

The complaint

Mr L is upset about the transfer of his Tesco Bank account to Barclays Bank UK PLC ('Barclays').

What happened

In November 2024, the High Court approved the transfer of Tesco Bank accounts to Barclays. Mr L opposed that transfer and he raised ethical objections with Tesco Bank who were now a trading name of Barclays.

Tesco Bank explained that the transfer had been approved by a court and they didn't think they'd done anything wrong.

Mr L referred his complaint to this service, but our investigator didn't think there was cause to uphold it. He explained that we couldn't consider a complaint when the subject matter had been the subject of court proceedings and where there had been a decision on the merits. And he didn't think there was cause to suggest Tesco Bank had been unreasonable in any other way.

Mr L disagreed with our investigator. He asked for a decision by an ombudsman and explained that he wasn't asking this service to overturn the court's decision but to consider his complaint about, among other things, Tesco bank's failure to provide a meaningful response to his ethical conflict and whether they'd treated him fairly.

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.

I know it will disappoint Mr L, but I'm not upholding this complaint. I'll explain why.

Where the information I've got is incomplete, unclear, or contradictory, as some of it is here, I have to base my decision on the balance of probabilities.

I've read and considered the whole file, but I'll concentrate my comments on what I think is relevant. If I don't comment on any specific point, it's not because I've failed to take it on board and think about it but because I don't think I need to comment on it in order to reach what I think is the right outcome.

Because a court has already approved the transfer of Tesco Bank's business this service cannot revisit or challenge that legal finding. The rules that govern this service are set out by the Financial Conduct Authority in their Dispute Resolution Rules. At DISP 3.3.4A (3) we must not consider a complaint to the extent that it has already been dealt with by a court.

Mr L has explained that he doesn't want us to do that; he's upset about Tesco Bank's handling of his ethical concerns. I can consider the fairness of Tesco Bank's actions in

relation to Mr L, whether they treated him fairly and whether Mr L's ethical objections were reasonably considered.

I think the bank were fair and that they demonstrated they had given fair consideration to Mr L's ethical concerns. For instance, they gave notice to Mr L of their intention to transfer the accounts, registered his objection and provided that information to the court. They guided Mr L to their public statement regarding some ethical concerns and they explained where he could find information on their approach to climate change. They have explained that they invited customers, like Mr L, who had raised an objection to attend the court hearing.

They've also offered financial help to Mr L if he is struggling to make payments.

Overall, I don't think there is reason to uphold this complaint and I'm not doing so.

My final decision

For the reasons I've given above, I don't uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr L to accept or reject my decision before 30 May 2025.

Phillip McMahon
Ombudsman