

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201304438, Business Stream  
**Sector:** water  
**Subject:** policy/administration  
**Outcome:** not upheld, no recommendations

### Summary

Mr C's house is behind, and next to, his business premises. He pays for domestic water usage through his council tax. Although he does not have a water connection to his business, Business Stream told him that he had to pay a water charge. Mr C complained that Business Stream were acting unreasonably, and that they did not respond reasonably to his representations.

We considered all the relevant information, including the complaints correspondence, a statement of Mr C's account, Business Stream's computerised records and their policy on dual use. We also made enquiries of Business Stream.

Our investigation found that both Mr C's business and domestic premises are separately rated and were publicly recorded as such. We also noted that commercial premises require access to water for health and safety purposes. Business Stream's policy is that where a property has both a rateable value notice and a separate council tax banding notice it is classed as 'dual-use premises'. Council tax charges should exist for the property, but charges are still applied by Business Stream on the full rateable value. Although Mr C considered this unfair and did not accept this explanation, we confirmed that he was being treated in accordance with Business Stream's policy and did not uphold his complaint.