The Directors are required by the Companies Act 2006 to prepare financial statements for each financial year that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Group and the Company as at the end of the financial year, and of the profit or loss of the Group for the financial year. Under that law, the Directors are required to prepare the Group financial statements in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) as adopted by the European Union (EU) and have elected to prepare the Parent Company financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice, including FRS 101 “Reduced Disclosure Framework” (UK Accounting Standards and applicable law).

In preparing these financial statements, the Directors are required to:

– select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
– make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
– state whether IFRSs as adopted by the EU and applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the Group and Parent Company financial statements respectively;
– present information, including accounting policies, in a manner that provides relevant, reliable, comparable and understandable information;
– provide additional disclosures when compliance with the specific requirements in IFRS are insufficient to enable users to understand the impact of particular transactions, other events and conditions on the entity’s financial position and financial performance; and
– prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis, unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Group and the Company will continue in business.

The Directors are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Group’s transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Group and the Company, and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements and the Directors’ remuneration report comply with the Companies Act 2006 and, as regards the Group financial statements, Article 4 of the IAS Regulation. They also have general responsibility for taking such steps as are reasonably open to them to safeguard the assets of the Group and the Company, and to prevent and detect fraud and other irregularities. The Directors are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the Company’s website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions. The Directors consider that the Annual Report and Financial Statements, taken as a whole, is fair, balanced and understandable and provides the information necessary for shareholders to assess the Group’s and the Company’s performance, business model and priorities. Each of the Directors, whose names and functions are set out on pages 28 and 29 confirm that, to the best of their knowledge:

– the financial statements, which have been prepared in accordance with the relevant financial reporting framework, give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities, financial position and profit or loss of the Group and the undertakings included in the consolidation taken as a whole; and
– the Strategic report contained within this document includes a fair review of the development and performance of the business and the position of the Group and the undertakings included in the consolidation taken as a whole, together with a description of the principal risks and uncertainties that the Group faces.