



Chartered
Institute of
Environmental
Health

Mr. Richard Benyon MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary for Natural Environment & Fisheries
Defra
Nobel House
17 Smith Square
London SW1P 3JR

17th June 2010

Dear Mr Benyon

Contaminated land capital grants

We have read last Thursday's announcement on local government spending and noted in particular the decisions, first, to reduce the budget for Contaminated Land Grants and, second, to lift the ring-fence on them.

Though we understand the economic reasons why it has been done, we are naturally disappointed that the budget is being reduced. Though it is true that the programme has been underspent in the past, that does not mean that it is unnecessary, rather that local authorities have often lacked the resources of their own for initial surveys and to work up bids. Quite apart from putting local authorities in some difficulty in respect of their statutory duty, reducing the help available to them can only perpetuate the risks from contaminated sites to human health and other sensitive receptors, continue property blight and slow down the process of regeneration and its associated economic benefits. In addition, the UK's negotiating position on the proposed EU Soil Framework Directive may be weakened if our domestic system ceases to work as well as we claim.

Should agreement be reached on this Directive, the UK will need a strong skills base to meet the required objectives. Cutting support to this sector is likely to lead to cuts in capacity too and we urge you to ensure that the upcoming Spending Review does not result in further reductions.

Notwithstanding, we appreciate the attempt to increase flexibility by removing the ring-fence around these Grants. What would increase flexibility further and might help mitigate the adverse

effects of the budget reduction would be, at the same time, to extend the scope of the grant to support the preliminary work mentioned. That would at least help the limited assistance to be distributed better according to the merits of the sites concerned. We would be grateful if you would give the idea some consideration.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Philip Mulligan". The script is cursive and fluid.

Philip Mulligan
CEO
Environmental Protection UK

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Graham Jukes". The script is cursive and includes two large loops at the bottom.

Graham Jukes
CEO
Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH)