SRA Complaint – Claire Porter

Complainant: Mr C. Bury

Date: 18-05-2025

Solicitor Name: Claire Kathryn Porter

Firm: Herefordshire Council Legal Services

Role: Director of Governance and Legal Services

Relationship: I am not a client of Ms Porter. She corresponded with me in her role as legal head of Herefordshire Council and was directly responsible for governance and compliance matters concerning my data requests and legal proceedings.

I am submitting this formal complaint against Ms Claire Porter for serious breaches of professional and regulatory standards under the SRA Principles and Code of Conduct. Ms Porter engaged in a sustained pattern of negligent, obstructive, and potentially dishonest conduct from 2022 to 2025 in connection with my Subject Access Requests (SARs), Herefordshire Council's unauthorised surveillance activities, and critical evidence disclosures linked to proceedings before the Investigatory Powers Tribunal.

Key Allegations

1. Failure to secure Forcepoint proxy logs: The Council used IP ranges (85.115.52.201–206), (85.115.53.201–206), (85.115.54.201–206) internal private ranges (10.x.x.x), and public facing network IPs (193.200.145.1-255) to repeatedly access restricted areas of my website. Despite multiple direct SARs and correspondence from 2022 onward, Ms Porter failed to secure or disclose logs from the Council's infrastructure or their proxy provider Forcepoint Ltd. This omission obstructed legal redress and violated GDPR Article 5 and 15, and RIPA policy standards.

2. Submission of inaccurate IPT certificate: On 18 October 2023, Ms Porter submitted a signed certificate to the Investigatory Powers Tribunal (DOC65), asserting that all relevant evidence had been disclosed and investigations conducted. This was false. At the time,

the Council had failed to release multiple logs showing repeated visits to my website alone and had not disclosed material referenced in DOC51, DOC52, DOC53, or DOC62.
Nor did they disclose evidence regarding monitoring on my Twitter account (DOC49).

3. Contradiction of Council RIPA Policy: The Council's policy (DOC58, DOC59) clearly states that repeated social media or web monitoring, particularly when targeting a named individual, requires authorisation. Ms Porter oversaw prolonged monitoring of my platforms without securing this authorisation. This was later rationalised by staff like Helen Worth on incorrect legal grounds, which Ms Porter failed to rectify.

4. Failure to respond to SAR from 13 April 2022: In my SAR dated 13 April 2022, I explicitly requested information relating to Council visits to my website and social media. Ms Porter, as legal head, failed to ensure any such data was preserved or disclosed, despite this being central to my data rights and linked legal actions. Supporting evidence of council activity (DOC60, DOC61, DOC63).

5. Failure to challenge misuse of the 'vexatious' designation: Ms Porter failed to act where there was clear strategic misuse of the vexatious label by Mr O'Connor and others including herself (DOC38–DOC40). As legal director, her failure to intervene or rectify this signals dereliction of regulatory responsibility.

Breaches of the SRA Principles and Code of Conduct

• Principle 1: Uphold the rule of law and proper administration of justice.

• Principle 2: Act with integrity.

• Principle 5: Act in the best interests of each client and of the public.

• Principle 6: Act in a way that encourages equality, diversity and inclusion.

• Code of Conduct: Paragraphs 1.2, 1.4, 1.8, 2.1, 2.2 and 7.1.

Key Supporting Evidence (Annex)

• DOC15 / DOC16 – Dates of surveillance showing unauthorised monitoring and lack of proper disclosure/

• DOC18 – Email by R[redacted] C[redacted] referencing monitoring of my Twitter account.

• DOC38–DOC40 – Misuse of the 'vexatious' label coordinated between Ms Porter and Mr O'Connor.

• DOC57 / DOC58 – Herefordshire Council's own RIPA policies.

• DOC60 / DOC61 – Evidence of Council's failure to disclose.

- DOC64 - IPT 2024 04 12 Notice of Decision.pdf

• DOC65 - Certificate signed by Ms Porter to the Investigatory Powers Tribunal (18 October 2023).

DOC66 - Misrepresentation of number of emails, Misuse of 'unreasonable behaviour' to withholding requested evidence data

A complete annex index is included in the file titled: SRA_Annex_Claire_Porter_Updated_14-05-2025.docx.

I am willing to provide any further information or clarification upon request.

Sincerely

[redacted]

Mr C. Bury