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From: ChairPAC [redacted] >

Sent: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 5:19 PM

To: 'William.Sinclair [redacted]'; Martin Earl [redacted] >; Hazel Sorrell [redacted]; david mackie [redacted]; david fettes [redacted]; rcjohnson9 [redacted]; Ronnie Erskine [redacted]; Chris

Spray [redacted]; Iain Paterson [redacted]

Cc: Stuart Mearns [redacted]; Heather Reid <[redacted]>; Gordon [redacted]; Claire Chapman [redacted]

Subject: Recent Email Correspondence re: Cononish Gold Mine

Dear Member,

You will have received an email either directly or via the Committee Clerk email address in respect of Cononish Gold Mine.

I have been briefed on the emails on this subject from this individual in recent months and discussed them with Stuart, who oversees the monitoring of the site and liaison with the mine operator. Members will be aware that the monitoring of development and condition compliance is an operational matter, which is overseen by Stuart as the relevant Director.

The adverse incidents, noted in the email you received, were highlighted verbally to Members by Stuart at the October Planning and Access Committee as an additional point to the annual Cononish Monitoring report. Stuart further advises that there has been a number of operational changes at the mine site to address the causes of the incidents – this is when there has been increased sediment in the discharge beyond the level set in SEPA's authorisation. As noted at Monday's Committee meeting, SEPA are the regulator in terms of the authorised discharge from the mine site, and it would be for them to take enforcement action on this issue if they felt it was necessary. Staff have regularly liaised with SEPA and we understand they are content with the changes made over the course of this year and continue to monitor the site working closely with the operator and the Park Authority.

As an example of the ongoing monitoring of the situation at the mine and our proactive work with partners such as SEPA, Crown Estate and the landowner, the Quarterly monitoring visit on the 13<sup>th</sup> December highlighted the need for specific proactive steps to be progressed as a matter of urgency in respect of the tailings in Stack 2 and the management of the settlement ponds. As a result confirmation was sought from the company that the works would be undertaken highlighting that if this was not provided by today (20<sup>th</sup> December), then the Park Authority would need to consider potential formal enforcement action in order to secure their completion or other actions working with relevant stakeholders and signatories to the S75 Agreement. Confirmation was received that the required works will start today and officers will continue to monitor this.

In terms of reporting or updates to Members, there has been updates to October Planning and Access Committee, November's Audit and Risk Committee and the December Board Meeting. This increase in reporting and the sharing of information on activity at the Mine site and on the situation with the operating company was considered appropriate and sufficient for Board Members.

The correspondence received via the Committee Clerk email account has been acknowledged as part of a wider response to the individual's various emails to the National Park Authority on this matter and I would suggest that is all the response required. The individual has received information on the level of assurance being provided to the Committee and wider Board relating to this case.

Should you wish to discuss further please don't hesitate to contact me or Stuart.

Regards,

Claire

Claire Chapman  
Chair of Planning and Access Committee

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