

Corporate Issues Overview and Scrutiny Committee

7 July 2014

Report on the Council's use of powers under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 – Quarter 4 2013/14



Report of Colette Longbottom, Head of Legal and Democratic Services

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 January 2014 until 31 March 2014 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 January 2014 to 31 March 2014.

Quarter 4 Activity

4. During the reporting quarter there have been 3 new RIPA directed surveillance authorisations. The authorisations related to surveillance operations conducted by Trading Standards regarding test purchases to detect the underage sales of alcohol or tobacco, the sale of illicit cigarettes and tobacco and underage sales of alcohol and tobacco.

5. 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 January 2014 to 31 March 2014 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

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