

## **CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

**10 FEBRUARY 2014**

### **REPORT OF THE COUNTY SOLICITOR**

#### **REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT 2000**

##### **Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with a quarterly report on the use of powers under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA).

##### **Background**

2. At its meeting on 25 November 2013, the Committee agreed to receive quarterly reports on the use of RIPA powers. The relevant RIPA Code of Practice suggests that quarterly reports should be made to members as a means of ensuring that RIPA has been used consistently and the policy remains fit for purpose. The Code specifically states that elected members should not be involved in making decisions on specific authorisations.

##### **Use of RIPA**

3. For the period from 1 October 2013 to the end of December 2013, authorising officers in the Chief Executive's Department received the following:-
  - 4 applications for directed surveillance;
  - 4 applications to use a covert human intelligence source.
4. Magistrates approved all eight authorisations and were satisfied that the County Council's submissions met all the necessity and proportionately requirements. These surveillance authorisations were required to enable the Trading Standards Service to:
  - Gather evidence relating to a rogue trader suspected of extracting payments from older people for shoddy or unnecessary home repairs;
  - To establish the identify and gather evidence relating to persons engaged in the distribution of counterfeit products;
  - To undertake age restricted test purchases of alcohol and tobacco products from retailers within the County;
  - To carry out covert test purchasing of suspected unsafe consumer goods.

### **Recommendation**

5. The Committee is recommended to note the contents of this report and the use of RIPA powers for the period from 1 October to 31 December 2012.

### **Equal Opportunities Implications**

6. None.

### **Background papers**

Report to the Corporate Governance Committee on 25 November 2013

Report to the Cabinet on 13th December 2013– Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA).

### **Circulation under the local issues alert procedure**

None.

### **Officer to contact**

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