

The complaint

Mr L complains that Madison CF UK Limited trading as 118 118 Money gave him incorrect information about his account and reported adverse information on his credit file.

What happened

Mr L says he spoke to 118 118 Money about his account when it increased its fees. He agreed to close the account, repay the balance in instalments and says he was told there wouldn't be an impact on his credit file. Mr L says that wasn't the position and there were a number of problems which caused him and his family distress as well as inconvenience. He says that if the correct advice had been given then he could have taken advantage of a zero interest offer on a different credit card account. Mr L would like appropriate compensation.

118 118 Money initially didn't accept making a mistake and says it was entitled to increase the account fee in line with agreed terms and conditions. It now accepts it ought to have given Mr L clearer advice and has removed any adverse information from Mr L's credit file, refunded fees and paid £31.99 to bring the account up to date.

Mr L had brought his complaint to us, and our investigator thought 118 118 Money had dealt fairly with the complaint. The investigator thought it was entitled to increase the fee but that it had corrected the account as well as the position.

Mr L told us that his account has now been dealt with properly. But he says that not all his e-mails were looked at and maintains he could have secured borrowing at a zero-interest rate.

What I've decided – and why

I've considered all the available evidence and arguments to decide what's fair and reasonable in the circumstances of this complaint.

Having done so I have come to the overall view that I don't require 118 118 Money to do anything further in the circumstances of this complaint and can see it has agreed to refund the fees as well as make sure there is no adverse information recorded on Mr L's credit file.

I make clear to Mr L that we are not 118 118 Money's regulator and so it's not our role to punish it or direct it about the amount it charges in monthly fees. And we can only consider the impact on Mr L. I say that as Mr L says his family was impacted by what took place. I have considered all of Mr L's e-mails as well as all of the evidence I have seen or heard in this case. But I can't consider his complaint about those e-mails not being looked at when his complaint was investigated by us. And I can't look into any complaints about how 118 118 Money dealt with his complaint, as complaint handling is not a regulated activity.

There is no dispute here that 118 118 Money ought to have provided clearer information to Mr L when he called it. I can see that 118 118 Money fairly accepts that and has spoken to Mr L directly about what took place. I have no doubt Mr L was caused distress and frustration and appreciate that matters took some months to sort out. I'm satisfied that 118 118 Money has acted fairly by refunding fees, I think were correctly charged in line with

agreed account terms and conditions. And by bringing the account up to date as well as making sure no adverse information was reported on Mr L's credit file which I think is the main area of Mr L's complaint. I don't consider further compensation is appropriate or that I can fairly direct 118 118 Money to reduce the balance Mr L owes it for expenditure he has made.

I appreciate Mr L says he could have moved the account balance if given the correct information. I have not seen any direct evidence that could have taken place and think that lenders look at a variety of factors when deciding to lend and at what interest rate. I don't think it possible to know what the outcome of any application Mr L may have made for a balance transfer and at what interest rate in or around October 2022.

Overall, I'm satisfied that 118 118 Money has acted fairly here and has made sure Mr L's credit file didn't contain any adverse information which I think was an important part of this complaint. I'm satisfied Mr L told us and 118 118 Money that he initially considered the outcome to his complaint had "now been dealt with properly". I find this now brings an end to what we in trying to resolve this dispute informally can do.

My final decision

My final decision is that Madison CF UK Limited trading as 118 118 Money has dealt fairly with this complaint, and I don't require it to do anything further in the circumstances of it.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr L to accept or reject my decision before 6 January 2024.

David Singh
Ombudsman