

SPSO decision report

Case: 201407445, Business Stream
Sector: water
Subject: incorrect billing
Outcome: not upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained that, although the water supply to his business premises was capped by his plumber when he took entry and, therefore, he used no water, he was still billed for water charges. He was further aggrieved that, although he invited someone to come and inspect the situation, Business Stream failed to arrange such a visit.

The complaint was investigated, and all the relevant information and documentation were given careful consideration. We found that although Mr C had been at the relevant address for a number of years, it was only relatively recently that Business Stream established this, and an account was opened and backdated. It had been Mr C's responsibility to advise them. Even although the supply had been capped, there was still a live connection into the premises which could be reinstated at any time. Mr C was, therefore, responsible for all water charges back to the date of his account opening. While he also complained that Business Stream had failed to arrange for the site to be visited, it was confirmed that they had asked Scottish Water to do so. However, on the grounds that it could be seen from records that no permanent disconnection had been made, Scottish Water considered it unnecessary. Only a permanent disconnection would have removed Mr C's liability for water charges. The complaint was not upheld.

However, in light of the delay Business Stream took in explaining the matter to Mr C, we made a recommendation that Business Stream extend the period in which Mr C has to repay the amount due.

Recommendations

We recommended that Business Stream:

- give sympathetic consideration to extend the period in which to repay the amount due.