

## PART A

**Report to:** Audit Committee  
**Date of meeting:** 10 December 2014  
**Report of:** Head of Democracy and Governance  
**Title:** Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA)

### 1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 To inform the committee of the result of a recent inspection by the Office of Surveillance Commissioners reviewing the Council's management of our covert activities under RIPA,

### 2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To note the report

**Contact Officer:**

For further information on this report please contact: Carol Chen Head of Democracy and Governance telephone extension: 8350 email: carol.chen@watford.gov.uk

**Report approved by:** Managing Director

### 3.0 DETAILED PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The Office of Surveillance Commissioners is the body with oversight of the covert surveillance aspects of RIPA. The Office has the responsibility of undertaking inspections of all public authorities that have the legal power to use RIPA covert surveillance powers. For bodies such as councils it is normal for an inspection to occur every 3 years or so.
- 3.2 The Council was subject to an inspection on 10 October 2014. The previous inspection being in 2011. During his inspection the inspector met with the Head of Democracy and Governance who is the lead officer for RIPA within the Council, Garry Turner and Jeffrey Leib officers used to the day to day operation of RIPA and Tim Woolridge who manages the CCTV control room. The inspector also visited the CCTV control room in Shady Lane.

- 3.3 I am very pleased to report that following his inspection the Inspector made no recommendations, noted that the two recommendations that he made following his inspection in 2011 had been implemented and commented that whilst the Council is not a significant user of the powers vested in RIPA preferring to use overt activity, it could where necessary and appropriate utilise covert investigation techniques and had excellent policies and procedures in place.
- 3.4 He also commented that since his previous inspection the CCTV control room had moved to the local police station and that there were excellent policies and procedures in place governing the relationship between the Council and the Police regarding it.
- 3.5 The recommendations that had been made in 2011 that had been implemented were, having a formal reporting of RIPA activity to members. This committee now receives annual RIPA reports, and that the role of Senior Responsible Officer be formalised. This now formally rests with the Head of Democracy and Governance. The other recommendation was that the CCTV operational procedure document was revised. This has also been done and is regularly reviewed.

#### 4.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

##### 4.1 **Financial**

- 4.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that there are no financial implications in this report

##### 4.2 **Legal Issues** (Monitoring Officer)

- 4.2.1 The Head of Democracy and Governance comments that there are no legal implications in this report

##### 4.3 **Equalities**

- 4.3.1 Not applicable

##### 4.4 **Potential Risks**

---

There are no risks

---

#### Background Papers

- Inspectors report dated 6 November 2014.

#### File Reference

None