

SPSO decision report

Case: 201200442, Business Stream Ltd
Sector: scottish government and devolved administration
Subject: charging method / calculation
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained that Business Stream failed to let her know when there was an excessive increase in the amount of water they had recorded that she was using on her farm. She said that her complaint about this was not dealt with sympathetically because, although she had queried her bill, a reminder with an additional charge was sent. Mrs C also complained about the charge that she was quoted upfront for the disconnection of one of two meters serving her property.

We did not uphold her complaints. From our investigation we found that, while the statement of account did record that there was a sharp increase in water usage from the bill issued in the previous quarter, Business Stream had carried out an actual once-a-year meter reading three days before the contested bill was issued. They explained that it was open to customers to carry out their own checks on usage by taking and submitting their meter readings.

Further, it was evident that Business Stream had provided Mrs C with the correct information about the circumstances in which a rebate could be given under their 'burst allowance policy' and why this did not apply in her case. They had responded to her complaint about the issue of a reminder for payment, and had not applied an additional charge.

With regard to the disconnection charges, from checking Business Stream's website it appeared possible that the amount that Mrs C said that she had been quoted for the upfront charges would have been for disconnection of both her meters. In responding to her complaint, they had directed Mrs C to the website. There was no evidence that Business Stream had given Mrs C misinformation about the cost of the deposit, and they have no discretion about the charges as these are based on the cost of providing this service. We directed Mrs C to the website to help her decide whether she wished to proceed with having one of her meters disconnected.