

Appendix 2

Carina Åkerström – President and Group Chief Executive Elect of Handelsbanken

Carina Åkerström was born in 1962 in Kalmar, Sweden. After upper secondary school, she moved to Lund to study law and later continued her studies at Sorbonne University in Paris.

She returned to Kalmar where in 1986, more or less by chance, she took a temporary job at a local branch office.

“The Bank quickly noticed this bright new employee and Carina was soon given more responsibility and new work duties. The temporary job became permanent and after only two years, she was offered the position of Deputy Branch Manager at one of the Bank’s largest branches, in Solna outside Stockholm,” says Pär Boman, Chairman of the Board of Handelsbanken.

At the time of the Swedish property and financial crisis in the early 1990s, Carina Åkerström was assigned to lead the work with some of the Bank’s largest and most complex credit cases.

“Carina is an extremely pragmatic problem-solver and thanks to her, many customers which had run into problems could avoid bankruptcy. Instead she found solutions which meant that the company could continue running its business and become strong again,” says Pär Boman.

After her years as a credit specialist, Carina Åkerström returned to the branch operations. In 1998, she was appointed Manager of Handelsbanken’s Birger Jarlsgatan branch in Stockholm.

In 2008, when the global financial crisis struck, Handelsbanken was well prepared with a stable financial situation. The Bank never needed to apply to the authorities, central banks or shareholders for support.

“But there were parts of the Bank with rather greater challenges. The eastern Sweden region had several small and medium-sized corporate customers which ran into problems in a credit market which had suddenly ground to a halt. We needed someone who could quickly tackle this. Carina successfully solved this task.

Carina Åkerström became Head of Regional Bank Eastern Sweden and was simultaneously appointed Executive Vice President of Handelsbanken. In 2010, she took over by far the largest region in the Bank, Stockholm.”

“Since Carina took over, the Stockholm regional bank has always been more profitable than the bank average. Turnover has almost doubled and Regional Bank Stockholm now represents a quarter of the Bank’s total profits. Customer satisfaction has also increased.”

In 2016, the Board appointed Carina Åkerström Deputy Group Chief Executive with responsibility for the Bank’s overall business with the largest Swedish companies, while retaining responsibility for the regional bank in Stockholm.

“What has been typical throughout Carina’s long career at the Bank is that she has always taken on increasingly demanding and complex assignments. Every time she has solved the task, not only better, but also often a bit more quickly than we expected. I’m convinced that the same will happen this time too,” says Pär Boman.