

Steeper Group Section 172 Statement for the year ending 28 February 2023

This statement is included in the consolidated financial statements of Steeper Group Holdings Limited as at 28 February 2023 and these financial statements may be obtained from Companies House.

The following disclosure sets out how the directors have discharged their duties under Section 172 of the Companies Act 2006, to promote the success of the Group for the benefit of its members as a whole.

Our key stakeholders are our People; Customers; Suppliers; and the Communities where we are based.

People

We define our People as our employees, contractors, consultants, and any other workers who work for our business. We believe the key matters important to our People are that they are working for a reputable employer; are fairly remunerated; have job security and stability; have access to development opportunities; and enjoy a positive culture and working environment. We have created our People Values to encourage a culture that aligns with the ethos of our business, and the demonstration of our values is rewarded through our employee recognition schemes. We engage with our people through staff surveys and our Innovation Forum. We also welcome feedback to the management team in staff meetings as well as other more informal settings. We review our employee benefits package annually and have taken steps to improve this in the current financial year, increasing annual leave allowances from January 2023, in addition to awarding an all-staff salary increase.

Customers

Within the UK our primary customer is the NHS but we also work with a range of other private, public, and third sector organisations. We also have a global customer base of distribution companies and agents. The way in which we work with our customers varies depending on their specific needs and requirements. However, we know that regardless of their size, our customers expect our products to be high quality, reliable, delivered on time, and provide value for money. We engage with our key customers through regular face to face or virtual meetings, and provide KPIs tailored to their requirements. As a result of this engagement we have improved our customer relationship management tools to improve efficiency when managing customer queries. We have also published our carbon reduction plan as a result of discussions with our NHS customers, which demonstrates our Net Zero commitment.

Suppliers

We have a large portfolio of suppliers based both in the UK and globally. The key matters that we believe are important to our suppliers are timely payments and fair and achievable key performance indicators. In return we expect our suppliers to provide us with good customer service, value for money, and products that adhere to our quality and regulatory requirements. We maintain an approved supplier list to ensure these requirements are upheld. We engage with our suppliers through regular meetings, and with our key suppliers we discuss key matters including delivery performance and other relevant KPIs. During the current financial year, economic factors including high inflation rates have driven increased engagement with suppliers, with pricing a key area of focus. Our priority has been minimising price increases where practicable, to help control the need for onward price increases to our customers.

Communities

We define our Communities to be those areas where we employ a significant number of People, or where we undertake manufacturing activities that might generate an environmental impact through creation of waste or pollutants. We understand that our Communities expect us to be a reputable employer, compliant with any relevant laws and regulations, and create minimal disruption or disturbance to our neighbours. We engage with local government through our annual environmental permit audits, and with our neighbours we engage via our landlord's agent. No specific actions were undertaken as a result of engagement with our community during the year.

The principal decisions made by the directors during the year are considered to be those that are significant to our business. When making decisions the directors have considered the impact on our stakeholders, the environment, maintaining our standards of conduct, and the need to act fairly. The following principal decisions have been made by the directors this year.

Global supply chain disruption

The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, the UK leaving the European Union, and the war in Ukraine, have all driven global supply chain challenges for businesses in all sectors. In order to mitigate the disruption, the directors took the decision to increase investment in safety stock levels, and where possible to add new alternative suppliers to our approved supplier list to minimise the risk of component shortages. This investment in additional stock was an important step to minimising disruption to our lead times, thereby reducing disruption to our Customers and our People.

Introduction of new manufacturing technologies

The directors continually look for opportunities to improve efficiencies through investment in new technologies, with the aim of creating additional capacity to enable the business to continue to meet the needs of our Customers. We are taking this opportunity to cross-train areas of our workforce, providing training and development to our People and preventing any need for redundancies by re-allocating resource across our manufacturing facility. Products manufactured using the new process will generate less waste and therefore drive environmental improvements, whilst continuing to provide the high quality solution our Customers expect.

Strategic investment in the Group

As part of the directors' ambition to grow the business, in summer 2022 the decision was taken to pursue opportunities for strategic investment in the Steeper Group. The directors' priorities included finding a partner with the same values and vision, who would provide investment to support future growth of the Company. A new strategic partnership with the Eqwal Group was finalised on 8 March 2023, which will provide significant global growth opportunities in the coming years. The ambitious growth plans of the Eqwal Group will generate new opportunities for our People, as well as facilitating access to new suppliers, technologies, ways of working, and global best practice.