FTSE 250 firm Assura turns down fourth takeover offer amid strategic growth plans

Assura, the FTSE 250 healthcare real estate investment trust, has turned down a takeover bid worth over £1.5m – marking the fourth such rejection in the past six months.

The Altrincham-based firm made headlines last week when it was revealed that private equity giant KKR and a major universities pension scheme had approached it, as reported by City AM.

However, Assura's board has now confirmed the rejection of the latest proposal, valued at £1.562bn. In a statement, KKR disclosed that this recent approach followed three other written proposals that were also rejected by the company within the last six months.

Both parties now have until 5pm on 14 March to declare their intentions regarding a potential offer.

'A highly attractive opportunity for Assura shareholders'

A statement from KKR read: "KKR believes that the terms of the latest proposal offer a highly attractive opportunity for Assura shareholders to realise their investment in cash at a significant premium to prevailing market prices."

It added: "KKR acknowledges the rule 2.8 announcement dated 17 February, 2025, from USS Investment Management Limited (as agent for and on behalf of Universities Superannuation Scheme Limited (acting in its capacity as sole corporate trustee of the Universities Superannuation Scheme)) following the rejection from the board of the latest proposal."

KKR is currently contemplating whether there is any merit in continuing to engage with the board.

"There can be no certainty that any firm offer for the company will be made. A further announcement will be made as and when appropriate."

Assura's shares saw a surge of over four per cent following the disclosure of the potential offer before Friday's trading session concluded. The increase, reaching 39p per share, resulted in Assura closing the day with a market capitalisation exceeding £1.2bn.

Despite this uptick, Assura's shares have been on a downward trajectory since peaking at nearly 49p in January 2024. Prior to the pandemic, its shares were trading above 80p.

In May of the previous year, Assura and USS agreed to invest £250m in a 20:80 joint venture to bolster investment in essential NHS infrastructure.

In a statement released to the London Stock Exchange on Friday, Assura stated: "The board is currently reviewing the proposal with its advisers.

"A further announcement will be made as appropriate. There can be no certainty that any offer will be made, nor as to the terms of any such offer. Shareholders are advised to take no action.

"The board remains confident in the long-term prospects of the company and believes that Assura is strongly positioned to create value for shareholders."

In a trading update issued at the beginning of January, Assura's CEO Jonathan Murphy, said: "We have maintained momentum in the third quarter continuing to deliver against our strategic objectives."

In its half-year results, Assura revealed a pre-tax profit of £77.1m for the six months to September 2024, a significant improvement from a loss of £17.8m in the same period in 2023.

However, for its latest full financial year, the 12 months to March 2024, Assura reported a pre-tax loss of £28.7m, following a loss of £119.2m in the previous year.

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