

# Care Dorset Shareholder Committee

2 December 2024

## Report from the Chair of the Board of Directors

### For information and assurance

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Report status: **PUBLIC**

#### **Brief summary:**

This paper provides an update for shareholder members on matters relating to Care Dorset following the last meeting. This is a shorter paper given the annual performance report covered elsewhere on the agenda.

#### **Recommendation:**

A. For the Shareholder Committee to note the report and the updates contained therein.

#### **Reason for recommendation:**

Care Dorset is a key delivery partner to the Dorset Council for adult social care and support. There remains significant work in driving forward improvements in Care Dorset's operation and also to grow the organisation both in volume and revenue.

## **INTRODUCTION**

1. Care Dorset is pleased to submit the Chair's Report to the Shareholder. It is a shorter report given the annual performance review which is included on the agenda.
2. We have engaged a part-time Marketing Director to support Care Dorset with preparing itself to sell more beds to private funders as well as exploring ways in which the organisation can better market itself as the organisation seeks to operate in a more commercial manner.
3. I am sure I speak for us all when I say how saddened we were to learn of the recent incident at the Gainsborough Care Home in Swanage. Following media reporting, we have sought to assure ourselves and the Board of the situation within our 24/7 care settings. We have reviewed the gas safety certification as well as purchased additional carbon monoxide testing equipment and located these in areas of risk.

## **FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE**

4. For the 12 months ending 30 September 2024, the management accounts show an operating profit of £79k. This is worse than budget by £656k. While getting to better than breakeven is creditable given the business's situation earlier in the year, there remain significant risks to overcome before the year-end.
5. Cash flow is expected to be positive through to the end of January 2025.
6. The assumptions on cash flow being positive through to end of January including some funding due from Dorset Council which include monies for property costs and the back-dated pay award.
7. There is some outstanding rent owed which Care Dorset will catch up with once the occupation agreement has been resolved.
8. The Government's budget announcement to increase employer National Insurance contributions by 1.2%, and reduce the secondary threshold means that we expect our pay bill to increase by £0.5 million per annum. We are talking to Dorset Council Commissioners as part of our contract price negotiations about how these additional cost pressures are accounted for within the overall costings.

## **OPERATIONAL DELIVERY**

9. We are delighted that St Martin's has now opened and the people have begun to move in. We have a wonderful team in place, and they are gearing up to start delivering really good care and support over the coming weeks.
10. The transfer of Shared Lives service to Care Dorset has been paused while some important matters relating to the transfer are progressed with Dorset Council.
11. Over the last quarter occupancy levels in our residential care settings have averaged 90%.

12. Occupancy levels across the 30 reablement beds have increased from 80% in the last quarter to 85% which reflects the work that colleagues have been doing with our referring agencies.
13. Our Day Services continue to over deliver against contract by a considerable level. Whilst we do not deliver services to as many people as we did in the past, the full-time equivalent is now higher than prior to the Care Dorset transfer given the higher needs of the individuals accessing the services. Care Dorset is working with Dorset Council in developing plans in response to the commissioning intention to develop a hub and spoke model.

## **WORKFORCE**

14. Recruitment activity was up slightly in October from September with 9 new colleagues commencing, with a full time equivalent of 4.42.
15. All onboarding for colleagues has now been centralised to the existing Resourcing team ensuring greater compliance with CQC Regulation 19.
16. The volume of leavers in general as well as turnover of colleagues within their first 6 months of employment continues to present as a key area of focus. With there being 17 leavers overall and 5 leavers this month in the first 6 months of employment.
17. The Human Resources (HR) Department continues to support Managers in addressing this through their regular monthly HR Surgeries, identifying where formal intervention is needed and supporting the process to conclusion.
18. Following the Learning and Development review, Care Dorset is in the process of recruiting a new learning and development department which will include three internal trainers and a digital coordinator. Overall compliance in training has improved since last reported, up to 86.4% against the target of 90%.

## **GOVERNANCE**

19. The details of our Senior Information Risk Owner (known as SIRO), Caldicott Guardian and Data Protection Officer have been registered with NHS Digital. Our Managing Director is the registered SIRO, our Director of Operations is our registered Caldicott Guardian and the Company Secretary as Data Protection Officer (now a qualified GDPR Practitioner).
20. Information security and information governance remains a focus for Care Dorset and a framework is being pulled together over the forthcoming months; this will help to provide assurance and develop good practice across the company.
21. The management of paper archives in our registered residential settings has been a priority to ensure we are lawful (in terms of retention periods) and potential fire safety risks addressed. The residential homes and supported living services will be completed by Christmas 2024, with reablement and day services following in the new year. A revised retention policy, with supporting schedule, and roadmap for a company file plan are to follow in early 2025.

22. Members of the Board attended a learning event facilitated by Claire Ward from Anthony Collins on 12 November 2024. The session was insightful, offered some useful guidance for the future and the feedback received has been positive.

## **PEOPLE WE SUPPORT INVOLVEMENT**

23. This is covered within the annual performance review.

## **STRATEGIC RISKS**

24. Following receipt of the findings report from Risk Management Partners (Gallagher Bassett) at the end of October, the strategic risk register is currently being reviewed to reflect key areas of feedback, sense-check against sector and global risks, and incorporate best practice.
25. A company issues log is now running, and this reflects the issues already happening and needing our prompt attention. In some cases, we may find entries moving between the issues log and the risk register during the lifecycle of the item.
26. A further session on risk management was prepared and delivered to the Senior Leadership Team at the end of October to introduce more rigor and ownership across our extended team. We are starting to see issues and risks flowing from our colleagues in operations, projects and business development thereby informing our strategic oversight.

## **APPENDICES**

27. There are no appendices to this report.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

28. There are no background papers.