

WHITBREAD

Trading Statement

Released : 04 March 2010

RNS Number : 0576I
Whitbread PLC
04 March 2010

Thursday 4 March 2010

TRADING UPDATE

WHITBREAD DEMONSTRATES FURTHER POSITIVE MOMENTUM

Whitbread PLC, the UK's largest hotel and restaurant group, today reports trading performance for the 51 weeks to 18 February 2010.

Sales for the 51 weeks to 18 February 2010

	% sales change vs. prior year			
	Q4 (to week 51)		51 weeks to 18/02/10	
	Like for like	Total	Like for like	Total
Premier Inn	1.7	8.5	(4.6)	2.8
Pub Restaurants	1.3	2.1	1.8	(0.6)*
Whitbread Hotels and Restaurants	1.5	5.5	(1.9)	1.3
Costa	9.5	19.9	5.3	21.0
Total	3.0	9.0	(0.7)	5.4

*including the 44 sites disposed of in September 2008

Alan Parker, Chief Executive of Whitbread PLC comments:

Whitbread's trading performance continues to be robust. In the last quarter all our businesses have demonstrated further positive momentum with like for like sales growth.

At Premier Inn, like for like sales in the last three months have been positive, up 1.7% on last year. Revpar at Premier Inn

showed continued outperformance versus competitors. Year to date, regional revpar was -6.9% against -10.2% for the total regional hotel market. Our plan to target the leisure market aggressively is progressing well with both our £29 Premier Offers and dynamic pricing delivering occupancy growth at weekends and holiday periods. In the quarter, we opened two hotels. We will end the year with a total of 42,799 rooms of which 41,720 rooms are in the UK and 1,079 rooms are overseas.

Our pub restaurant brands have delivered sustained growth in the quarter with like for like sales up 1.3%, albeit after a slow start early in January due to the adverse weather. Year to date, total sales for pub restaurants are up 5.2%** year on year, with total covers up 5.1%. We have opened five restaurants during the year, bringing our total estate at the year end to 374.

Costa has recorded another strong and accelerating underlying performance. In the quarter like for like sales were up 9.5%, recently benefiting from the launch of Costa's new 'Flat White' coffee at the end of January. Year to date sales in UK and overseas franchise units are up 35.8% to £203m. Costa's international presence will be further enhanced by the acquisition of coffeeheaven, with its 89 stores in Central and Eastern Europe. In the year, net 185 new Costa outlets were opened in the UK and net 32 across our international markets, taking the total number of outlets to 1,505 across 24 markets.

Net debt as of the year-end is estimated to be around c.£540m (2008/09: £623m) against committed facilities of £1.15bn.

In 2009/10 Whitbread achieved its three priorities, which were to outperform the competition, to reduce operating costs and to achieve cash flow neutrality. It is anticipated that the results for the year ended 4 March 2010 will be in line with management expectations and will be announced on 29 April 2010.

Like for like sales trend

	% Like for like sales change vs. Prior year				
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4 (to week 51)	YTD
	%	%	%	%	%
Premier Inn	(7.9)	(7.1)	(3.1)	1.7	(4.6)
Pub Restaurants	2.0	1.6	2.3	1.3	1.8
Whitbread Hotels and Restaurants	(3.7)	(3.6)	(1.0)	1.5	(1.9)
Costa	2.6	2.4	6.7	9.5	5.3
Total	(2.7)	(2.7)	0.3	3.0	(0.7)

**excluding the 44 sites disposed of in September 2008

End

Conference call for analysts and investors

Alan Parker and Christopher Rogers will be available for a conference call at 8.00am today. To participate, dial 0808 238 0673 and enter Conference ID: 57451323.

A recording of the conference call will be available until the 10th March 2010. To listen, dial 0800 953 1533 and enter the passcode

57451323#. This service will be active approximately two hours after the conference call has finished.

Please dial into the call 10 minutes before to ensure you don't miss the start.

For more information please contact:

Investor Relations

Christopher Rogers, Whitbread PLC +44 (0) 20 7806 5491

Press Contacts

Tabitha Aldrich-Smith, Whitbread PLC +44 (0) 1582 84 4244
David Allchurch, Tulchan +44 (0) 20 7353 4200

For photographs and video please visit our media library on www.whitbreadimages.co.uk

Notes to Editors

Whitbread PLC is the UK's largest hotel and restaurant group operating market-leading businesses in the budget hotels and restaurant sectors. Its well-loved brands are Premier Inn, Beefeater, Brewers Fayre, Table Table, Taybarns and Costa Coffee.

Whitbread PLC employs over 33,000 people and serves 9 million customers every month in over 2,000 outlets across the UK.

In the six month period ended 27th August 2009, Whitbread PLC reported a 3.1% increase in Group Revenue to £703.3 million and Underlying Profit before tax of £118.2 million down 2.7%.

Whitbread PLC is listed on the London Stock Exchange and is a constituent of the FTSE 100 . It is also a member of the FTSE4Good Index.

This information is provided by RNS
The company news service from the London Stock Exchange

END

TSTJMMRTMBAMBFM