

CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS MEETING FOR PUBLIC PROTECTION

MONDAY, 24 January 2022

PRESENT: Councillor: P.M. Hughes (Cabinet Member).

The following officers were in attendance:

R. Griffiths, Head of Place and Sustainability
L.R. Jones, Head of Administration and Law
R. Edgecombe, Legal Services Manager
E. Bryer, Democratic Services Officer

Virtual Meeting - 2.00 - 2.15 pm

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of personal interest.

2. DECISIONS RECORD - 17TH SEPTEMBER, 2021

RESOLVED that the decision record of the meeting held on 17th September, 2021 be signed as a correct record.

3. REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT

The Cabinet Member considered a report which provided an overview of the use of covert surveillance activity undertaken by the Authority during 2021. It was also noted that the Council's procedure document had been reviewed and no changes were required.

The report included information in relation to the following:

- Directed Surveillance;
- Covert human Intelligence Sources;
- Interception of Communications Data;
- Unauthorised Covert Surveillance;
- Statistical Returns;
- Covert Surveillance Procedure Document.
- Training

The Cabinet Member noted that no authorisations had been issued under this Act during 2021 for the conduct of directed surveillance, covert human intelligence sources and interception of communications data.

The Legal Services Manager stated that refresher training session would be scheduled this calendar year and that all Directors had already been asked to canvas staff to attend training sessions. The Legal Services Manager informed the Head of Place and Sustainability that he would be willing to undertake direct training with Planning Enforcement Officers and any other planning officers that may benefit from undertaking covert surveillance training.

RESOLVED:

3.1 that the covert surveillance activity undertaken by the authority in 2021 be noted;

3.2 to approve the Corporate Surveillance Procedure on the conduct of surveillance for 2022.

4. PLANNING ENFORCEMENT STATEMENT

The Cabinet Member considered a report which provided details of the Planning Enforcement Statement.

It was noted that the current Enforcement Policy was developed in 2015 and an overarching Corporate Enforcement Policy adopted in April 2018. The original Planning Enforcement Statement had been updated following the findings of the Audit Wales Review and to take into account the changes within both the internal and external environment.

The statement included information in relation to the following:

- Clarification on what constituted a breach and what did not.
- Review on current reporting mechanisms including the policy on service requests from anonymous complainants
- Information on the various stages of investigation and what to expect
- Identification of the Service Targets that the section was aiming to achieve
- Identification of the 3 Priorities depending on the seriousness of the alleged breach and the time scales that the service aimed to visit.
- Information on how the authority manages compliments and complaints

RESOLVED that the Planning Enforcement Statement be approved.

CABINET MEMBER

DATE