

MINUTES

Shareholder Committee

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of a meeting of the Shareholder Committee held on Monday 31 October 2022, City Hall.

Members Present: Councillors Adam Hug (Chair), David Boothroyd, and Matt Noble

Apologies: Councillors Liza Begum and Tim Roca

2. MEMBERSHIP
There were no changes to the membership of the Shareholder Committee.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES
RESOLVED: The Committee agreed, on the advice of attending officers, that the minutes of the meeting held on 17 March 2022 were a true and correct record of the proceedings.
It was noted that current Members of the Shareholder Committee were not present for the meeting dated 17 March 2022 due to the change in Administration, but the Committee was content to approve the minutes on the basis of the recording of the meeting and the advice of officers.

4. NOTICE OF PRIVATE PART OF MEETING
RESOLVED: It was resolved that the rest of the meeting should take place in private session and that any public and press present should be excluded from the meeting due to the likely disclosure of exempt information, most notably commercially sensitive information.
This decision was taken on that basis on of the contents of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

<p>5.</p>	<p>WESTMINSTER BUILDS MID-YEAR REVIEW</p> <p>Cllr Hug invited James Green (Director of Development) and Chief Executive of Westminster Builds to provide an overview of the report.</p> <p>Mr Green noted Westminster Builds has delivered 43 homes at the start of the year (2022-2023) and that number has increased to 71 homes with a further 8 to follow shortly.</p> <p>Due to the current market, lettings have been slower than expected. Acquiring additional units will be the primary focus over the next financial year for the company.</p> <p>Mr Green noted that Westminster Builds is committed to aligning itself to the new Truly Affordable Housing Strategy in line with the Fairer Westminster Strategy. To achieve this 31Ten has been hired as a consultant to review the delivery of the Council's regeneration ambitions and strategy including as part of this, the objectives and role of Westminster Builds.</p> <p>Cllr Hug noted that the Shareholder Committee needs to consider a new appointment to the Chair of the Board of Westminster Builds following the change in Administration.</p> <p>Cllr Noble asked if the delays are due to lettings or marketing of units and Mr Green responded that this is mainly due to marketing tenancies and Westminster Builds will be looking to offer tenancies earlier. Cllr Noble stated that he's happy to look at this process.</p> <p>Cllr Boothroyd noted that there has been a bit of a lull on developments and that there has been changes to the core management team, to which Mr Green replied that the Development / Regeneration service will be going through a restructure next year.</p> <p>RESOLVED – SHAREHOLDER COMMITTEE APPROVED THE RECCOMENDATIONS SET OUT ON PAGE 8</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>WESTMINSTER COMMUNITY HOMES MID-YEAR REVIEW</p> <p>Cllr Hug welcomed Steve Moore, Chief Executive of Westminster Community Homes and invited him to introduce his report.</p> <p>Steve Moore noted that this year Westminster Community Homes will be working on acquiring leaseholder interests on estates and noted their success on Ebury Bridge.</p> <p>James Green, Chair of Westminster Community Homes, noted that Steve will be retiring in the new year. He also noted that the Board requires new members due to vacancies arising and asked the Shareholder Committee to bear that in mind.</p> <p>The Committee offered sincere thanks to Mr Moore for his work over the years and wishes him the best in retirement.</p> <p>The Shareholder Committee agreed to the recommendations set out in the report in section 8.2 to move forward with the recruitment of a new Chief Executive.</p>

	<p>Cllr Hug asked Mr Green, as Cabinet Members await the recommendations from 31Ten, which will also consider the role of Westminster Community Homes, if we are restricted to 5 board member and James notes we can have 7 or 9.</p> <p>Cllr Hug noted the social value work of the company and asked how that is integrated with the wider Council. Mr Moore noted that we are missing work this with Registered Provider (RP) sector and this is something the new Chief Executive will be asked to explore.</p> <p>Cllr Noble noted he agrees with the recommendations in the report and stated he would prefer to spread the net wider on talent appointed to the Board, and would like 7 Board members opposed to 5.</p> <p>Cllr Boothroyd noted that the Board members may have to be remunerated.</p> <p>RESOLVED – SHAREHOLDER COMMITTEE APPROVED THE RECOMENDATIONS SET OUT ON PAGE 25</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>WESTCO MID-YEAR REVIEW</p> <p>Cllr Hug welcomed Ian Farrow Managing Director of Westco and Christos Pishias Associate Director to introduce their report.</p> <p>Mr Farrow set out that Westco has faced a challenging landscape due to the current market and noted the success the company had during the pandemic in regard to protecting employment and growing new revenue streams.</p> <p>Mr Farrow noted the company are proposing a company restructure which it is expected will enable the company to adapt and ensure profitability in 2023 and beyond.</p> <p>The Committee thanked Mr Farrow and Mr Pishias for the report, agreed the business plan, including the proposed restructure arrangements.</p> <p>RESOLVED – SHAREHOLDER COMMITTEE NOTED THE RECOMENDATIONS SET OUT ON PAGE 45</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>COMPANY GOVERNANCE AND COMMERCIAL REVIEW</p> <p>Cllr Hug invited Richard Cressey, Head of Governance and Councillor Liaison to introduce the report.</p> <p>Mr Cressey noted that an independent valuation of Westco Trading Ltd has been commissioned and will report in the coming months. This valuation will inform the Council's choices on next steps and this would be reported to the next meeting of the Shareholder Committee in March.</p> <p>The Committee welcomed the report, agreed that officers should assess the options available to the Council's based on the final outcome of the company valuation and report back to the Committee in due course.</p> <p>RESOLVED – SHAREHOLDER COMMITTEE NOTED THE RECOMENDATIONS SET OUT ON PAGE 114</p>

9.	WORK PROGRAMME Members had no comments on the future Work Programme.
10.	ANY OTHER BUSINESS No other business was noted.