Shareholders Committee

Tuesday, 7th April, 2026

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Ian Woodall, Juliet Barker Smith and Jane Spilsbury

Officers:

Ruth Bamford and Juie Lorraine

Democratic Services Officers:

Jess Bayley-Hill

23. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Bill Hartnett and Sharon Harvey.

In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair, Councillor Ian Woodall, chaired the meeting.

24. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Jane Spilsbury declared an other disclosable interest in respect of Minute Item no. 25 – Shareholders Committee Annual Report 2025/26 - as her son worked for Rubicon Leisure Limited. She remained present for the debate in respect of this item and voted thereon.

25. SHAREHOLDERS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2025/26

The Principal Democratic Services Officer presented the Shareholders Committee's draft Annual Report 2025/26 for Members' consideration.

Members were advised that there was a requirement, detailed in the terms of reference for the Shareholders Committee in the Council's constitution, for an Annual Report to be prepared each year which detailed the work of the Committee during the municipal year. The draft report would be considered by the Shareholders Committee and subsequently by the Executive Committee, as the Shareholders Committee was a sub-committee of the Executive.

The final report was due to be presented at the first ordinary meeting of Council to be held in the 2026/27 municipal year.

There were certain reserved matters in the Articles for Rubicon Leisure Limited that could only be determined by the Shareholders Committee. The Committee's work in respect of these reserved matters had been detailed in the draft Annual Report and included approval of the company's business plan for the following financial year.

There was a requirement in the Articles for at least four meetings of the Shareholders Committee to be held each year. Members were advised that this requirement had been fulfilled in the 2025/26 municipal year.

Following the presentation of the report, Members commented that Rubicon Leisure Limited had had a successful year. The suggestion was made that the achievements arising as a result of the Committee's input during the year, including actions delivered under the previous business plan that had been approved by the Committee, should be highlighted in the report. In addition, Members commented that these achievements could be further highlighted through the inclusion of images in the final version of the report.

Reference was made to the performance of Rubicon Leisure Limited. Members commented that they were proud of the fact that the company was performing well in terms of income targets and was also making a positive contribution towards tackling health inequalities within the Borough. However, it was also noted that the focus of the report was on the work of the Committee during the year, not the performance of the company or specific facilities managed by the company.

Consideration was given to the potential for the Council to assist Rubicon Leisure Limited with the promotion of the company's achievements. It was highlighted that the Council's Communications team could assist with highlighting the company's positive achievements. However, Members were also asked to note that there were restrictions on Council publicity during the pre-election period.

Reference was made to the meetings of the Committee that had been held in 2025/26 and questions were raised about the extent to which other Members could attend and participate in the meetings. Confirmation was provided that the Committee was a sub-committee of the Executive Committee, in line with national best practice, and therefore only Members of the Executive could be appointed to serve on the Committee. However, in line with the terms of reference for the Committee, group leaders were invited to attend meetings, and they could participate in the debate. Meetings of the Committee were also open to other Members to attend to observe, with their participation in the debate subject to the discretion of the Chair.

During consideration of this item, a few typographical errors were identified, including in respect of the membership gallery. A request was received to address these prior to publication of the final report.

RECOMMENDED that

subject to the amendments detailed in the preamble above, the Shareholders Committee's Annual Report 2025/26 be submitted to Council for consideration.

The Meeting commenced at 6.30 pm
and closed at 6.46 pm