

SPSO decision report

Case: 201406272, Business Stream
Sector: water
Subject: incorrect billing
Outcome: not upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained to us that Business Stream had not disconnected his water supply, and that he had been charged for a water service that he did not need or use.

We reviewed the communication between Mr C and Business Stream and we found that Mr C was liable for water charges, and that this was set out in his lease. We reviewed the evidence from phone conversations Mr C had with Business Stream, and found that Mr C did ask for a disconnection, but he then decided not to pursue this.

However, we were critical of Business Stream's handling of the situation. They were not clear about what was happening with his account, and they did not provide him with the charging information he needed to make a clear decision on his water services, despite several opportunities to do so. We were also critical that they did not do more to facilitate access to Mr C's property when it would have been appropriate to do so.

Recommendations

We recommended that Business Stream:

- remove the second added recovery charge from Mr C's account, in addition to the existing offer to remove the recovery charge and make the ex gratia payment; and
- consider providing customers with more comprehensive information on the costs and options in relation to the disconnection of water services, including information about the charges still applicable during temporary disconnection, and how to request a disconnection.