

**ITEM B NOTICE OF MOTION - COUNCILLOR COX - RUSSELL VALE COAL MINE**

Councillor Cox has submitted the following Notice of Motion –

“I formally move that –

Councillors be given a briefing on the Russel Vale coal mine, including but not limited to:

- The land use agreement between Wollongong Coal and Wollongong Council on the mine site and adjacent land in the Russell Vale Golf course;
- Unpaid security bonds, and what efforts council has made to recover those debts;
- Council’s liability for site remediation in the event that Wollongong Coal goes bankrupt;
- Update on emplacement area Council conditions; and
- Environmental controls currently in place, both for the mine and also the emplacement area on Council land.

**Background provided by Councillor Cox:**

It has been reported in the media that Wollongong Coal owes several hundred thousand dollars in unpaid security bonds to Wollongong Council. These are intended to be kept by Council to cover the costs of site remediation in the event that the mine closes and is unable to pay for remediation. However, if these bonds have never been paid, there is a legitimate concern that Council bears the liability of clean up.

There have also been reports that there was a historical land swap agreement between Wollongong Coal and Wollongong Council. Wollongong Council owns some land that the mine is using as a stockpile for waste material, and the mine owns some land that is part of the golf course. The land owned by the mine and occupied by the golf course was supposed to be dedicated to Council - however it appears that this never happened. As a consequence, Council owns part of the slag heap and the coal mine owns part of the golf course. There is cause for concern that council may be left with a large stockpile of waste material and seriously degraded land, while the mine owns the golf course, which council has been maintaining over many years.

Residents have expressed concern that Wollongong Coal are not complying with environmental controls to prevent contamination of waterways, and airborne pollution in particular.

It would be helpful for Councillors to have a full understanding of the complexities of this matter.