the internal pipework to ensure that all of the consumption was captured, as internal pipework is the responsibility of the property owner. Several visits were required to the property before it was agreed that the required changes had been done and the second meter could be removed.

We were satisfied that two meters had been required, as there were two separate water supplies before the internal pipework was changed. It was, therefore, reasonable for Business Stream to calculate Mr C's initial charges based on two meters. However, when Mr C applied to have the second meter removed, there were delays in progressing the application, and we upheld Mr C's complaint for this reason. In response to our enquiries, Business Stream agreed to waive the fixed charges for the second meter from the date Mr C applied for it to be removed.

Recommendations

We recommended that Business Stream:

- waive the fixed charges for the second meter from the date Mr C applied for this to be removed; and
- issue a written apology to him for the delays in taking action to have the second meter removed.