

complaint

Mr M is unhappy that TransferWise Ltd facilitated a fraudulent transfer from his TSB bank account.

background

Mr M was a victim of a fraud where a fraudster transferred £9,000 from his TSB bank account to a third party, via TransferWise, in June 2018.

TSB accepted responsibility for what happened – it refunded £9,000. And because it refunded the money a day later than it ought to have done, it added £300.00 to compensate Mr M. It also said it would consider any further losses Mr M could evidence caused by the late refund.

Mr M remained unhappy – he thought TransferWise was equally responsible for allowing the fraudulent transfer to go through. And he doesn't believe he's been adequately compensated for what went wrong.

In January 2021, I sent a provisional decision which explained why I didn't think TransferWise needed to do anything to put things right. Neither Mr M nor TransferWise responded to my findings with anything to add by the deadline given, so it's been passed to me to make a final decision.

my findings

I've considered all the available evidence and arguments to decide what's fair and reasonable in the circumstances of this complaint. Given that neither Mr M nor TransferWise responded to my provisional findings, I see no reason to depart from my decision to not uphold this complaint. For completeness, I've explained my reasoning again:

- Mr M blames TransferWise for the fraudster being able to complete the transfer. It's not for me to tell TransferWise exactly how to verify its customers. And I note that here, the fraudster was able to get past TransferWise's security questions because they already had a lot of Mr M's personal and account information. Indeed, it seems TransferWise's involvement was one part of a sophisticated operation – involving hacking Mr M's phone and his TSB account.
- So I don't think I can reasonably say that it's TransferWise fault that this happened – that blame more squarely falls with the fraudster. And even I thought differently, my role isn't to punish TransferWise for what happened. Instead it's to put Mr M back in the position he would've have been had this not have happened.
- £9,000 was stolen from Mr M's TSB account. It seems TSB refunded this a few days after he reported the fraud – so I'm satisfied that's already been put right.
- Mr M says he suffered other losses too – he's mentioned cancelled travel plans and a concert ticket. But he's provided no evidence of how being without the £9,000 for a few days directly caused these losses.
- Mr M also mentioned the moral damage and the inconvenience of all the spam emails he's received as a consequence of what happened. It must have been terrible

for Mr M to have such a significant amount stolen. And I think the £300 TSB awarded is a fair reflection of the distress of being without the money for a few days. But, for the reasons I've already explained, I don't blame TransferWise that someone tried to defraud him – so I can't ask it to compensate him for that undoubtedly horrible experience.

- It follows that I think Mr M's losses, that could reasonably be TransferWise's responsibility, have already been put right. So I don't ask it to do anything further.

my final decision

For the reasons I've explained, I don't uphold Mr M's complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to Mr M to accept or reject my decision before 16 March 2021.

Emma Szkolar
ombudsman