

Policy for dealing with unacceptable behaviour

This policy applies to all front-line locations managed by Customer Services, including One Stop Shops, Register Offices and Libraries.

Bath & North East Somerset Council has a responsibility to provide a safe and secure environment for everyone that uses its services. The Council is committed to the care and protection of its employees and other service users from inappropriate, unpleasant, aggressive or violent behaviour.

Violent or aggressive behaviour could result in the immediate removal of an individual (or individuals) from a front-line location, and notice being given to exclude them from entering the premises for either a set period of time or indefinitely. Where appropriate, members of staff may decide to contact the City Marshals and / or the Police for assistance and the Council may also consider the possibility of taking criminal action.

Customer Services works closely with both internal and external service partners to ensure that excluded individuals continue to have access to the services and support that they need.

Individuals who are excluded from a front-line location will be provided with information about alternative ways to access these services (e.g. at another front-line location, by telephone, email or letter, or through a third party service provider).

The types of behaviour that are unacceptable include:

- Aggressive or threatening behaviour towards a customer, employee or third party service provider, which may or may not result in injury.
- Bullying or harassment, including racial or sexual harassment of an intimidating or threatening nature towards a customer, employee or third party service provider.
- Persistent swearing, shouting or verbal abuse.
- Alcohol / drug misuse.
- Vandalism / criminal damage.
- Body odour causing offence to others.
- Any behaviour in contravention of Library byelaws (where applicable).

Stage 1:

Any individual (or individuals) behaving in an unacceptable manner will be approached by a member (or members) of staff. The staff will explain why their behaviour is considered to be unacceptable and warn them that they will be asked to leave the premises if the unacceptable behaviour continues.

Any individual (or individuals) who continue to act in an unacceptable manner after being warned about their behaviour will be asked to leave the premises.

Depending on the nature and seriousness of the incident, a member of staff, a member of the public or a third party service provider may also decide to contact the City Marshals and / or the Police for assistance.

Stage 2:

If the individual (or individuals) return to the front-line location and continue to behave in an unacceptable manner, they will be asked to leave the premises immediately.

In order to access services through that front-line location in future, they will be asked to sign an 'Acceptable Behaviour Agreement'.

This agreement will either be posted to them with a covering letter, or discussed in person at a meeting with a member of the front-line management team.

The covering letter / member of the management team will explain to the individual(s):

- why their behaviour was considered to be unacceptable,
- that in order to have access to the front-line service location, they must agree to behave in an acceptable manner at all times, and
- that a breach of the terms of the agreement will result in them being excluded from the front-line location for a set period of time, or in some cases, indefinitely.

Individuals will be asked to sign the 'Acceptable Behaviour Agreement' to agree that their behaviour / conduct will remain acceptable when visiting the front-line location in the future.

If an individual refuses to sign the agreement they will be informed that the conditions will still apply to them.

Stage 3:

If the individual (or individuals) breach the terms of the 'Acceptable Behaviour Agreement', the following action may be taken by the Customer Services' front-line management team:

- Exclusion / banning of the individual (or individuals) from the front-line location for a set period of time, or in some cases, indefinitely.
- Where an individual continues to attempt to gain access to a front-line location they have already been excluded from; the management team may extend the period of exclusion.

Following any period of exclusion, the individual(s) will be expected to sign a new 'Acceptable Behaviour Agreement' prior to the exclusion / ban being lifted.