



Supporting Our Community

FIRE SAFETY PRECAUTIONS & EMERGENCY PROCEDURES **107-109 HIGH STREET/COUNCIL MEETINGS**

Fire in any building is a potential killer. It is important that all staff are familiar with the fire precautions for the areas that they find themselves in while you are at work. The Town Clerk should ensure that all new employees are made aware of the fire precautions and procedures in the Town Council offices on the first day of their employment.

Staff should be aware of the alternative means of escape. If a member of staff is hosting visitors – at a committee or other meeting, they are to ensure that the fire evacuation information is given out before the meeting commences.

SOUNDING THE ALARM

The alarm will be raised, normally by the continuous ringing of a loud bell. On hearing the alarm, staff are to leave the building immediately. Staff and any visitors are to make their way to the evacuation muster point at the junction of the High Street and Lower South Street and are to await the instructions of the designated Fire Marshal or the Fire Brigade before returning to the Council Offices.

FIRE EVACUATION WARDENS – COUNCIL OFFICES

The Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) is the Town Council office Fire Evacuation Warden (in the absence of the RFO this role will be undertaken by the Support Services Executive). The Fire Evacuation Warden will ensure the Town Council offices are empty and report this to the person in charge at the assembly area. Staff are to obey the instructions of Fire Wardens when the fire alarm sounds. Irrespective of whether the evacuated site is on a monitored alarm system or not, the Fire Warden is to ring 999 and report the incident to the Fire Brigade.

FIRE EVACUATION WARDENS – COUNCIL MEETINGS

Irrespective of the location of a Council Meeting, the meeting clerk is to act as the Fire Evacuation Warden to ensure that the meeting room is vacated and report this to the person in charge of the assembly area/fire officer as appropriate. As WBC do not provide a permanent receptionist during evening GTC meetings, the GTC Fire Evacuation Warden may not immediately be able to find the WBC designated Fire Warden, therefore during evening meetings the Clerk acting as Fire Evacuation Warden is to ring 999 and report the incident to the Fire Brigade.

DISCOVERING A FIRE

If you discover a fire, you should **raise the alarm at once**. There are manual call points (alarm buttons covered by a glass window, also known as “break glasses”) by all final points of exit in the Council Offices and at all locations used for Council Meetings, i.e WBC Council Chamber, Pepperpot, Wilfrid Noyce Centre and the Museum. To raise the alarm, break the glass (carefully), this will activate the fire alarm. Irrespective of whether the evacuated site is on a monitored alarm system or not, the Fire Warden is to ring 999 and report the incident to the Fire Brigade. If safe to do so close all doors and windows and leave the building by the nearest safe route. Once outside, tell the person responsible where the fire you discovered is located.

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

Fire extinguishers are only to be used for small fires, for example a small fire in a waste bin. If you have not used a fire extinguisher before, the time to learn is **not** when there is a fire.

GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

If you see or become aware of any blocked fire exits, potential sources of a fire or anything else which you think may compromise safety in the event of a fire it is your duty to report it, normally to the Facilities Supervisor. If the situation is not resolved quickly, contact the Town Clerk.

BOMB THREAT CALL – MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS

In the event that you receive a bomb threat call please ask the following questions and keep the caller talking as long as possible

WHERE IS THE BOMB?

WHAT TIME WILL IT GO OFF?

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS?

WHO ARE YOU?

At the end of the call immediately ring the emergency number 999 and report the incident. Then notify the town clerk or facilities supervisor

Write down the exact words of the message.

Record anything that was specific about the caller - e.g.

Calm or excited

Accent or odd language use

Old or young sounding

Background noise or music

If on contact with the police service they instruct the evacuation of the building, the evacuation button on the Fire System Control panel should be used to initial an evacuation.

If you come across a suspect package, parcel or bag etc. – please:

Report the package to the Town Clerk or Facilities Supervisor

DO NOT ATTEMPT TO OPEN IT YOURSELF.

If the package cannot be identified the police are to be contacted, staff should follow the advice given by the emergency services.

TERRORIST ACTION BY POST – 109-107 HIGH STREET

THE THREAT IS MINIMAL

Terrorist (or other criminal) action intent on causing harm using the postal system is extremely rare and the Town Council is not considered to be an especially vulnerable target. Although there have been incidents in the UK since September 2001, which have been proven criminal hoaxes. Any incident, however, for the sake of the safety of staff, must be treated seriously.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU RECEIVE A SUSPICIOUS COMMUNICATION THROUGH THE POST

The key advice is:

Your suspicions may be aroused particularly through a combination of the following conditions:

- the means of delivery is unexpected;
- the source of the communication is unknown to you or the source cannot be surmised;
- the addressing of the package is unusual;
- the package is discoloured/stained and/or gives off an unidentifiable smell;
- the package has excessive postage;
- there is excessive binding around the package; etc.

If a package is received that appears suspicious, if practicable place the suspect article in a bag or container that can be sealed and the call **101** for advice, if you remain concerned call 999.

WHAT TO DO IF PEOPLE HAVE BEEN POTENTIALLY CONTAMINATED

If a package is leaking, has been opened and is found to contain a suspicious substance and people have been potentially contaminated by a powder or a liquid, again contact **101** and, if practicable, place the suspect article in a bag or container that can be sealed.

Close doors and windows and evacuate the immediate area in which the article has been handled. For staff within the Council Offices, Godalming you should assemble in the Pepperpot Meeting Room, but please note that it is critically important that all staff who have come into contact with the suspicious article should go to the evacuation area and remain in that area until otherwise advised, following receipt of advice from the emergency services.

Put some form of sign on the outside of the door into the evacuated area to ensure that other staff do not inadvertently enter what may be a contaminated area.