

SPSO decision report

Case: 201405951, Business Stream
Sector: water
Subject: policy/administration
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained that Business Stream had unreasonably charged his bowling club a return to sewer rate (the percentage of water that is returned to the sewer) of 95 percent. Mr C had applied for this to be reduced after finding out that another bowling club in the area had been given a lower return to sewer rate, which reduced their water charges. Business Stream reduced Mr C's bowling club's return to sewer rate to 75 percent from the date on which Mr C applied for this. Mr C considered that the bowling club had been paying the wrong rate and that this should have been backdated.

We considered Scottish Water's Wholesale Charges Scheme for 2014/15, which had been approved by the Water Industry Commission for Scotland. This stated that return to sewer allowances apply from the date on which the water provider had demonstrated to Scottish Water's satisfaction that such an allowance was justified. It stated that this was the point at which a full application, including all relevant information, was received. We also considered Business Stream's return to sewer allowance policy. This stated that the award of a return to sewer allowance does not mean that the customer has previously been incorrectly billed, but is a deviation from the standard billing. It says that it will only ever be applied going forward and not backdated. In view of all of this, we found Business Stream had acted in line with their policy and we did not uphold the complaint.