



**Environment, Food
and Rural Affairs
Committee**

16 July 2025

Heidi Mottram
CEO, Northumbrian Water Group and Northumbrian Water
By email

Subject: Reforming the water sector inquiry

Dear Heidi,

I am writing in response to your letter dated 9 June 2025, which responded to several questions from the EFRA Committee.

The information provided so far has been helpful and I acknowledge that you stated in your oral evidence that you have no plans to pay dividends over the next five years. We note, however, that your letter did not address our original question regarding Northumbrian Water's policies for paying dividends over the past five years and how this related to company performance. I would appreciate further information on previous dividend policy.

Our question regarding legal fees was also interpreted as fees incurred when initiating legal action. The Committee would also like to know how much has been spent on external legal fees in connection with regulatory actions taken by Ofwat, the Environment Agency and the Drinking Water Inspectorate over the past 5 years and in relation to any complaints or legal actions initiated by individuals, campaign groups or NGOs in relation to Northumbrian Water's regulated activities. We are collecting this information from all those companies who made a similar interpretation of our original question.

The Committee would also like to know, over the same timeframe, how many regulatory actions by Ofwat, the Environment Agency and the Drinking Water Inspectorate Northumbrian Water has been subject to and of those, how many the company has i) complied with, ii) sought to reframe, or iii) contested.

Finally, the Committee would like to know how many people work in Northumbrian Water's legal team and how many of the team focus on regulatory matters of the type overseen by Ofwat, the Environment Agency and the Drinking Water Inspectorate.

I would appreciate a response by 1 August 2025.

Yours sincerely,

Alistair Carmichael MP
Chair, Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee