

Councillor development

Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA)

Date(s)	Time(s)	Venue(s)
Friday 4 November 2011	9.30am to 1.00pm	Committee Room 3, County Hall, Trowbridge BA14 8JN

Target audience: all councillors

What is it about?

A half day training session has been organised for councillors regarding the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA). The training will outline the background to the Act and give an update on recent changes to the legislation. There is now a requirement that the oversight of the RIPA policy and its use should be carried out by elected members.

The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA), which came into force on 25 September 2000, was enacted in order to regulate the use of a range of investigative powers by a variety of public authorities. It gives a statutory framework for the authorisation and conduct of certain types of covert surveillance operation. Its aim is to provide a balance between preserving people's right to privacy and enabling enforcement agencies to gather evidence for effective enforcement action.

Councils must comply with RIPA to ensure that any surveillance authorised is "lawful for all purposes" and compliance will protect the Council from challenges to both the gathering of, and subsequent use of, covertly obtained information.

The Home Office Codes of Practice in relation to RIPA state that elected members of a local authority should review the authority's use RIPA and set the policy at least once a year. They should also consider internal reports on the use of RIPA on at least a quarterly basis to ensure that it is being used consistently with the local authority's policy and that the policy remains fit for purpose. They should not, however, be involved in making decisions on specific authorisations.

For course bookings contact Rita Sanders on 01225 718 375 or email councillordevelopment@wiltshire.gov.uk

For more information on councillor development please see: <http://thewire.wiltshire.council/index/councillors-area/councillor-development.htm>