

## **Corporate Issues Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**25 November 2013**

### **Report on the Council's use of powers under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 – Quarter 2 2013/14**



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## **Report of Colette Longbottom, Head of Legal and Democratic Services**

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### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To inform members about the Council's use of powers under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 ('RIPA') during the period 1 July 2013 until 30 September 2013 to ensure that it is being used consistently with the Council's policy and that the policy remains fit for purpose.

### **Background**

2. As members are aware, the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) enables local authorities to carry out certain types of surveillance activity provided that specified procedures are followed. The Local Authority is able to rely upon the information obtained from those surveillance activities within court proceedings.
3. This report gives details of RIPA applications that have been authorised during the period 1 July 2013 to 30 September 2013.

### **Quarter 2 Activity**

4. During the reporting quarter there have been 2 new RIPA directed surveillance authorisations. One authorisation related to a Fraud and Error Team investigation regarding Council Tax/Housing Benefit fraud and the other authorisation related to an operation conducted by Trading Standards into underage sales of alcohol.

5. The authorisations were approved the Magistrate on 19 July 2013 and 2 August 2013 respectively and there were no difficulties or issues raised by the Magistrate in approving the applications.
6. The Council's Senior Responsible Officer is satisfied that the Council's use of its powers under RIPA during the quarter is consistent with the Council's policy and the policy remains fit for purpose.

### **Recommendations and Reasons**

7. It is recommended that members receive the quarterly report on the Council's use of RIPA for the period 1 July 2013 to 30 September 2013 and resolve that it is being used consistently with the Council's policy and that the policy remains fit for purpose.

### **Background Papers**

None

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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**Finance:** None

**Staffing:** None

**Equality and Diversity:** None

**Accommodation:** None

**Crime and Disorder:** The appropriate use of an oversight of RIPA powers will enable the Council to provide evidence to support appropriate prosecutions and tackle crime.

**Human Rights:** None

**Consultation:** None

**Procurement:** None

**Disability Discrimination Act:** None

**Legal Implications:** None