

Cherwell District Council

Shareholder Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Shareholder Committee held as a Virtual meeting, on 15 February 2021 at 1.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Barry Wood (Chairman)

Councillor John Donaldson
Councillor Tony Ilott

Also Present:

Councillor Simon Holland – Cherwell District Council appointed Non-Executive Director of Crown House Banbury Limited (for agenda item 8)
Sue Smith – Chairman, Graven Hill Development Company (for agenda item 7)
Karen Curtin – Managing Director, Graven Hill Development Company (for agenda item 7)
Karen Orrey – Graven Hill Development Company (for agenda item 7)

Officers:

Steve Jorden, Corporate Director Commercial Development, Assets & Investment
Michael Furness, Assistant Director Finance
Claire Taylor, Corporate Director Customers and Organisational Development
Belinda Green, Operations Director - CSN Resources
Jonathan MacWilliam, Programme Director, Growth & Commercial
Liza Ellis, Executive Assistant, Place, Growth and Commercial
Emma Faulkner, Democratic and Elections Officer
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

31 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

32 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 21 December 2020 were confirmed as a correct record, to be signed by the Chairman in due course.

33 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

34 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

35 **Exclusion of the Public and Press**

Resolved

That, in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business, on the grounds that they could involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Schedule 12A of that Act and that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

36 **Graven Hill Village Development Company - Quarter Three Management Report, Business Plan and Budget 2021/22**

The Committee considered an exempt report from the Shareholder Representative which detailed quarter three management information, the draft budget and draft business plan for 2021/2022.

The Managing Director – Graven Hill Development Company presented key information relating to quarter three performance, and detailed amended recommendations for the Committee's consideration.

The Managing Director – Graven Hill Development Company explained that self-building on the site had continued during the early part of the year despite the COVID pandemic. It was anticipated that 89 units would be completed across the site by the end of the current financial year.

Rental units had proved popular, and as a result of the Government's 'Help to Buy' scheme being extended to May, a number of units on the price list had been reserved.

With regards to the employment land aspect of the site, discussions were ongoing and it was hoped contracts would be exchanged during February.

The Managing Director – Graven Hill Development Company advised the Committee that key areas of focus for the remainder of 2020/21 included preparation for the Strategic Review that would be undertaken with the Board and Shareholder. A strategy day was scheduled for 14 April, the Managing

Director – Graven Hill Development Company gave details of the proposed content for the day for the Committee's consideration.

The Committee thanked the Graven Hill Development Company for the update.

Resolved

- (1) That the Graven Hill quarter three management update be noted.
- (2) That the quarter three management accounts be approved.
- (3) That the quarter four priorities and year end forecast be noted.
- (4) That the Shareholder Finance Review undertaken on 6 January 2021 be noted.
- (5) That the 2021/22 Budget, Cashflow and Business Plan be approved, incorporating:
 - Principles – STACK 16
 - 2021/22 Revenue and Expenditure Budget
 - 2021/22 Cashflow and Funding Requirement
 - 2021/22 Business Plan
 - 2021/22 Corporate Key Performance Indicators
- (6) That the Strategic Review Scope for 14 April 2021 be approved.
- (7) That the Building Block update be noted.

37 **Crown House - Quarter Three Management Report, Business Plan and Budget 2021/22 January 2021 Review**

The Committee considered a report from the Shareholder Representative that detailed the Crown House quarter three management report, business plan and budget 2020-25 January 2021 review.

The Shareholder Representative explained that earlier issues with the Wi-Fi in the building had now been resolved, along with all snagging issues. A number of local suppliers had been used to resolve some issues due to travel restrictions as a result of the COVID pandemic.

Occupancy levels were very good, with a number of short term tenancies renewed at the end of their initial period. The small number of tenants who had moved on at the end of their tenancy were as a result of changing personal circumstances due to the pandemic.

In response to questions regarding the car parking spaces, the Programme Director, Growth and Commercial explained that a permit system was in place and it was managed by an external company.

In relation to the review of the 2020-25 business plan, it was proposed that the updated business plan be used until September 2021 when 12 months' trading had been completed. A revised business plan for the period 2021-2026 could then be produced.

Resolved

- (1) That the Crown House Banbury quarter three management report be noted.
- (2) That the Business Plan and Budget 2020-25 January 2021 review be approved, and it be revisited in September 2021.

38 **CSN Resources - Quarter Three Management Report, Service Plan and Budget 2021/22**

The Committee considered a report from the Shareholder Representative that presented the CSN Resources quarter three management report, and requested approval of the service plan and budget for 2021/22.

The Operations Director – CSN Resources explained that the team had continued to deal with an increased workload during quarter three as a result of the COVID pandemic. Government grant schemes relating to Local Restriction Support, Additional Restriction Support and Christmas Support payments were all being administered by the team, as well as Test and Trace payments and Covid Council Tax Hardship payments.

With regards performance, collection of Council Tax and Business Rates were both reporting amber, with figures of 82.53% (Council Tax) and 82.89% (Business Rates) against targets of 85% and 86% respectively. Benefits performance remained rated green.

The Operations Director – CSN Resources explained that the team was working pro-actively with all parties in relation to the collection of Council Tax and Business Rates.

With regards to the service plan and budget for 2021/22, it was hoped that the introduction of automated processes could be achieved for some aspects of business. The Operations Director – CSN Resources explained that the team had worked with colleagues from IT to create online forms for people to complete in relation to COVID grants, and it was hoped this work would help with the move towards automation of some processes.

The Shareholder Representative advised the Committee that the Operations Director – CSN Resources would be leaving the company at the end of March to take up a position at the West Northamptonshire Unitary Authority. The Committee thanked the Operations Director – CSN Resources for her work with the company to date, and wished her good luck for the future.

The Shareholder Representative explained that as a result of the departure of the Operations Director and the creation of the West Northamptonshire Unitary Authority, a project team would look at CSN Resources and advise options for moving forward.

Resolved

- (1) That the CSN Resources quarter three management report be noted.
- (2) That the business plan and budget 2021/22 be approved.

The meeting ended at 3.40 pm

Chairman:

Date: