

15 January 2024

**Re: - REVIEW OF THE STRATEGY OF DEALING WITH
CONTAMINATED LAND IN RCT**

Dear Director, Public Health, Protection and Community Services,

I have been instructed by this Council's Community Services Scrutiny Committee to convey the comments and observations of Members in relation to the **proposed Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy for RCT** before its consideration through the delegated decision process.

The Community Services Scrutiny Committee gave feedback and comments in respect pre-scrutinising the Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy, at its meeting on the 15th January. The following points were raised:

- Members praised the strategy noting that it is comprehensive, clearly written and technical and recognised the work that has been undertaken by Officers in compiling the report including the examples provided as appendices and the updated information relating to the most recent review.
- A Member referenced the lack of funding available as highlighted in the report and noted the requirement under Part 2 of the Environmental Act that the Council must inspect its area in terms of contaminated land and sought clarity that the lack of resources doesn't impact the ability of the Council to carry out inspections and fulfil their requirement.
- Members also acknowledged the lack of funding was an issue across Wales and queried the position of other Local Authorities and the processes used in other Local Authorities to fulfil their requirements regarding Contaminated Land Inspections and whether it is a universal approach to utilise the Development Control Processes as currently is the case in Rhondda Cynon Taf.
- A Member raised the point that it is important for the Council to be confident that the Strategy is comprehensive to ensure there are no risks posed to local Communities as a result of there being a lack of resources available and sought clarity that the strategy has clear processes for dealing with complaints if received.
- Members also recognised the importance of the strategy feeding into the Council's wider plans such as Corporate Plan / Council's Carbon Reduction Strategy.
- Members raised the concern of the increasing impact of significant weather events such as flooding and the connections between flood risk management and risk of contamination arising from flood events.

- Members sought clarity over the responsibility of NRW in dealing with Special Sites and the scrutiny arrangements of NRW in respect of the Councils responsibility to residents.
- A Member also queried the availability of the Public Register only being hard copy and asked whether there were plans to make this available online in the interests of transparency.

At the conclusion of the Committee's discussions, Members recognised the importance of having a Contaminated Land Strategy and were supportive of the proposal to renew this. Members were mindful of the challenges given the lack of funding available and raised their concerns in relation to the impact of significant weather events and the potential to cause contamination requesting further clarification on the process of assessing flood risk management. Overall committee noted its support in favour of the proposals.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Christian Hanagan', written over a faint circular stamp.

Christian Hanagan
Service Director Democratic Services and Communication