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Kip Meek
Chair, Special Reference Group
Competition and Markets Authority

By email

30 October 2020

Dear Kip

I was disappointed to learn that the North East Flood Risk Reduction scheme was not agreed, despite the strong case that was submitted to you as part of Northumbrian Water's Business Plan. I know that the scheme had very strong customer support, so I thought it might be helpful to re-state my support of the proposals as you consider further submissions.

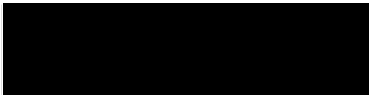
I understand that Northumbrian Water customers, when presented with the choice of large bill reductions or investment now to reduce the risk of more serious problems happening in the future, clearly indicated the company should invest now, with 91% accepting the proposed plan.

Within the Tyne and Wear area, this would include an investment of around £41m to provide flood risk reduction to approximately 4,371 properties from a range of rainfall events. I am concerned in particular about the schemes which would impact on residents of Newcastle:

	Investment	Properties protected
Newcastle	£2,096,369.00	77
Heaton SWNT	£660,000.00	30
Martello Gardens	£660,000.00	30
Newcastle Upon Tyne SWNT Denton Valley	£1,436,369.00	47
05-D26 Lindfield Ave, Newcastle - Flooding	£687,909.00	21
Heatherslaw Road, Newcastle Flooding	£748,460.00	26

Of course, striking the right balance between affordable bills today and investing to ensure future generations have a resilient service is clearly an important judgment, particularly given our understanding of growing environmental pressures. I would urge you to support the customers' choice, by taking a long-term view and ensuring the ability of Northumbrian Water to deliver this package of schemes is financeable as you consider these further submissions.

Yours sincerely,



Cllr Nick Forbes
Leader of the Council