

# WATRS

## Water Redress Scheme

### ADJUDICATOR'S FINAL DECISION SUMMARY

Adjudication Reference: WAT/X956

Date of Final Decision: 3 July 2022

#### Party Details

**Customer:** The Customer

**Company:** The Company

#### Complaint

The customer says the company has overcharged her for sewerage services. She seeks that the company bill her correctly.

#### Response

The company denies overcharging the customer. It confirms it has charged her as she expected; it could have explained this better previously.

#### Findings

The evidence shows the company provided its services to the standard to be reasonably expected.

#### Outcome

The company does not need to take any further action.

The customer must reply by 1 August 2022 to accept or reject this decision.

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# ADJUDICATOR'S FINAL DECISION

Adjudication Reference: WAT/X956

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## Case Outline

### The customer's complaint is that:

- She believes the company has billed her incorrectly and provided a poor customer service.
- The company says she has used 66 cubic metres of water over a six month period from May to November 2021, whereas her water supplier says she has only used 59 cubic metres over a whole year from November 2020 to November 2021.
- She seeks that the company bill her correctly.
- She has not commented on the company's response.
- In comments on a preliminary decision the customer refers to emails provided to WATRS which evidence incorrect billing; notes the company accepted errors in its defence and; maintains the company did bill her for 66 cubic metres of water over just six months.

### The company's response is that:

- **XX** Water ("**XX**") provide water services to the customer. The company provides sewerage services. It bills the customer based on meter readings provided by **XX**.
- There is a main meter and a sub meter at the customer's address. **XX** take the main meter reading and deduct the sub-meter reading to calculate the customer's usage.
- Its sewerage charges are based on 90% of the water supplied plus a standing charge for surface water drainage.
- It issued an invoice in June 2021 without deducting the sub meter reading. In July it apologised, issued a £20.00 GSS payment and issued a corrected bill.
- For the period November 2020 to November 2021, it has billed the customer for 48 cubic metres. Over the same period, **XX** billed the customer for 59 cubic metres. It has billed less than **XX** as it only bills for 90% of water used.
- It could have explained this better to the customer and in January 2022 it paid her a further £20.00 GSS payment in recognition of this.

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- It has billed the customer correctly and provided suitable compensation for customer service failings.
- It denies the claim.

### How is a WATRS decision reached?

In reaching my decision, I have considered two key issues. These are:

1. Whether the company failed to provide its services to the customer to the standard to be reasonably expected by the average person.
2. Whether or not the customer has suffered any financial loss or other disadvantage as a result of a failing by the company.

In order for the customer's claim against the company to succeed, the evidence available to the adjudicator must show on a balance of probabilities that the company has failed to provide its services to the standard one would reasonably expect and that as a result of this failure the customer has suffered some loss or detriment. If no such failure or loss is shown, the company will not be liable.

I have carefully considered all of the evidence provided. If I have not referred to a particular document or matter specifically, this does not mean that I have not considered it in reaching my decision.

### How was this decision reached?

1. I must consider the evidence available and reach a decision on the balance of probabilities.
2. The company has outlined in its defence where it previously accepted, apologised and provided remedies for poor service. I consider the company acted reasonably in taking such actions which occurred prior to the application to WATRS. Bearing these points in mind, the evidence does not show the company failed to provide its services to the standard to be reasonably expected.
3. The customer says the company has billed her incorrectly but she has not provided evidence which clearly shows that to be the case. The customer has provided CCWater documents and emails which show exchanges with the company. These show the company made efforts to

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explain it had billed the customer correctly. The company has provided a further explanation of its billing within its defence which appears to further support this.

4. The crux of the customer's complaint is that the company should have billed her for 59 cubic metres of water or less for the period November 2020 to November 2021. The company has now unequivocally confirmed that it has billed the customer for only 48 cubic metres of water used in that period.
5. On balance I am satisfied there is no longer any dispute about the customer's bills. The company has billed the customer as she wishes. Therefore, the evidence does not show the company failed to provide its services to the standard to be reasonably expected in this regard.
6. In the absence of any proven failing, the customer's claim is unable to succeed.
7. To address the comments received on a preliminary decision, I acknowledge the customer remains unhappy and maintains the company has billed her incorrectly. I have therefore reviewed the documents again and considered whether I need to change my decision.
8. The documents show that the company billed the customer for 127 cubic metres of water used from November 2020 to November 2021, however it then credited her the cost of 79 cubic metres. As a result the customer paid for 48 cubic metres over this period. I am satisfied the documents support the explanation given in the company's defence. Therefore, my decision remains the same.

#### **Outcome**

The company does not need to take any further action.

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## What happens next?

- This adjudication decision is final and cannot be appealed or amended.
- The customer must reply by 1 August 2022 to accept or reject this decision.
- When you tell WATRS that you accept or reject the decision, the company will be notified of this. The case will then be closed.
- If you do not tell WATRS that you accept or reject the decision, this will be taken to be a rejection of the decision.



J Mensa-Bonsu LLB (Hons) PgDL (BVC)  
**Adjudicator**

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