SHAREHOLDER COMMITTEE FOR CARE DORSET HOLDINGS LTD

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 23 MARCH 2026

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

Apologies: None

Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):
Chris Best (Managing Director, Care Dorset), Grace Evans (Head of Legal Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer), Tony McDougal (Communications Business Partner - Adults and Housing), Sam Poole (Interim Corporate Director for Commissioning & Improvement), Caroline Tapster (Chair of the Board, Care Dorset), Lindsey Watson (Senior Democratic and Governance Officer) and Sian White (Service Manager, Finance)

30. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2026 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

31. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

32. **Public Participation**

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

33. **Councillor Questions**

There were no questions from councillors.

34. **Forward Plan**

The Forward Plan was noted.

35. **Dorset Council Organisational Update**

The shareholder committee considered a report of the Corporate Director, Commissioning and Improvement, which presented the developments led by the council, relevant to Care Dorset, and summarised key progress since the last meeting of the shareholder committee.

In respect of the recent review of day opportunities, the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care expressed his appreciation to Care Dorset staff for their professionalism during the review process.

In response to a question, the Corporate Director confirmed that a report relating to the Bridport Reablement Centre was due to be considered by Cabinet in June. Consideration was given to the potential timescale for the development.

The report was NOTED.

36. **Care Dorset Update**

The shareholder committee considered a report, which provided an update on matters relating to Care Dorset since the previous meeting.

The Chair of the Board made reference to a Care Dorset summit which had taken place on 4 February and which had been attended by members of the Care Dorset Board and commissioning team. She thanked the Dorset Council representatives that had attended and noted that the summit had provided an opportunity for all attending to jointly reflect on progress made to date, plans for the future and to reaffirm the shared commitment for continued success and growth.

The Managing Director provided an overview of the areas covered by the report and made particular reference to operational performance issues including occupancy levels, a structure transformation programme that was being undertaken and noted that an update on the current business plan would be provided at the next meeting of the shareholder committee. It was noted that Care Dorset continued to perform well against the expectations of the commissioners.

Councillors considered the issues covered by the report and points were noted in the following areas:

- Occupancy levels were considered and would be covered further in the business plan report later on the agenda
- In response to a point raised, a definition was provided for an ‘involuntary’ leaver
- An update was provided on sickness levels and the management of both short-term and long-term sickness. Care Dorset linked in with the council’s occupational health team to support people back to work
- A point was raised in respect of the use of the wording related to the average occupancy in care homes, where it stated that average occupancy was 100% in two care homes. The wording would be reviewed and revised for future reports.

The report was NOTED.

37. **Chair of the Board - tenure for a further 3 years until June 2029**

Prior to consideration of the agenda item, Caroline Tapster, Chair of the Care Dorset Boards, left the meeting.

The shareholder committee received a report which set out a recommendation from the Remuneration and Nominations Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd and Care Dorset Limited, to continue the tenure of the existing Chair of the Boards, Caroline Tapster for a further 3 years, until June 2029.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care commended the continuation of the current Chair of the Boards.

It was proposed by S Robinson seconded by R Biggs

Decision

That the recommendation from the Remuneration and Nominations Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Limited and Care Dorset Limited, to continue the tenure for the existing Chair of the Boards, Caroline Tapster, for a further 3 years until June 2029, be approved.

Reason for the decision

To consider the continuation of the existing Chair of the Boards, Caroline Tapster for a further 3-year tenure until June 2029.

Caroline Tapster returned to the meeting.

38. **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

39. **Exempt Business**

It was proposed by S Robinson seconded by G Taylor

Decision

That the press and the public be excluded for the following items in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the meaning of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12 A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

Reason for taking the items in private

Paragraph 3 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

The livestream was concluded at this juncture.

40. **Care Dorset Annual Business Plan**

The shareholder committee considered a report of the Managing Director, Care Dorset, which presented the Annual Business Plan for Care Dorset for 2026/27. In presenting the business plan, the Managing Director set out the key strategic priorities for 2026/27.

Councillors reviewed the business plan, and responses were provided to questions and comments raised.

It was proposed by S Robinson seconded by B Wilson

Decision

That the Annual Business Plan for 2026/27 be approved.

Reason for the decision

As set out in the exempt report.

41. **Remuneration Policy 2026-29**

The shareholder committee received and considered a report of the Managing Director, Care Dorset, which presented and sought approval of the Remuneration Policy 2026-29. In presenting the report, the Managing Director confirmed that a change would be made to the final version of the document, to clarify the decision-maker in respect of the policy.

It was proposed by R Biggs seconded by S Robinson

Decision

That the Remuneration Policy 2026-29 be approved, with a review period of three years.

Reason for the decision

As set out in the exempt report.

Duration of meeting: 2.00 - 2.58 pm

Chairman

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