

The complaint

Mr N has complained about the payment options he was offered by Morses Club PLC (“Morses Club”) when it was unable to send an agent to collect payments as a result of the pandemic. He says he wasn’t able to make payment at the post office with the barcode provided and had to try different places before it was accepted. So Morses Club should compensate him.

What happened

Mr N had a home credit loan with Morses Club. His payments were usually collected by a Morses Club agent. However, the onset of the pandemic prevented Morses Club from sending an agent to him. After a discussion with Morses Club, Mr N was provided with a paypoint barcode to make payment. But he found it difficult to do so and eventually complained to Morses Club.

Morses Club didn’t offer Mr N any compensation. Mr N remained unhappy and referred his complaint to us. Mr N’s complaint was then looked at by one of our adjudicators. She didn’t think Morses Club had done anything wrong, or treated Mr N unfairly. So she didn’t think Mr N’s complaint should be upheld. Mr N disagreed with our adjudicator and asked for an ombudsman’s decision.

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 carefully thought about everything provided I’ve decided not to uphold Mr N’s complaint. I’ll explain why in a little more detail.

I can understand why it would have been more difficult for Mr N to make his payments when Morses Club became unable to send an agent to collect them from him. But this was as a result of an unprecedented situation. And I don’t think Morses Club’s inability to send someone round to collect Mr N’s payments itself was unfair as it offered him a number of reasonable alternatives to make his payments.

As I understand it, Mr N was offered three options for making payment. Mr N was offered the option of making payment online, the option of making payment over the phone and finally the option using a paypoint code to do so at any post office. I know that Mr N wasn’t able to use all of these options because he didn’t have access to the internet. I’ve also seen that Mr N didn’t want to make payment over the phone either because he’d previously had difficulties when making payments to other providers.

So Mr N chose to make his payment using a paypoint code at the post office, as it appeared to be the most convenient of all the options offered to him. I appreciate that Mr N had difficulties with the paypoint barcode being read at the first post office he visited. But as Mr N was able to make payment with the same code at the next place he tried, it seems to me that any difficulties were due to the post office Mr N visited, rather than the paypoint code Morses

Club provided. So, in these circumstances, I don't think that Morses Club was responsible for Mr N's difficulties or that it did anything wrong.

I'm also mindful that Morses Club didn't add any further interest even though there was this delay in it receiving Mr N's payment – it was received after date Mr N's early settlement payment needed to be cleared for him to receive an interest rebate. As this is the case and bearing in mind what I've already said about the payment options it offered Mr N, I think that Morses.Club did treat Mr N fairly and so I'm not upholding the complaint, or requiring it to pay any compensation.

My final decision

For the reasons I've explained, I'm not upholding Mr N's complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr N to accept or reject my decision before 4 November 2020.

Jeshen Narayanan
Ombudsman