

## **JD WETHERSPOON PLC**

5<sup>th</sup> May 2010

### **THIRD QUARTER TRADING UPDATE**

JD Wetherspoon plc ("JD Wetherspoon" or the "Company") announces its second Interim Management Statement, as required by the FSA's Disclosure and Transparency Rules, relating to the third quarter, covering the thirteen weeks ending 25th April 2010.

#### **Current Trading**

For the 13 weeks to 25<sup>th</sup> April 2010, like-for-like sales decreased by 0.8%. Total Company sales over the same period increased by 3.6%. In the year-to-date (39 weeks to 25<sup>th</sup> April 2010), like-for-like sales decreased by 0.2% and overall Company sales increased by 4.0%.

We reported on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2010 that operating margins before exceptionals were 10.0% in the first half of the financial year and they have remained at this level in the 39 weeks to 25th April 2010.

#### **Property**

The financial year so far has seen the opening of 26 new pubs and the closure of 2 sites. Approximately 45 new sites are now expected to open this financial year.

#### **Financial position**

The Company is in a sound financial position, with net debt to EBITDA currently at approximately 2.8 times.

#### **Other matters**

As part of a continuing legal process, the Company has recently received a cash payment of £14.9m for a claim against overpayment of VAT on amusement machines. This potential income is still contingent on the final outcome of that legal process. A further update will be made, when appropriate.

#### **Outlook**

Our sales, profit and cashflow continue to be resilient, in spite of price increases in January (in respect of higher VAT) and at the end of March (in respect of a punitive increase in excise duty for pubs). The performance of our pubs which opened within the last 2 years is encouraging; we continue to believe there are substantial opportunities for us to acquire sites at reasonable prices. We therefore remain confident about the Company's prospects for this financial year.

However, we now feel slightly more cautious about the outlook for the next financial year, as a result of the annualised effect of recent tax and duty increases, and higher interest charges, combined with the risk of more subdued consumer expenditure.

**Enquiries:**

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Visit our web site at [www.jdwetherspoon.co.uk](http://www.jdwetherspoon.co.uk)

Notes to editors

1. JD 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](http://www.jdwetherspoon.co.uk)
3. This announcement has been prepared solely to provide additional information to the shareholders of JD Wetherspoon, in order to meet the requirements of the UK Listing Authority's Disclosure and Transparency Rules. It should not be relied on by any other party, for other purposes. Forward-looking statements have been made by the directors in good faith using information available up until the date that they approved this statement. Forward-looking statements should be regarded with caution because of inherent uncertainties in economic trends and business risks.
4. The next trading update is expected to be issued on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2010.