

SHAREHOLDER COMMITTEE FOR CARE DORSET HOLDINGS LTD

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 25 JUNE 2025

Present: Cllrs Nick Ireland (Chair), Richard Biggs (Vice-Chair), Steve Robinson and Gill Taylor

Present remotely: Cllrs Ben Wilson

Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):

Chris Best (Managing Director, Care Dorset), Jen Cook (Lawyer - Contracts and Commercial), Aidan Dunn (Executive Director - Corporate Development S151), Lisa Evans (Chief Finance Officer, Care Dorset), Tony McDougal (Communications Business Partner - Adults and Housing), Ona Morrall (Lawyer - Contracts & Commercial), Caroline Tapster (Chair of the Board of Directors), Mark Tyson (Corporate Director for Adult Commissioning & Improvement) and Lindsey Watson (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

1. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 April 2025 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Public Participation

There were no questions or statements from members of the public or local organisations.

4. Councillor Questions

There were no questions from councillors.

5. Terms of Reference

The terms of reference for the shareholder committee were noted.

6. Dorset Council Organisational Update

The shareholder committee considered a report of the Corporate Director, Commissioning and Improvement, which presented the developments on the part of the Council, relevant to Care Dorset, and summarised significant developments

since the last meeting of the shareholder committee. Particular reference was made to progress with the development of new reablement centres, thanks expressed to those that engaged in the recent consultation around day services and managers and staff within the day centres visited during the consultation, recognition of current budget challenges with thanks noted to the Dorset Care Association for their support, and an update on work undertaken to purchase a care home, which would not now be progressed.

Councillors considered the issues covered in the report and discussion was focused on the following areas:

- The potential timing for the Care Quality Commission (CQC) local authority inspection was considered
- The consultation relating to day centre provision currently operated by Care Dorset had closed and further work would be undertaken to look at where services were delivered and the needs of areas. This would include engagement with councillors and local councils to consider implications for their communities, including areas currently without day services. A report would be considered through the council's democratic process towards the end of the year
- Further work would be required to ensure that day centre buildings were financially viable and to support them to become community hubs
- The impact of the rise in employers' National Insurance rates and thresholds on the commissioner and providers was considered. Providers would be asked to review their cost bases and report if there were additional costs that were required to be met. There would be continued engagement with providers if and when issues occurred and the wider picture across the south west region would also be monitored.

The report was NOTED.

7. Care Dorset Update

The Chair of the Board of Directors and Managing Director of Care Dorset introduced the report, which provided an update on matters relating to Care Dorset since the previous meeting. This included Care Dorset's financial and operational performance, workforce trends, governance and strategic priorities.

The new Chief Finance Officer was introduced to the shareholder committee. An update was also provided in respect of the appointments of the Chief Commercial Officer and the Clinical Director.

In presenting the report, the Managing Director made particular reference to the completion of fire safety remedial works, voluntary turnover levels and recent Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspections, including at Streets Meadow, which had retained its 'Good' rating.

Councillors considered the issues arising from the report and during discussion, the following points were raised:

- The Cabinet member for Property & Assets and Economic Growth would follow up in respect of a meeting due between Care Dorset and the council's assets team
- In response to a question regarding the Home Office's Sponsorship Management System, the Managing Director noted that the position with recruitment within Care Dorset was positive and that there was not a reliance on overseas recruitment
- The Corporate Director provided some comments on the situation regarding the above, on the social care sector generally, and noted that this was an ongoing issue. Links to the Government proposal for the fair pay deal were also noted with a requirement to understand funding in this area
- Use of agency staff was expected to reduce by 40% by September 2025 and the impact on the budget was considered. The Managing Director reported that there was confidence that this could be achieved due to a number of measures put in place, including the introduction of reduced agency premium costs, improvements in sickness levels and increased support to managers in rota management
- In response to a question, it was reported that there was a comprehensive approach to monitoring sickness absence within Care Dorset and further information was provided.

The report was NOTED.

8. Annual report and Year end accounts to 30 September 2024

The Managing Director, Care Dorset, introduced the report which set out the audited annual accounts for the 12-months ending 30 September 2024. In addition, he noted that an impact report was available to shareholders and would also be available on the Care Dorset website. The report was for noting by the shareholder committee.

In response to a question regarding an increase in staff costs, the Managing Director provided an overview of staffing developments, including investment in improving levels in the care team and support centre and arrangements to ensure levels of staff resilience.

The Cabinet member for Adult Social Care commended Care Dorset on the financial position.

The report was NOTED.

9. Forward Plan

The Forward Plan was noted.

10. Urgent Items

There were no urgent items.

11. Exempt Business

There was no exempt business.

Duration of meeting: 2.00 - 2.44 pm

Chairman
