Cumberland Council

Civic Centre
Rickergate
Carlisle
Cumbria CA3 8QG
Telephone 0300 373 3730
cumberland.gov.uk

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To whom it may concern

Cumberland Council support Electricity North West's application for additional funding to improve the resilience of the electricity network in Cumberland under the Storm Arwen Uncertainty Mechanism. Cumberland saw significant damage in the aftermath of Storm Arwen, therefore we welcome additional investment to increase the resilience of the network to secure reliable electricity supplies for our communities and businesses.

During Storm Arwen some of our communities were without power for over five days and many miles of overhead lines were impacted. Due to our location and geography, we are exposed to the impact of severe weather events and their frequency has noticeably increased in our region. Climate changes forecasts suggest that this will only increase in the future. Therefore, it is vital that we proactively take steps to future-proof the network to storm impacts. When the power is off for extended periods our communities not only experience loss of power, but due to the rural nature of our region communities also potentially spend days without water, drainage, telephony, broadband and access to vehicle charging. Remote communities are particularly affected, unable to move to other locations as roads became impassable, also hindering Electricity North West's engineers from reaching and repairing affected sites. Electricity North West do an incredible job when it comes to restoring power but it is important to recognise their limitations, particularly around Cumberland reaching remote areas due to road damage, as we have recently seen with Storms Isha and Jocelyn.

Storms are not going away and we must become more resilient to support and protect our communities. As a Council we support the range of initiatives which ENWL propose including network strengthening (rebuilding overhead lines to modern standards or undergrounding), interconnecting parts of the network, and using new technology to automatically restore more customers following a storm event.

We fully endorse Electricity North West's application and I hope you give it your full consideration.

Yours sincerely

Darren Crossley
Director of Place, Sustainable Growth & Transport
Cumberland Council