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## Telford Man Jailed After Threatening Police with Fake Gun

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— Categories: Crime



A man in Telford is now behind bars after he confronted two police officers with an imitation firearm made from a brown paper bag, in what authorities call a calculated attempt to provoke fear and violence.

The incident took place at around 10 pm on February 22, when officers responded to reports of an attempted break-in at a shop in Telford town centre. On arrival, Police Constables Dan Arthur and George Oliver were met by 37-year-old Matthew Sylvester, who

charged at their vehicle holding what looked like a handgun. With limited visibility in the car park, the officers could not tell that the weapon was fake.

According to West Mercia Police, Sylvester had hidden in a nearby trolley bay before the officers arrived. There, he used a jumper to conceal his face and folded a Primark paper bag in a way that resembled a handgun. As soon as the police vehicle entered the car park, he rushed towards it, pointing the imitation weapon.

Trapped behind the car park's barriers, the officers could not drive away. Sylvester then approached the passenger side of their vehicle, where he kicked the car and threatened PC George Oliver. He also attempted to open the boot before fleeing the scene on foot. The officers quickly pursued him and tackled him before he could leave the car park, managing to subdue him and remove the jumper covering his face.

Once detained, Sylvester, who has no fixed address and is already known to police, was found in possession of the fake weapon and Class A drugs. He was arrested at the scene and charged with several offences, including possession of an imitation firearm with intent to cause fear, assaulting emergency workers, possession of cocaine, and attempted burglary.

Chief Inspector Matt Sanders said the officers responded to the incident not knowing what to expect and were met with clear intent to cause harm. He explained that Sylvester had deliberately created a situation to lure police to the scene, threatening members of the public and attempting to break into a shop beforehand. By covering his face with a jumper and folding a brown paper bag to mimic a firearm, Sylvester aimed to intimidate whoever arrived.

Sanders commended the courage and professionalism shown by PCs Arthur and Oliver, highlighting how their quick thinking prevented further escalation. He noted that despite the threatening behaviour, neither officer was injured. The suspect was swiftly detained with the support of additional officers. Sanders also stressed that no emergency worker should face violence while doing their job, and thanked the team for their dedication to protecting the public.

Sylvester admitted to all charges midway through his trial at Shrewsbury Crown Court last week. On August 1, he was sentenced to 16 months in prison for the offence involving the

imitation firearm. He also received an additional 3 months for assaulting the two officers, with those sentences to run consecutively.

He was given further terms of four months for causing fear and violence and one month for cocaine possession, which are to run concurrently.

The case highlights growing concerns over the risks faced by emergency workers, particularly when responding to incidents that can quickly escalate in unpredictable and dangerous ways.