

REPORT TO AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE



DATE	20th March 2024
PORTFOLIO	Resources and Performance Management
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PURPOSE

1. To provide members with an update of the recent Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (“RIPA”) Inspection by the Investigatory Powers Commissioner’s Office (“IPCO”) and to report on authorisations issued under RIPA.

RECOMMENDATION

2. To note the update.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

3. To ensure the Council’s RIPA powers are operated lawfully.

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

4. RIPA regulates the Council’s use of covert surveillance to prevent and detect criminal activity.
5. The Council is subject to regular inspection by the IPCO to ensure that its policies and procedures are operated in a lawful manner. The latest inspection took place in the form of a desktop assessment in October 2023. The IPCO Inspector was satisfied that there was ongoing compliance with RIPA 2000 and the Investigatory Powers Act 2016. The Inspector noted that the RIPA policy was last refreshed in 2021 and noted currently that the Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) could not give an assurance that the use of social media by staff was routinely reviewed for compliance with RIPA.
6. The IPCO Inspector recommended that these matters be addressed forthwith. Work is currently being undertaken to refresh the policy and to reinforce the use of social media in compliance with RIPA. Minor amendments to the policy will be actioned in consultation with the Leader.

7. An ongoing recommendation made by the IPCO is that a report on RIPA activity (or lack of it) be made periodically to elected members. This report is the annual update to members on RIPA activity in the past year.

8. In 2023 there was no surveillance activity by the Council necessitating authorisation under RIPA.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND BUDGET PROVISION

9. None

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

10. None

DETAILS OF CONSULTATION

11. None

BACKGROUND PAPERS

FURTHER INFORMATION
PLEASE CONTACT: CATHERINE
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ALSO: