

Operational Policy

Customer Service & Customer Complaints Handling



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Further Document Information and Relationships	
Related Legislation*	See website http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/ for current Acts, Regulations and Environmental Planning Instruments. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSW Library Act 1939 • Library Regulation 2010 • Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)

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Related Policies	<p>Council Policy - Code of Conduct</p> <p>Council Policy - Corporate Uniform</p> <p>Council Policy - Communications</p> <p>Council Policy - Workplace Operations & Telephone & Mobile Device</p> <p>Council Policy - Councillor Access to Information & Interaction with Staff</p> <p>Council Policy - Employee Assistance Program</p> <p>Council Policy - Records Management</p> <p>Council Policy - Privacy Management Plan</p> <p>Council Policy – Children & Young People</p>
Related Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Customer Service Charter• Parkes Shire Library Membership and Internet Access Agreement• Parkes Shire Library General Information Brochure• NSW Government Office of the Children's Guardian: Risk Management and the Child Safe Standards
<p>Note: Any reference to Legislation will be updated in this Policy as required. See website http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/ for current Acts, Regulations and Environmental Planning Instruments.</p>	

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Council handles customers fairly, efficiently, and effectively by:

- responding in a timely, consistent, and efficient way to issues raised by people requesting service from Council or making a Customer Complaint;
- boosting public confidence and perception of the quality of the services provided by Council; and
- providing information that can be used by the organisation to deliver quality improvements in services, staff, and customer complaint handling.

The intent of the library's guidelines for behaviour as described in this Policy are to protect the rights and safety of library customers; to protect the rights and safety of staff members; and to preserve and protect library materials, facilities, and property

This policy also outlines arrangements associated with our customers who are not satisfied with Council services, and a process for staff who deal with customers who behave inappropriately.

2. Commencement and Review

This Policy is effective from date of adoption by Council resolution and shall remain in force until repealed by resolution of Council.

3. Scope and Application

This Policy covers all requests received by Council employees and contractors of Council. This Policy does not cover complaints that are:

- Staff grievances
- Public Interest Disclosures made by Council staff
- Complaints against Councillors
- Code of Conduct complaints against staff
- Requests for information (GIPA requests)

Where a complaint, falling into one of the categories listed above is received by Council, it will be dealt with in accordance with Council's Code of Conduct, grievance procedure, Public Interest Disclosure Policy or in accordance with relevant legislation or other relevant Council policy.

This Operational Policy shall apply to all Council staff, volunteers, and visitors to buildings, interior and exterior, and all grounds controlled and operated by Parkes Shire Council, including Henry Parks Information Centre, Parkes Library, Peak Hill Library, Trundle Library, Tullamore Library, Coventry Room, and Marramarra Makerspace.

4. Definitions

In this Operational Policy, the following terms shall be interpreted as having the following meanings:

Term	Definition
Council	Means Parkes Shire Council
Parkes Shire Library	Refers to all branches of the library service (Parkes, Peak Hill, Trundle, Tullamore) and the Cultural Centre (Marramarra Makerspace, Coventry Room, and Foyer)
Business Day	Means a day that is not a Saturday, a Sunday, 27/28/29/30/31 December, nor a public holiday in Sydney
General Manager	Means the General Manager of Parkes Shire Council appointed under section 334 of the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>
Governing Body	Means a person elected or appointed to civic office as a member of the governing body of Council who is not suspended, including the Mayor
Complaint	Means an expression of dissatisfaction with the Council's policies, procedures, charges, agents, or quality of service
Assault	Refer to any act which intentionally or recklessly causes another person to fear immediate and unlawful violence.
Community Consultative Committee	Means a group recognised and supported by Council as representing the views of a local community.
Customer	Means any person, internal or external, that a Council staff member deals with regarding the provision of a Council service.
Child	As per the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998, this means a person under the age of 16 years.
Customer Service Requests	Means the request for provision of a Council Service where a staff member creates a customer referral (known as a CRM request). Some examples of customer requests include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requests for service • Reports of damaged or faulty Council Infrastructure • Requests for information • Explanation of policies, procedures, and decisions. • Concerns about neighbours or neighbouring property or unauthorised building work
Referral	Is created where a customer requests a service, information or an explanation of Council policies, procedures, and decisions of Council: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in writing, or • that cannot be provided at the first point of contact from a customer service staff member.
Response Time	Means the time taken for a customer to receive a response from a Council staff member to a phone call or written correspondence.

Term	Definition
Service Standard (for CRM requests)	Means the agreed time frame for the completion of customer referral requests (CRM). Note that service standards referred to here are specifically related to the type of work to be provided.

5. Operational Policy Statement

Parkes Shire Council values its customers and strives to provide the highest level of customer service to the community. Council's role is to provide a consistent level of professional services in a timely manner that enhances its relationship with the community.

Council will look to improve its procedures and the manner our staff interact with customers by assessing the end-to-end customer experience.

Council will set minimum acceptable standards for the provision of customer service that incorporate Council's values of Community Focus, Innovation, Integrity, Respect, Safety and Teamwork.

6. Review

As part of Council's commitment to good governance and continuous improvement, this Policy must be reviewed and re-adopted by Council not less than once every year or as Council otherwise determines in line with legislative requirements and policy changes.

7. Responsibility

Position	Delegation/Task
General Manager and Senior Staff	Endorse the policy Compliance with the policy Promote customer service to Managers and Supervisors
Managers and Supervisors	Compliance with the policy Promote the policy to staff Monitor compliance of staff
Employees	Compliance with the policy
Customer Experience Coordinator	Manage and review the policy Comply and promote the policy to staff Monitor compliance of staff

8. Approach to Dealing with Customers

In dealing with customer service requests, Council employees will endeavour to provide an end-to-end customer experience which has the customer as its focal point. This means Council staff will place themselves in the position of the customer in responding to issues. Written information, whether in an email, letter or provided on our web site will be in a customer friendly, plain English tone.

We will keep the following values in mind when dealing with our customers:

8.1 Respect

we talk to our customers about their individual service needs and listen to what they say. We respond to our customers within defined response times and keep customers informed of the progress of their requests. If we cannot help for any reason, we will explain the reasons why. We will endeavour to ensure you understand the procedures that are being used and to make these as simple and user friendly as possible.

8.2 Integrity

We act in an open, honest, and fair manner with our customers and treat customers with respect and courtesy. Staff shall comply with Council's Code of Conduct in their dealings with customers and conduct their exchanges about the Code's key principles of Integrity, Openness, Respect, and Accountability. Decisions and advice will be premised on relevant legislation and Council's administrative procedures and current policies.

8.3 Teamwork

We work together to achieve the right outcome. We will share information with colleagues where a referral to another staff member is required to fully answer enquiries and to avoid asking the customer the same questions.

9. Handling Customer Requests/Standards & Procedures

9.1 Staff & Corporate Uniform

All staff are expected to provide coverage within their own department to ensure a continuation of service during opening hours.

Corporate uniform enhances the professional and corporate image of Parkes Shire Council and encourage and promote appropriate standards of dress within the organisation. See Council's Corporate Uniform Policy for more details.

9.2 Requests made in Person

Where a frontline staff member is unable to answer an enquiry, every effort will be made to refer the person who can best assist with the enquiry in the most appropriate manner. Providing an immediate response will depend on the availability of the person best able to assist and how complex the enquiry is.

Where the enquiry cannot be resolved at the time of the visit, details will be taken, and a follow up response will be arranged. This may include on site meetings, return phone calls, letters, emails etc; In such cases a file note will be completed, and the request (if appropriate) will be entered into the CRM system and tasked to appropriate department for triage.

9.3 Telephone Calls

All Telephone calls are to be handled in accordance with Council's Workplace Operations & Phone & Mobile Device Usage Policy.

The following customer service standards will apply when handling customer telephone calls.

- Staff will respond to telephone messages or requests for return phone calls within one (1) working day (next available working day if call is received after hours)

- Staff will ensure their current availability is displayed to internal and external customers through using settings in Council's systems, such as:
 - CentrePal: Set your availability status for incoming calls
 - Microsoft Outlook: Use your calendar and set your free/busy status. Set an 'Out of Office' email message when away. Allow staff to see your calendar events
 - Microsoft Teams: Set your status to advise Teams users what you are doing
- Staff making outgoing calls shall identify themselves by name and Parkes Shire Council or Council Department/Section as appropriate and shall clearly outline the purpose of the call.
- In the event that the customer does not answer an outgoing call made by staff, a voicemail detailing their name, department, and purpose of the call should be left.
- Council also provides an out-of-hours telephone service to assist with after-hours emergencies. For emergencies relating to Council services, facilities, and roads outside of business hours, the service number is **1800 648 585**

9.4 Correspondence

Correspondence includes a letter or email message received at Council as follows:

The General Manager
2 Cecile Street (PO Box 337)
PARKES NSW 2870

or

The General Manager
council@parkes.nsw.gov.au

- All Correspondence received will be entered into Council's Document Management System (ECM) or if a service request, into Council Request Management System (CRM) on the day received or next available working day if received after hours.
- Correspondence that is seeking a response on a number of items across various departments in Council, may be registered via a CRM and tasked to the appropriate department depending on the level of response required.
- All Council staff will endeavour to respond to correspondence received from customers (written, faxed or emailed) within ten working (10) days. If we cannot provide a full response to the item/s raised within this time, an acknowledgement letter/email will be sent to advise what is happening with your request, who will be handling the enquiry and the responsible Council Officers contact details.
- All correspondence sent will be entered into the ECM system and include a contact name and reference number from the person sending the communication.

9.5 Requests from Councillors

All requests from Councillors are to be handled in accordance with [Council Policy - Councillor Access to Information & Interaction with Staff](#)

Councillors may make requests for Council services or information, either on behalf of a member of the community, a community group or as a citizen. Councillors are encouraged to put the information into an email and ensure it is sent to

council@parkes.nsw.gov.au to the General Manager & Public Officer. Councillors may also raise issues for action at a Council meeting or workshop.

CRM requests are to be handled as follows:

- Requests received from Councillors will be linked to the Councillor
- The Councillor will be advised that the request has been entered into the request system & the request number

Other referrals not considered CRM requests must be:

- Registered into the Council's Document Management System (ECM) system and tasked to the appropriate department

9.6 Requests from Township Consultative Committee's or Ratepayer Assoc.

Township Consultative Committees or Ratepayer Associations may make requests for Council services or for information. Committees and Associations are encouraged to put the information into an email and ensure it is sent to council@parkes.nsw.gov.au.

Alternatively; request for access to information can be made under the GIPA Act 2009 NSW. The GIPA Act establishes a proactive, open approach to gaining access to government information in New South Wales (NSW), additional Information can be located on Council's Website: <https://www.parkes.nsw.gov.au/>

CRM requests are to be handled as follows:

- Requests received from the Committee will be linked to Committee/Association
- The Committee or Association will be advised that the request has been entered into the request system & the request number

Other items not considered CRM requests must be:

- Registered into the Council's Document Management System (ECM) system and tasked to the appropriate department

9.7 Website

Information provided on Council's Website <https://www.parkes.nsw.gov.au> will adhere to the following guidelines:

- Council's website will contain information in an easy-to-understand format and be updated on a regular basis
- Council's website is under constant review to ensure it meets the needs of our customers
- Council will provide access to commonly requested items such as payments, forms, items on exhibition, tenders, and job vacancies in an easy to find location
- The website will contain links to useful information and other Council facilities such as the Library, Visitors Information Centre

See Council's Communications Policy for more details on Website communications.

9.8 Social Media

Council's customer service standards regarding social media interaction with Customers is contained within its Communications Policy.

10. Customer Complaints

10.1 Acknowledgements

Where a Customer Complaint cannot be resolved at first contact, Council will assess and prioritise in accordance with the urgency and/or seriousness of the issues raised. If a matter concerns an immediate risk to safety or security the response will be immediate and will be escalated appropriately.

Council is committed to providing high levels of customer service and will acknowledge a Customer Complaint as soon as possible, and no later than 10 business days of receipt of the Customer Complaint.

10.2 Lodging a Customer Complaint to Council

Customer Complaints can be made as follows:

- EMAIL: council@parkes.nsw.gov.au,
- Online form via WEBSITE: <https://www.parkes.nsw.gov.au/>
- POST: Po Box 337 PARKES NSW 2870 or 2 Cecile Street PARKES NSW 2870, or
- IN PERSON: 2 Cecile Street, Parkes NSW 2870.

Process:

1. Submit form either online, in writing or in person
2. Customer will receive an acknowledgement of submission within 10 business days
3. We will make an assessment as to the seriousness, complexity, and urgency of the complaint
4. We will contact the customer within 21 calendar days to advise the outcome

Council encourages the person making the Customer Complaint to do so in writing to ensure Council has all the relevant information and facts. If a person has difficulty in making a Customer Complaint in writing, they should speak to Council's Customer Service Team on (02) 6861 2333.

If a person prefers or needs another person or organisation to assist or represent them in the making their Customer Complaint, Council will communicate with them through their representative if this is their wish. Anyone may represent a person wishing to make a Customer Complaint with their consent (e.g. advocate, family member, legal or community representative, member of Parliament, another organisation).

10.3 Lodging a Complaint to an External Agency

Customers are welcome to seek advice or lodge complaints with external agencies. Find below some relevant contact details:

Office of Local Government	NSW Ombudsman	Independent Commission Against Corruption
5 O'Keefe Avenue NOWRA NSW 2541 P 02 4428 4100 F 02 4428 4199 TTY 02 4428 4209 E olg@olg.nsw.gov.au W www.olg.nsw.gov.au	Level 24, 580 George Street SYDNEY NSW 2000 P 02 9286 1000 F 02 9283 2911 E Enswombo@ombo.nsw.gov.au W www.ombo.nsw.gov.au	Level 21, 133 Castlereagh Street SYDNEY NSW, 2000 P 02 8281 5999 F 02 9264 5364 TTY 02 8281 5773 E icac@icac.nsw.gov.au

10.4 Anonymous Complaints

Council will not accept anonymous Customer Complaints.

10.5 Early Resolution

Where possible, Customer Complaints will be resolved by Council's Customer Service staff at first contact with Council.

10.6 Initial Assessment

When determining how a Customer Complaint will be addressed, the Customer Service staff will make an assessment as to the seriousness, complexity, and urgency of the complaint.

10.7 Finalisation of the Customer Complaint

Following consideration of the Customer Complaint and any investigation into the issues raised, Council will contact the person making the Customer Complaint within **21** calendar days and advise them of:

- the outcome of the Customer Complaint and any action taken
- the reason/s for the decision
- the remedy or resolution/s that Council proposes to put in place, where relevant; and the options for review

10.8 Objectivity and Fairness

Council will address each Customer Complaint in a fair and unbiased manner and will ensure that the staff member handling a Customer Complaint is different from any staff member whose conduct or service is the subject of the Customer Complaints Conflict of interests, whether actual or perceived, will be managed responsibly.

10.9 Privacy

Personal information that identifies the person making the Customer Complaint will only be disclosed to a third party as permitted under the relevant privacy laws and other relevant legislation.

10.10 Review Options

Where the person making a Complaint is dissatisfied with the outcome of Council's decision about their Customer Complaint; they may seek:

- An internal review - this will be conducted by the General Manager or Director - or a senior staff member independent of the original decision. An application for an Internal Review of Decision can be located on the Council Website <https://www.parkes.nsw.gov.au/>
- If the internal review is not appropriate the review of the Council's response can be lodged with the external agencies listed in Section 10.3

11. Continuous Improvement

Council is committed to improving the effectiveness, efficiency, and quality of its service delivery by:

- supporting the making, and appropriate resolution, of customer complaints and service requests
- implementing best practices in customer complaint and service handling
- regularly reviewing this Policy and customer service data
- implementing appropriate service changes arising out of its analysis of customer service data; and
- continually monitoring its systems and processes, and amending and updating them as required

12. Managing Expectations

Not every issue brought to Council's attention is within Council's jurisdiction and Council will not take complaints that are not within Council's power to resolve. Staff will endeavour to direct the customer to the appropriate agency or organisation to deal with the respective issue.

13. Unreasonable Conduct by Customers (UCC)

It is Council's responsibility to treat all customers fairly and with respect. Staff need to show impartiality and professionalism when facing challenging behaviour. This does not mean that staff should tolerate conduct that is threatening, aggressive or abusive.

Parkes Shire Council has a zero tolerance towards any harm, abuse or threats directed towards staff.

13.1 Unreasonable Conduct by Customers

Most of our customers act reasonably and responsibly in their interactions with us, even when they are experiencing high levels of distress, frustration, and anger about their complaint. However, in a small number of cases some customers behave in ways that are inappropriate and unacceptable – despite our best efforts to help them. They are aggressive and/or verbally abusive towards our staff. They threaten harm and violence, bombard our offices with unnecessary and excessive phone calls and emails, make inappropriate demands on our time and our resources and refuse to accept our decisions and recommendations in relation to their complaints.

When customers behave in these ways, we consider their conduct to be 'unreasonable'. Unreasonable conduct by customers ('UCC') is any behaviour which, because of its nature or frequency, raises substantial health, safety, resource or equity

issues for our organisation, our staff, other service users and customers or the customer himself/herself.

UCC can be divided into five categories of conduct:

- Unreasonable persistence
- Unreasonable demands
- Unreasonable lack of cooperation
- Unreasonable argument
- Unreasonable behaviours

13.2 Unreasonable Persistence

Unreasonable persistence is continued, incessant and unrelenting conduct by a customer that has a disproportionate and unreasonable impact on staff, services, time, and/or resources.

Some examples of unreasonably persistent behaviour include:

- An unwillingness or inability to accept reasonable and logical explanations including final decisions that have been comprehensively considered and dealt with.
- Persistently contacting Council about the same matter when it has been comprehensively considered and dealt with.
- Reframing a complaint in an effort to get it taken up again
- Bombarding staff/organisation with phone calls, visits, letters, and emails (including cc'd correspondence) after repeatedly being asked not to do so
- Contacting different people within our organisation and/or externally to get a different outcome or more sympathetic response to their complaint - internal and external forum shopping

13.3 Unreasonable Demands

Unreasonable demands are demands (express or implied) that are made by a customer that have a disproportionate and unreasonable impact on Council staff, services, time, and/or resources.

Some examples of unreasonable demands include:

- Issuing instructions and making demands about how we have/should handle their complaint, the priority it was/should be given, or the outcome that was/should be achieved
- Insisting on talking to a senior manager, Director, or the General Manager personally when it is not appropriate or warranted
- Demanding services that are of a nature or scale that Council cannot provide when this has been explained to them repeatedly

13.4 Unreasonable Lack of Cooperation

Unreasonable lack of cooperation is an unwillingness and/or inability by a customer to cooperate with our organisation, staff, or complaints system and processes that results in a disproportionate and unreasonable use of our services, time, and/or resources.

Some examples of unreasonable lack of cooperation include:

- Sending a constant stream of comprehensive and/or disorganised information without clearly
- defining any issues of complaint or explaining how they relate to the core issues being complained about

- Providing little or no detail with a complaint or presenting information in 'drips and drabs
- Refusing to follow or accept our instructions, suggestions, or advice without a clear or justifiable reason for doing so
- Arguing frequently and/or with extreme intensity that a particular solution is the correct one in the face of valid contrary arguments and explanations
- Displaying unhelpful behaviour - such as withholding information, acting dishonestly, misquoting others, and so forth

13.5 Unreasonable Arguments

Unreasonable arguments include any arguments that are not based in reason or logic, that are incomprehensible, false, or inflammatory, trivial, or delirious and that disproportionately and unreasonably impact upon Council, staff, services, time, and/or resources. Arguments are unreasonable when they:

- Fail to follow a logical sequence
- Are not supported by any evidence and/or are based on conspiracy theories.
- Lead a customer to reject all other valid and contrary arguments
- Are false, inflammatory, or defamatory

13.6 Unreasonable Behaviour

Unreasonable behaviour is conduct that is unreasonable in all circumstances – regardless of how stressed, angry, or frustrated that a customer is – because it unreasonably compromises the health, safety and security of our staff, other service users or the customer himself/herself. Some examples of unreasonable behaviours include:

- Acts of aggression, verbal abuse and derogatory, racist, or grossly defamatory remarks
- Harassment, intimidation, or physical violence
- Rude, confronting and/or threatening face to face or phone contact or correspondence

14. Dealing with Unreasonable Customers

14.1 Telephone or Face to Face (Counter)

If, in the opinion of any staff member, rude, abusive, or aggressive comments or statements are made in telephone conversations or interviews, the staff members may:

- Warn the customer that if the behaviour continues the conversation or interview will be terminated
- Terminate the conversation or interview if rude, abusive, or aggressive behaviour continues after a warning has been given
- Activate the duress alarm (if available) and / or call upon a supervisor or the Police as appropriate if there is a perceived threat

Where a conversation or interview is terminated in accordance with this section, the staff member must notify their supervisor and note the details on the Customer's account. If a threat has been made and/or the police have been called, the General Manager or relevant Director must be notified of the details, as soon as possible.

14.2 Correspondence

If in the opinion of the General Manager any correspondence to Council contains personal abuse, inflammatory statements or material clearly intended to intimidate, it will be returned to the sender and not otherwise acted upon.

If in the opinion of the General Manager a customer is constantly raising the same issues the following actions may be taken by the General Manager to notify the customer that only a nominated staff member will deal with them in future and they must make an appointment with that person if they wish to discuss their matter or all future contact with Council must be in writing.

The General Manager shall advise the Mayor of any notification issues in accordance with the above clause and the customer shall be given an opportunity to make representations about Council's proposed course of action.

14.3 Restricting Access to Council Services or Properties

Restricting a customer's access to Council properties or dealing with Council Officers can be made if in the opinion of the General Manager the customer is poses a significant risk for a staff member or other parties because their actions involve one or more of the following types of conduct:

- Acts of aggression, verbal and/or physical abuse, threats of harm, harassment, intimidation, stalking or assault
- Damage to property while on our premises
- Threats with a weapon or common office items that can be used to harm another person or themselves
- Physically preventing a staff member from moving around freely either within their office or during an off-site visit
- Conduct that is otherwise unlawful

In these cases, the customer will be sent a letter notifying them that their access to Council services/properties have been restricted.

The Police may also be notified in these circumstances and charges may be laid.

15. Customers Threatening Self-Harm

Employees and contractors engaged in contact roles may on occasion be confronted by a distressed person threatening suicide or self-harm, either in person, on the telephone or in writing. Such situations can be difficult to handle, especially when most employees are not trained or qualified to assist the person with such related issues.

There are numerous factors which may have influenced or led a person to the point of making such a threat. You must take the threat seriously and you have a duty of care to the distressed individual to, as far as possible and practicable, provide them with the support they need to obtain the professional care and assistance that they need.

The person who was the recipient of the threat should be encouraged to utilise free confidential support and counselling through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). The EAP is a service that provides employees with confidential and professional counselling and related services to assist them in resolving issues that may be work related or of a personal nature.

Employees and contractors are encouraged to access the EAP service as early as possible.

See HR Policy – Employee Assistance Program for more details

15.1 Procedure for Handling Customers Threatening Self-Harm

- Take the person and the threat seriously
- Advise the person that threats of suicide or self-harm are taken seriously and that you may need to refer them to someone who is more appropriately trained or qualified to help
- Inform the person that you have a duty of care to ensure that they are safe and have appropriate support
- Seek details of the person making the threat, i.e. name, address, telephone number, treating doctor details and the person's current location (if threat made by telephone)
- Encourage the person to seek immediate support from a friend, partner, General Practitioner, or an appropriately qualified health worker and supply them with telephone numbers such as Lifeline 131 114
- If the person refuses to seek such support, wherever possible seek their agreement to contact a support person or service on their behalf
- Advise the person that you will be contacting and providing their details to the Mental Health ACT Triage and Crisis Assessment and Treatment Team, the police, or their local hospital to ensure that they have someone to come and assess them as the case may be
- For immediate life threatening or dangerous situations call 000 for emergency services
- Do not attempt to counsel the person or make a judgement about whether you think the person will carry out the threat of suicide or self-harm - refer the matter to appropriately qualified personnel at the earliest possible opportunity
- Notify your manager immediately and outline the course of action you have taken

16. Records & Governance

Council will ensure that full and accurate records of all activities and decisions of the Parkes Shire Council are created, managed, and disposed of appropriately to meet the Parkes Shire Council's organisational needs and accountability requirements.

See Council's Records Management Policy for more details.

17. Responsibilities of Visitors and Library Users

- Treat other visitors and Library staff with courtesy and respect showing regard for their needs, sensitivities, and rights. Anti-social behaviour, including harassing other visitors or staff, unwelcome behaviours, using offensive language or displaying offensive imagery or signage is not acceptable.
- Leave the Library when requested at closing time and during emergency procedures, or if directed to do so.
- Inform Library staff immediately if you become aware of any risk or potential risk to people or property.

17.1 Schedule of Penalties

Behaviour	Penalty
Entering "Staff Only" areas.	Explain to customer that for their safety and the safety of staff, that they or the children they are responsible for, must not enter the "Staff Only" areas.
Entering programs or events areas when not an authorised participant	Explain to customer that the space is only available for participants booked into the activity/event.
Food and drinks in library (No food and drinks in computer room; covered drinks permissible in library area; food to be consumed in outdoor area; exception applied to library programs)	Explain to customer where food and drink is permissible. If behaviour is repeated ask customer to leave the library and return with no food or uncovered drink.
Library items are returned damaged or lost.	Items damaged or lost should be replaced or paid for. If items are regularly returned damaged or lost, borrowing privileges and use of library services will be limited.
School students from Kindergarten to Year 10 within the Library building during normal school hours.	Talk to the student. Ring parent or appropriate school and report the student. Tell student that you have called the parent or school.
Bullying or physical fighting between children	One warning, then immediate exclusion from library for the day. Ring parent to report the behaviour. If behaviour is repeated on subsequent visits, letter or email sent to parent excluding the child for two weeks.
Parents/carers not adequately monitoring and regulating the behaviour of their children.	One warning, then exclusion from library for the day. If behaviour is repeated regularly, letter or email excluding offender for two weeks.
Overstaying a computer booking when asked by staff (due to high demand, closing time, or time limit)	One warning, then immediate exclusion from use of computers for the day. If behaviour is repeated on subsequent visits, letter or email excluding offender for two weeks.
Failure to leave the Library when requested at closing time and during emergency procedures, or when directed to do so.	One warning, then immediate exclusion from the Library premises. If behaviour is repeated on subsequent visits, exclusion of offender from Library premises for two weeks.

Behaviour	Penalty
Photography & filming Permission from Library staff is required for any photography & filming in the Library	One warning, then immediate exclusion from library for the day. If behaviour is repeated on subsequent visits, letter or email excluding offender for two weeks.
Animals Only registered assistance animals can be brought into the Library. Proof of registration may be required	One warning, then immediate exclusion from library for the day. If behaviour is repeated on subsequent visits, letter or email excluding offender for two weeks.
Mobile phone usage (including phones on speakerphone) Customers asked to minimise calls in the library. For extended call customers asked to move to outdoor or foyer areas.	One warning, then exclusion from library for the day. If behaviour is repeated regularly, letter or email excluding offender for two weeks.
Smoking (including vaporisers)	One warning, then immediate exclusion from the library for the day. If behaviour is repeated on subsequent visits, letter excluding offender for two weeks.
Use of obscene and/or profane language	One warning, then immediate exclusion from the library for the day. If behaviour is repeated on subsequent visits, letter or email excluding offender for two weeks.
Anti-social behaviour including unwelcome behaviours or comments that make other visitors or staff feel: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncomfortable • Frightened • Threatened 	One warning, then immediate exclusion from the library for the day. If behaviour is repeated on subsequent visits, letter or email excluding offender for two weeks.
Touting	One warning, then immediate exclusion from the library for the day. If behaviour is repeated on subsequent visits, letter or email excluding offender for two weeks.
Downloading inappropriate material from the Internet	One warning, then immediate exclusion from use of computers for two weeks. If behaviour is repeated on subsequent visits, letter excluding offender for one month.

Behaviour	Penalty
Customer aggression toward staff or other customers	<p>Immediate eviction from library.</p> <p>Incident reported on Appenate following Council's WHS Incident Notification procedure.</p> <p>Length of exclusion pending decision and written notification from Director.</p>
Stealing Vandalising other library user's possessions, or library equipment	<p>Immediate eviction from the Library.</p> <p>Matter reported to Police.</p> <p>Incident reported on Appenate following Council's WHS Incident Notification procedure.</p> <p>Length of exclusion pending decision and written notification from Director.</p>
Using or selling of illegal drugs	<p>Immediate eviction from the library.</p> <p>Matter reported to Police.</p> <p>Incident reported on Appenate following Council's WHS Incident Notification procedure.</p> <p>Length of exclusion pending decision and written notification from the General Manager.</p>
Assault	<p>Immediate eviction from the library</p> <p>Matter reported to Police.</p> <p>Incident reported on Appenate following Council's WHS Incident Notification procedure.</p> <p>Length of exclusion pending decision and written notification from the General Manager.</p>
Threat to use, or use of any weapon	<p>Immediate eviction from the library.</p> <p>Matter reported to Police.</p> <p>Incident reported on Appenate following Council's WHS Incident Notification procedure.</p> <p>Length of exclusion pending decision and written notification from the General Manager.</p>

17.2 Library Authority

- All Library employees have the authority to request a person to cease unacceptable behaviour.
- The responsible employee has the authority to exclude a person from the Library for a period of 24 hours.
- The Supervisor, Manager and Director have the authority to ban a person from the Library for longer periods.
- Any complaint / appeal will be dealt with in the first instance by the rostered staff member.

Complaints / appeals that cannot be resolved at this level will be referred to the Supervisor on duty, Library & Information Services Team Leader and/or Manager Cultural Education & Library Services.

If the customer remains unsatisfied, they may write to:

General Manager
Parkes Shire Council
Po Box 337
PARKES NSW 2871
council@parkes.nsw.gov.au

18. Customer Service Charter

Customer Service Charter



What you can expect

OUR SERVICE COMMITMENT TO YOU

- Be friendly, efficient, and consistent on every interaction & provide information which is timely, accurate and reliable
- Handle your enquiry with confidentiality and respect
- Resolve your enquiry at first contact where we can, or explain how your matter will be progressed and who is responsible
- Provide you with a reference number and timeframe for your service requests
- Continually review and improve our services to you

WHAT DO WE ASK FROM YOU?

- Provide information that is timely, accurate and complete to assist us in meeting our service levels and your expectations
- Be open and honest in your dealings with us
- Treat our staff with courtesy and respect
- Provide us with honest and constructive feedback to help us improve service delivery



WHEN YOU VISIT US WE WILL...

- Acknowledge & greet you at the customer counter in a timely manner
- Endeavour to provide an end-to-end customer experience which has the customer as its focal point
- Process your transactions efficiently with a smile



WHEN YOU PHONE US WE WILL...

- Strive to answer your call as quickly as possible
- Greet you courteously and introduce ourselves by name
- Strive to have your enquiry resolved by the first person you speak to, otherwise direct you to the relevant person or department
- Return phone calls and messages within 1 working day



WHEN YOU WRITE TO US WE WILL...

- Respond to you within 10 working days
- For complex enquiries or complaints, requests will be acknowledged within 10 days, and advised of outcome and/or any action taken within 21 calendar days
- Ensure we communicate with you using easy to understand language



WITH OUR WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA WE WILL...

- Ensure regular monitoring of social media.
- Continuously review our website to ensure it is easy to use, with clear navigation and content so that you can quickly find the exact information you need <https://www.parkes.nsw.gov.au>
- See Council's Communications Policy for more details on Website & Social Media communications

ASK A QUESTION, REPORT A PROBLEM, MAKE A REQUEST OR PROVIDE FEEDBACK

You can do this by scanning the QR Code
or by emailing us at council@parkes.nsw.gov.au

Council encourages complaints in writing to ensure we have all the information. Refer to the Customer Service & Customer Complaints Handling Policy located on the website for more information.

