



The Coal
Authority

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Rt Hon Stephen Crabb MP
Chair of the Welsh Affairs Committee
London, SW1A 0AA

Sent by email to the Second Clerk of the Welsh Affairs Committee: [REDACTED]

25 April 2024

Dear Stephen Crabb,

Thank you for the invitation to the evidence session on metal mine pollution in Wales scheduled for 8 May. I can confirm that Carl Banton, Operations and Sustainability Director and Nick Cox, Head of Metal Mines Programme will attend to give evidence to the committee.

The Coal Authority is a practical, operational body that predominantly exists to manage the legacy from Great Britain's coal mining past. We are a 24/7/365 emergency responder and a category 2 responder under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (as amended 2023) and undertake a range of activities to protect life, drinking water and the environment from the effects of coal mining and wider aspects of mining where we are funded to do so. For example we operate 80 mine water treatment schemes across Great Britain which protect 400 km of river and the drinking water of 600,000 people.

We are a UK Government non-departmental public body and partner organisation of the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero. Increasingly over the last decade or so we have also used our skills and experience to support governments with the challenge of pollution from metal mines. We do this for (and funded by) Defra and in partnership with the Environment Agency in England and for (and funded by) Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales in Wales. Scotland does not have the same level of impacts from metal mining but we work closely with Scottish Government and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency across many aspects of our work.

We have focused this response on our work in Wales, funded by Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales. Water quality and the pollution from abandoned metal mines is a devolved

matter led by Welsh Government and managed by Natural Resources Wales. Policy is set by Welsh Government.

The Coal Authority uses its expertise, in partnership with Natural Resource Wales, to provide advice and support on managing the impacts of metal mine pollution. This includes designing and building mine water treatment schemes on a prioritised basis, informed and funded by Natural Resources Wales on behalf of Welsh Government. Our work is funded on a cost recovery basis in line with other public sector work that we do across Great Britain.

Natural Resources Wales undertake water monitoring to identify the problems and prioritise legacy metal mine sites that impact water quality. The Coal Authority act as the delivery partner by identifying, developing and delivering remedial interventions to improve water quality. Interventions include surface water management to address diffuse pollution and mine water treatment to address point source discharges. The Coal Authority will operate and maintain these interventions, post construction.

You can read more about our work in our [Business Plan](#) which sets out our 3 year plan and 10 year vision to make a better future for people and the environment in mining areas and our 2022/23 [Annual Report and Accounts](#) which includes a summary of our work in Wales (Page 40-41). Welsh versions are available here [Cynllun Busnes](#), [Adroddiad Blynyddol a Chyfrifon](#).

I hope this is helpful. Please do let me know if we can assist further. We look forward to meeting with you on the 1 May ahead of the committee on the 8 May.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'L. Pinney', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Lisa Pinney MBE
Chief Executive