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17 April 2025

Kirstin Baker CBE
Competition and Markets Authority
The Cabot
25 Cabot Square
London
E14 4QZ

Email: waterPR24references@cma.gov.uk

Dear Ms Baker,

CMA Referral – Northumbrian Water Group 2025–30 Business Plan

As the largest independent business organisation in the region, I am writing on behalf of the North East Chamber of Commerce to express our support for Northumbrian Water Group's (NWG) referral of Ofwat's Final Determination for its 2025-30 Business Plan to the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA).

Our members, from small and medium-sized enterprises to large employers, depend on reliable, high-quality infrastructure to operate, innovate and grow. NWG's proposed £6bn investment programme represents a significant opportunity to enhance essential services and generate wider economic benefits for the North East and beyond.

We welcome the fact that much of the plan has been approved. However, we understand that some key elements, particularly those focused on infrastructure upgrades and longer-term planning, may not receive the level of support needed to proceed in full. Without greater certainty and the ability to secure private investment, there is a risk that parts of the programme could be delayed or



reduced. As a result, this may limit the wider benefits the plan could deliver for local businesses, supply chains and communities.

This is an important moment for regional investment. NWG's plans are already stimulating economic activity across a range of sectors, supporting skilled jobs and strengthening local networks. The fact that 60p in every pound spent remains within the region highlights the scale of opportunity for the North East.

Our support for this submission reflects the long-term value this programme can bring to the regional economy. It offers a platform for business growth, further investment and sustained economic development.

This aligns with our mission to create a stronger, fairer North East economy.

This letter is submitted on a confidential basis and is not intended for wider circulation.

Yours sincerely,



John McCabe
Chief Executive Officer
North East Chamber of Commerce