

# ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

## REPORT TO AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE ON 29 JULY 2021

### REPORT

**SUBJECT:** Update on the Council's Use of Powers Under The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA)

**REPORT AUTHOR:** Stephen Pearse, Internal Audit Manager

**DATE:** July 2021

**EXTN:** 37561

**PORTFOLIO AREA:** Corporate Support

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

The Audit & Governance Committee is the designated body for oversight of the Council's use of powers under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA).

A report / update on any usage is provided to the Audit & Governance Committee annually.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Members of the Audit & Governance Committee are requested to note that the Council did not make any use of its powers under RIPA in the 2020/21 municipal year

#### **1. BACKGROUND:**

The Council has a published RIPA policy. This was last updated in 2019 and adopted by Full Council in January 2020 at the recommendation of the Audit & Governance Committee who considered the changes at its November 2019 meeting.

The Policy was also reviewed as part of the December 2019 inspection by the Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office (IPCO). A high-level document has been attached to advise Members of the main RIPA provisions relevant to the Council.

The Committee is advised that no use of these powers has been made by the Council in the 2020/21 Municipal Year.

#### **2. PROPOSAL(S):**

It is proposed that the Committee notes that RIPA powers have not been used by the Council in the 2020/21 municipal year.

#### **3. OPTIONS:**

To note the lack of use of RIPA powers.

<b>4. CONSULTATION:</b>		
Has consultation been undertaken with:	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Relevant Town/Parish Council		✓
Relevant District Ward Councillors		✓
Other groups/persons (please specify)		✓
<b>5. ARE THERE ANY IMPLICATIONS IN RELATION TO THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL POLICIES: (Explain in more detail at 6 below)</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Financial		✓
Legal	✓	
Human Rights/Equality Impact Assessment	✓	
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act	✓	
Sustainability		✓
Asset Management/Property/Land		✓
Technology		✓
Other (please explain)		✓
<b>6. IMPLICATIONS:</b>		
Use of RIPA (and now IPA) powers have significant restrictions imposed by the legislation. Failure to follow appropriate procedures and approval processes, relevant to the Council under RIPA / IPA, could mean that evidence gathered could be deemed inadmissible in a Court case and/or the Council could be open to legal action for a breach of personal privacy under human rights legislation		

<b>7. REASON FOR THE DECISION:</b>
The Committee notes that the Council has not made use of its powers under RIPA in the 2020/21 municipal year

<b>8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:</b>
N/A