1 Purpose of Report

1.1 This report updates members of Rochdale Township Committee on the latest position regarding the TBA site.

2 Recommendations

2.1 Members are recommended to note and comment upon the information provided in the report.

3 Update – report submitted to Informal Cabinet

3.1 The TBA site has been of long-running concern for the local communities which surround it. The Council has always sought to work with the landowners' representatives (UK Land and Property or UKLPR) for the safe management of the site, now and in the future. This requires appropriate dialogue with UKLPR to ensure that any risks arising from the site are kept to a minimum; for instance, appropriate site security is to be maintained.

3.2 On 13 August 2015, a report was presented to Informal Cabinet outlining the history of the site and details of current site management. Members considered the report in detail and asked for further information to be provided. A report containing the requested information will now be presented to Informal Cabinet on 8 October 2015.

4 Update - Air Quality Monitoring

4.1 The Council is keen to better understand the risks (if any) posed by the site which may arise from its industrial history. As a result, the Council has commissioned a firm to undertake sampling around the perimeter of the site, to gather data on whether asbestos levels in the air are within expected parameters.
4.2 The work is being undertaken by Bureau Veritas of Didsbury. Monitoring equipment will be placed at 4 carefully selected locations. These locations will be secure (placed within residents’ gardens with their full agreement), and between them will cover the full circumference of the site. In order to act as a comparator, it is also proposed that an additional “control” unit should be housed on the roof of Number One Riverside.

4.3 The exercise is due to commence in September 2015. Under the agreed Sample Analysis Plan, monthly samples will then be taken over the next 12 months until August 2016. A total of 5 samples will be taken each month (including the control sample). Of the 4 monthly non-control samples, 3 will be analysed by optical microscopy and 1 by electron microscopy (which has a higher resolution but a greater cost). All filter papers will be retained, thereby giving the Council the option to undertake future electron microscopy (subject to findings and future finances). The control sample will be analysed by optical microscopy.

4.4 The methodology to be used by Bureau Veritas for counting asbestos fibres is based on standard industry practice and will be carried out by competent and accredited analysts. The only aspect which requires any local consideration is the location of sites from which the monitoring will be undertaken. This will be determined by the physical location of the preferred sites, which will demonstrate a lack of obstructions (eg fences) and will be able to provide security for monitoring equipment.

4.5 The air quality monitoring exercise was publicly discussed at the last meeting of the Spotland and Falinge Area Forum on 21 May 2015, as evidenced by the minutes of that meeting (please see link below):

http://democracy.rochdale.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=539&MId=3538&Ver=4

4.6 The full cost of this exercise will be borne by Rochdale Council. It is proposed that the outcome of the sampling will be shared with Spotland and Falinge Area Forum as well as Rochdale Township.

**Alternatives considered**

The Council is under no obligation to undertake the monitoring of the site’s perimeter. However, the Council is keen to understand the nature of any risk posed by the site and as such the sampling is an appropriate step which will hopefully provide reassurance for local residents.

5 Financial Implications

5.1 The cost of the sampling cannot be disclosed for reasons of commercial sensitivity. However, as stated in the report, the full cost of the sampling will be borne by Rochdale Council.

6 Legal Implications

6.1 There are no legal implications arising from the decision to undertake the perimeter sampling. Once the outcome is known, this will form part of the Council’s thinking in terms of its stance with regard to the site.
7 Personnel Implications

7.1 There are no Personnel implications arising from this report.

8 Corporate Priorities

8.1 This report contributes to the Council’s 2014/15 Corporate Plan in the following ways:

- People – increased healthy life and wellbeing

9 Risk Assessment Implications

9.1 The Council is keen to better understand the nature of risk posed by the site. The perimeter sampling will enable the Council to determine the risk (if any) posed to local residents by air-borne transmission of asbestos.

10 Equalities Impacts

10.1 Workforce Equality Impacts Assessment

There are no (significant) workforce equality issues arising from this report.

10.2 Equality/Community Impact Assessments

The following equality/community issues arise from the issues raised in this report as set out below: summarise key issues from, and cross ref to EIA, even if EIA appended to report

The TBA site is a major issue for the Council and local residents in terms of its potential impact on local communities. The air quality monitoring exercise is intended to help clarify the position regarding possible health risks, and this professional exercise will provide a wealth of data which will help the Council to better understand this issue.

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