

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201404222, Business Stream  
**Sector:** water  
**Subject:** policy/administration  
**Outcome:** some upheld, recommendations

### Summary

Mr C operates his business from three units in a business centre. He contacted Business Stream when he moved in and, following a visit, an account was opened and he set up a direct debit to pay monthly bills. He told us that it was agreed with Business Stream that he would be billed for all three premises in one invoice. Some three years later Business Stream invoiced him separately for one of the units but then cancelled this, having been advised by Mr C that he was being billed for all three units. In 2013, Business Stream invoiced Mr C for outstanding services provided to two of his units since 2010. Mr C believed that he should not have to pay for the error in 2010 when his account was set up. He also complained of delay in the handling of his complaint.

From our investigation we found that there was evidence of the account being opened for one unit, but no evidence of an agreement to pay for the three units under one account, so we did not uphold this complaint. However, we did uphold Mr C's complaint about how his enquiries and complaint were dealt with. We found there were periods when there was no action, updates were not provided, and there was a failure to send a form to Scottish Water within a reasonable time, as well as delay in responding to the complaint.

### Recommendations

We recommended that Business Stream:

- formally apologise and credit Mr C's account with a sum in recognition of the poor handling of the matter;
- review their handling and credit Mr C's account with 50 percent of the difference between the unmeasured rateable value water charges and his reassessed charges for the appropriate period, if it is established that there were unexplained delays by them; a
- ensure that lessons learned from review of the case are passed on to staff.