Westmorland & Furness Council

Via email

11 January 2024

Dear Mr Grunfeld

Westmorland and Furness Council are pleased to support Electricity North West's application for additional funding as part of the Storm Arwen Uncertainty Mechanism. We welcome additional investment to increase the resilience of our communities and improvements should be made to secure reliable electricity supplies for residents and businesses in the area.

Some of our communities in Cumbria endured extended periods of electrical power loss as a result of Storm Arwen and more recent weather incidents. During Storm Arwen some of our communities were without power for over 5 days and many, many miles of overhead lines were impacted. Coordination between agencies helps to alleviate some of the worst impact, however some communities are extremely remote, inaccessible in flood or snow due to limited access points and these communities deserve to have their supply strengthened and improved. 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 people also potentially spent days with the loss of power impacting water, drainage, telephony, broadband and access to vehicle charging. Not to mention the impact on businesses, schools and the vital tourism industry that our region is known for.

As a council we are committed to decarbonisation and the expected increased reliance on electricity means that our regions aspirations are even more reliant on a reliable electricity supply. The recommendations from the Storm Arwen Review by BEIS and Ofgem are welcomed alongside all opportunities to strengthen the electricity network across our

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community. 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, improving our ability to remotely restore supplies, additional tree-cutting etc. The frequency of storms in our region is increasing and a modern, resilient network is vital.

We look forward working with ENWL to identify the most appropriate targeting of the investment and the most effective packages of work for individual communities and areas.

Yours sincerely,

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