

complaint

Mr M complains Lowell Portfolio I Ltd failed to investigate how much he owes when it was asked to try and recover a debt he believes he'd already paid off.

background

Mr M says he took out a store card in the 1990s and made regular payments towards it. He says that the direct debit used to pay the card was mistakenly cancelled in late 2012. He says six months later he received a letter from a company saying his account had been defaulted and he owed over £1,200. He says he questioned this and was told an investigation would be done. He says he didn't receive a satisfactory response and has dealt with a number of businesses since then. One of those businesses includes Lowell Portfolio. Mr M complained to us about this – he complained about each of the businesses involved.

Our adjudicator recommended that Lowell Portfolio pay Mr M £100 in compensation for the confusion it had caused given the way it handled his complaint. Lowell didn't agree with why our adjudicator had recommended a payment of £100, but agreed to the payment. Mr M asked for a decision from an ombudsman. He said he wanted an ombudsman to take into account other linked complaints he has with us.

my findings

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

I accept that Mr M has been dealing with a number of businesses in relation to this debt. He's been told that the balance outstanding is just over £550 as a result of refund of just over £700 in charges and interest. Lowell has also offered Mr M a 15% discount as a goodwill gesture – meaning he could clear the account with a payment of just over £450.

I'll leave it to Mr M to decide whether he wishes to accept Lowell's offer once he's had a chance to consider my decision on his complaint against the business which passed the debt onto Lowell. I've dealt with that complaint given that it is clearly linked. In the meantime, I agree Lowell was right to agree to the payment our adjudicator had recommended.

my final decision

My final decision is that I require Lowell Portfolio I Ltd to pay Mr M £100 in compensation.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr M to accept or reject my decision before 13 November 2015.

Nicolas Atkinson
ombudsman