

Thame Town Council

Terrorism Policy / Advice Note

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Policy / Advice Note has been written in light of the generally increasing security threat within the UK. This is not to cause panic or alarm but to set out clear guidelines for staff and members to follow in the event of a terrorism incident taking place.

2. Letter Bombs

- 2.1 These can be in the form of substantial envelopes or parcels containing paper-backed books delivered through normal postal services. They are likely to be in the form of a flat letter weighing up to four ounces, or in a package the size of a conventional library book. The degree of caution advised in handling depends on the cumulative effect of points which may give rise to suspicion.

2.2 Points which may make unfamiliar material received suspect:

- The postmark – if foreign and not familiar.
- The writing – which may have a questionable appearance, lack literacy, or be crudely printed.
- Name and address of sender (if known) – if address differs from area of postmark.
- 'Personal' or 'Private' letters addressed to the Town Clerk under the wrong job title, e.g. Managing Director.
- Weight – if excessive for size and apparent contents.
- Weight distribution – if uneven, may indicate presence of batteries inside.
- Grease marks – showing on the exterior of the wrapping from inside, may include 'sweating' explosive.
- Smell – some explosives have a smell of marzipan or almonds.
- General – damaged envelopes which give sight of wire, batteries or fluid, filled plastic sachets should be left strictly alone. Those that rattle or feel springy should be treated with caution, and naturally, any ticking noise should be treated as a 'red alert'.
- Where a conventional paper-back book has been used in the making of a letter bomb, it is likely to be noticeably softer in the centre than at the edges.

2.3 Suspicions cannot be ignored

- Do not try to open the letter/parcel or tamper with it. It has been made to withstand postal handling and is designed to function during normal sequence of opening. Do not put in water or put anything on top of it.

3. Bomb Threats

3.1 Bomb Threat Checklist

- In the event of a member of staff receiving a bomb threat over the telephone she/he is to complete the Bomb Threat Checklist and details of the call.
- At the conclusion of the call the member of staff is to:
 - i. Inform the Town Clerk
 - ii. Inform the police
 - iii. Evacuate the site if the Town Clerk decides that this is necessary

3.2 Action to be taken on receipt of a Bomb Threat

- Immediately alert someone else if possible (so that the Town Clerk may be informed) **but do not put down the handset or cut off conversation**;
- Obtain as much information as you can;
- Try to keep the caller talking (apologise for bad line, ask him to speak up etc);
- Write down the exact message.

3.3 Bomb Threats – What to Do

- Stay Calm – 90% of bomb threats are hoaxes – but take them seriously
- Complete the Bomb Threat Checklist

Date:	Time:	am/pm
Calling From: Internal phone / External Phone / Coin Box		
What was said? (Note down as said or as soon as possible, exactly as you can)		
Where is the bomb?		
When will it go off?		
What does it look like?		
What sort of bomb?		
Why was it placed?		
Who placed it?		

3.4 Describe details of call (tick any that are appropriate)

Caller	Male	Female	Adult	Juvenile
Accent	Local	Regional	Foreign	Disguised
Voice	Loud Rough	Soft Educated	High Pitched	Deep
Speech	Fast Blurred	Slow Distinct	Normal Obscene	Stutter
Manner	Calm Rational Coherent	Nervous Irrational Incoherent	Deliberate Angry	Hysterical Humorous
Background	Quiet Office	Music Party Noise	Road Traffic Voices	Factory
Any other relevant information				

4. Advice on Chemical or Biological Attacks

Prevention Advice

4.1 On Site Water Storage Tanks

- Prevent unauthorised access and secure access routes.

4.2 Review Access Control Systems

- Ensure access control is working effectively for staff, Councillors, visitors and contractors. All visitors, Councillors and contractors should sign in at reception in the Information Centre when they arrive.
- A 'Challenge Culture' is employed by staff to ensure only authorised people are on the premises.

4.3 Mail Procedures

- Ensure that all incoming mail, despatch, lorry, van and motorcycle courier deliveries, or hand delivered items are processed in the Information Centre before being distributed to staff.
- Check all mail for suspicious signs:
 - i. Point of origin e.g. from postmark or name of sender, if given, if from an unusual point or sender,
 - ii. Manuscript of sender – if this indicates for example, a questionable style of writing, and if such is not usually received,
 - iii. Flap of envelope – usually there is an un-gummed gap of about 3-5mm, if the flap of the envelope is stuck down completely

Do not open or continue to open any package deemed suspicious

5. Dealing with an Incident

5.1 Suspicious Packages – do not open it, do not pass it around –

- Evacuate the building;
- Dial 999 for the police, making sure you state you believe chemical or biological materials are involved;

5.2 Device Outside the Building

- Close all fire doors in the building, close all windows in the building;
- Move all occupants located on the ground floor and below, up the building to the first floor and above and await instructions from the emergency services;
- Dial 999 for the police, making sure you state you believe chemical or biological materials are involved.

5.3 Contaminated Persons

The following action should be taken for any person suspected of being in contact with a suspected chemical or biological device, prior to the arrival of the emergency services:

- Wash hands in a weak bleach solution (one teaspoonful of domestic bleach to one litre of water) and then rinse with ordinary soap and water;
- Keep the person separate from others and make them available for immediate attention from the emergency services;
- Try to ascertain how many other people may have been exposed to the material – complete a detailed list and keep all suspected contaminated people separate from others and send to A&E as quickly as possible.

5.4 Firearms or Weapon Attack / Intruder

The following action should be followed as prescribed by the national Counter Terrorism Policing:

- **RUN** to a place of safety. This is a far better option than to surrender or negotiate. If there's nowhere to go, then.....
- **HIDE** it's better to hide than to confront. Remember to turn your phone to silent and turn off vibrate. Barricade yourself in if you can. Then finally and only when it is safe to do so
- **TELL** the Police by calling 999.