



Investigatory Powers
Commissioner's Office

PO Box 29105, London
SW1V 1ZU

Mr Duncan Sharkey
Chief Executive
County Hall
Taunton TA1 4DY

10 January 2024

Dear Chief Executive,

In furtherance to the original letter to you on 11th August 2023 on behalf of the Investigatory Powers Commissioner, your Council still requires inspection by IPCO regarding its compliance with RIPA 2000 and the Investigatory Powers Act 2016.

It is acknowledged that your Council has gone through considerable organisational change, and this may have contributed to the lack of response to the preparatory questions and follow up correspondence sent to your staff.

It is my intention to conduct a physical inspection at your Council on **Wednesday 3rd April 2024** of your policy, processes, training arrangements and any RIPA authorisations since the last inspection of constituent district councils.

In order to prepare for the inspection, it will be helpful for your Senior Responsible Officer to consider the preparatory questions.

1. Any Areas of Non-Compliance identified at your last inspection have been remedied
2. Your RIPA Policy is subject to annual review and submitted to your Elected Members for approval (please advise when this was most recently revised and shared with Members)
3. Training, both initial and ongoing for key officers, plus awareness training for all staff, is provided (please provide dates since the last inspection)
4. A Central Record that meets the requirements of the relevant Codes of Practice is in place
5. You have a named SRO in place, as well as designated Authorising Officers
6. You have policies and training that appropriately cover the potential or actual use of social media as part of investigations/enforcement activities
7. The potential (for inadvertent, unauthorised) use of such media is actively monitored by managers
8. If you own/manage a town centre CCTV system, that this is operated and appropriately managed in line with RIPA considerations, including when used by third parties such as the local police

9. You are aware of NAFN and how access to communications data is managed through OCDA
10. Your Council has recognised and adheres to the Safeguards outlined in the relevant Codes of Practice in relation to its retention, review and destruction of material obtained through the use of covert powers.
11. If you have used the powers, please make relevant applications and authorisations available for my review.

I look forward to receiving an acknowledgement to the suitability of the date for inspection and contact from a nominated person to finalise arrangements of the inspection.

Kind regards,



John Coull
Oversight Inspector
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Authorisation & Oversight

OUR MISSION: Independently overseeing the use of investigatory powers, ensuring they are used in accordance with the law and in the public interest.