

20 January 2016

J D WETHERSPOON PLC

Q2 Trading Update

J D Wetherspoon plc ('J D Wetherspoon' or 'the Company'), announces an update on current trading, before entering its close period for its interim results, for the six months ending 24 January 2016, which are expected to be announced on 11 March 2016.

Current trading

For the first 12 weeks of the second quarter (to 17 January 2016), like-for-like sales increased by 3.3% and total sales by 6.3%. In the year to date (25 weeks to 17 January 2016), like-for-like sales increased by 2.8% and total sales increased by 6.1%.

We expect the operating margin (before any exceptional items) for the half year ending 24 January 2016 to be around 6.3%, 1.1% lower than the same period last year. The margin reflects the increases in the starting rates for hourly paid staff in October 2014 and August 2015, which totalled approximately 13%.

Property

The Company has opened 5 new pubs since the start of the financial year and has sold 2. We intend to open 10 to 15 pubs in the current financial year.

Financial position

The Company remains in a sound financial position. Net debt at the end of this financial year is currently expected to be slightly above the 26 July 2015 total of £601.1million.

Outlook

The chairman of JD Wetherspoon, Tim Martin, said:

"Like-for-like sales have improved in the second quarter so far. However, as indicated in our November trading update, increased labour costs will be an important factor in the outcome for this financial year. Our current view is profits for this year are likely to be towards the lower end of analysts' expectations."

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Notes to editors

1. J D Wetherspoon owns and operates pubs throughout the UK. The Company aims to provide customers with good-quality food and drink, served by well-trained and friendly staff, at reasonable prices. The pubs are individually designed, and the Company aims to maintain them in excellent condition.
2. Visit our website: www.jdwetherspoon.co.uk
3. This announcement has been prepared solely to provide additional information to the shareholders of J D Wetherspoon, to meet the requirements of the FCA's Disclosure and Transparency Rules. It should not be relied on by any other party, for any other purposes. Forward-looking statements have been made by the directors in good faith, using information available up until the date on which they approved this statement. Forward-looking statements should be regarded with caution, because of the inherent uncertainties in economic trends and business risks.
4. The current financial year comprises 52 trading weeks to 24 July 2016.
5. The next trading update is expected to be the Company's interim results statement on 11 March 2016.