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Helen Standen
Chief Executive
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7th January 2026

Dear Chief Executive,

I am grateful to James Ellis, your Director for Legal, Policy and Governance and Monitoring Officer, and nominated RIPA Senior responsible Officer (SRO), for providing IPCO with the information requested by my Inspector, . I am satisfied the information provided offers the required assurance that ongoing compliance with RIPA 2000 and the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 will be maintained. As such, your Council will not require further inspection this year.

While I recognise your organisation has not used its CHIS and surveillance powers for some time, it is important you maintain a level of knowledge and awareness across the organisation to ensure no unauthorised surveillance is carried out by your staff. Unlike most local authorities, you have not delivered any training for some time. The Covert Surveillance and Property interference Code of practice at paragraph 4.46 places a responsibility on your SRO to ensure all authorising officers are of an appropriate standard and as you have not authorised any activity, regular training becomes even more important. Equally raising awareness of RIPA across the wider organisation will help staff recognise when an authorisation should be considered and will help prevent any unauthorised activity.

Your policy has been reviewed by my Inspector and is fine, but it has not been reviewed internally, nor has it been presented to and approved by your elected members as required by the Code of Practice, since 2023. This point is acknowledged by your SRO and should be addressed at the earliest opportunity.

Going forward, I would ask that you ensure that the key compliance issues receive the necessary internal governance and oversight through yourself and your Senior Responsible Officer. Your Council will be due its next inspection in 2028, but please do not hesitate to contact my Office if IPCO can be of assistance in the intervening period.

Yours sincerely,

The Investigatory Powers Commissioner

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