

# PETER GIBSON MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Sunday 23 October 2022

*Dear Constituent*

Thank you for your email about the ongoing political situation in Westminster.

I must apologise for the delay in responding, as the situation has unfolded, earlier drafts of this reply rapidly became out of date. This letter was drafted and prepared on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> October, please accept my further apologies if it does not address points that have now become irrelevant due to events, and if events occur which have overtaken my replying points to you.

Liz Truss has taken the decision to resign as leader of the Conservative Party. Under our constitutional set up, the electorate cast their vote for an individual to become their Member of Parliament in the General Election; voters do not vote for individuals to become Prime Minister. The Prime Minister will serve for as long as they hold the confidence of their colleagues in the House of Commons. It became clear that Liz Truss could no longer rely on the confidence of the House of Commons, she rightly recognised that it was in the national interest for her to step down.

I welcome the news that an expedited leadership election is set to take place to ensure a new Prime Minister is in place by the end of next week. It will now be the duty of my colleagues and I to choose her successor as Leader of the Conservative Party and therefore Prime Minister. It is now the duty of my colleagues and I to elect a leader who will oversee a sensible, and competent Government at this critical moment for our country.

I have taken the decision to back Rishi Sunak as the next leader of the Conservative Party and our Prime Minister. Rishi has been a tireless champion for our levelling up agenda in Darlington and the wider Tees Valley and took the brave and bold decision to site the Northern Economic Campus in Darlington.

He is energetic, entrepreneurial and a man of integrity, a man we can trust. He is a true friend to me and a true friend to Darlington and that is why I am backing our neighbouring MP, Rishi Sunak, to be the next Prime Minister of our country.


From an economic standpoint, we must be frank about the scale of the economic challenges we face, with global inflationary and interest pressures caused by Putin's illegal invasion of Ukraine. I am pleased that the new Chancellor has already taken decisive action by making immediate changes to the Growth Plan to support confidence and stability in our economy. We are:

- Reversing almost all the tax measures announced last month – including the cut to dividend tax rates; the reversal of the off-payroll working reforms introduced in 2017 and 2021; the new VAT-free shopping scheme for non-UK visitors; and the freeze to alcohol duty rates.

*Member of Parliament for Darlington*

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- Maintaining the planned levels of income and corporation tax – keeping the basic rate of income tax at 20 per cent until economic circumstances allow for it to be cut, restoring the top rate of income tax at 45 per cent, and proceeding with the planned corporation tax rise to 25 per cent.
- Reviewing the Energy Price Guarantee – keeping the planned support in place until April 2023 and conducting a review into how best to support energy bills for households and businesses beyond that date, ensuring support is in place for those most in need.

These actions will help to put the public finances on a sustainable footing. Moreover, I want to assure you that the Government will publish a credible, transparent, fully costed plan to get debt falling as a share of the economy over the medium term.

Here in Darlington I want to assure you that I continue to work hard on a daily basis to deliver on our local priorities, delivering on the Government's commitment to unite the country and level up communities that have long been left behind by Governments of all colours.

Nowhere has this been more evident than in our town. Since the 2019 General Election, this Government, has invested in our town and our region; ensuring that Darlington will play a key role in shaping future policy for our country, indeed, one of the very reasons I am backing Rishi Sunak.

As you will know, last year, the Government announced that the Treasury would create the new Darlington Economic Campus in our town. Already, civil servants from the Treasury, the Department for International Trade, the Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, the Competition and Markets Authority and the Office for National Statistics are working from our town's centre.

In addition, the Government is investing £139m into redeveloping Bank Top Station, revolutionising connectivity. That redevelopment complements the rejuvenation of the town centre, with £23.3m secured from the towns fund, allowing our town to reverse the disastrous changes of the past and making Darlington a thriving market town once again.

I am incredibly proud to be the Member of Parliament for Darlington, elected on a clear manifesto, which I will continue to deliver on for the people who trusted me to represent them, working hard every step of the way.

Once again, thank you for taking the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

*Yours sincerely*  
*Peter Gibson*

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