

**CABINET
4 MARCH 2025**

REGULATORY INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT (RIPA)

**Responsible Cabinet Member -
Councillor Mandy Porter, Resources Portfolio**

**Responsible Director - Elizabeth Davison,
Executive Director – Resources and Governance**

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. This report informs and updates Members about issues relevant to the use of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 and developments that have taken place since the last report to Cabinet in September 2024.

Summary

2. The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (“RIPA”) enables local authorities to carry out certain types of surveillance activity, as long as specified procedures are followed. The information obtained as a result of surveillance operations can be relied upon in court proceedings providing RIPA is complied with.
3. The Investigatory Powers Act 2016 (“IPA”) is the main legislation governing the acquisition of communications data. The information obtained as a result of these acquisitions can also be relied upon in court proceedings providing IPA is complied with.
4. This report updates members on issues relevant to this area of work and gives details of RIPA directed surveillance applications and IPA communications data applications that have been authorised since the last report to Cabinet.

Recommendations

5. It is recommended that Members:-
 - (a) Note the issues raised in the report
 - (b) Members receive further reports on the Council’s use of RIPA and IPA and other associated issues.

Reasons

6. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons:-
 - (a) In order to ensure that the Council complies with the legal obligations under RIPA, IPA and national guidance.
 - (b) To help in raising awareness and giving transparency about the use of RIPA and IPA in this Council.

Elizabeth Davison
Executive Director, Resources and Governance

Background Papers

General Information: Investigatory Powers Commissioners Office website: [Home page - IPCO](#)

Jim Langley : Extension 3137

Council Plan	The appropriate use of powers can help improve the quality of lives, local communities and the environment.
Addressing inequalities	The RIPA Policy treats all groups equally
Tackling Climate Change	There are no issues that this report needs to address
Efficient and effective use of resources	Clarity about the lawful use of RIPA and IPA will help in understanding their efficient and effective use
Health and Wellbeing	There are no specific implications for Health and Wellbeing
S17 Crime and Disorder	The appropriate use of and oversight of RIPA and IPA powers can help the Council to provide evidence to support prosecutions and tackle crime.
Wards Affected	All wards
Groups Affected	All groups
Budget and Policy Framework	This does not represent a change to the Council's budget and policy framework.
Key Decision	This is not a key decision.
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision.
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office

7. As advised previously on 1 March 2024, the Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office (IPCO) and the Office for Communications Data Authorisations (OCDA) merged – creating a single body dealing with regulation in this area. Since then the new organisation has been reviewing the way that it undertakes its role and developing new strategic plans.
8. The IPCO publishes quarterly newsletters on its work which are available from the website [Correspondence - IPCO](#). There is nothing specific that needs to be drawn to the attention of Cabinet at this time.

Training and awareness raising – Update

9. Training sessions were held in October 2024 for Council Officers in service areas that use or may need to consider using RIPA. This training was delivered by Jim Langley the Principal Lawyer (Litigation).
10. In addition, all of the designated Authorising Officers and members of the Chief Officers Executive also received refresher RIPA training and there was also training for members of the Chief Officers Board. This training was delivered by the Assistant Director, Law and Governance.

11. It is an essential requirement for us to conduct annual refresher training with our staff and we have to demonstrate our compliance with this requirement when we are inspected by IPCO.
12. Information about the need to consider RIPA was highlighted in the December 2024 Annual Governance newsletter, which is circulated to staff.
13. This bi-annual report as well as other staff coms are also part of the process of raising awareness.

Bi-Annual Report Regarding this Council's RIPA and IPA usage

Directed Surveillance Authorisations

14. There have been no authorisations granted since the last Cabinet Report.

Communications Data Authorisations

15. There have been no authorisations granted since the last Cabinet Report.