

Orbitas Bereavement Services Ltd (Orbitas)
Minutes of Board Meeting,
30th June 2022, via Teams

Present:

Kevin Melling, Managing Director	KM
Cllr Joy Bratherton, Chair	JB
Mark Darbyshire, COO, Orbitas	MD
Helen Green, Finance Business Partner	HG
Melanie Henniker, Director HR & Corporate Service	MH

Other Attendees:

Megan Bowyer, PA to Group MD (Minutes)	MB
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Apologies:

Sarah Worthington, Operational Team Leader South (Employee Rep)	SW
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Agenda Item	Notes	Action
1.	<p>Welcome to all participants, Apologies and Declarations of Interest</p> <p>JB reported that due notice of the meeting had been given and that a quorum was present. She chaired the meeting throughout. There were no declarations of interest.</p> <p>KM explained the format of future meetings and the need to publish agendas and minutes on the company website.</p> <p>The two new non-executive directors will be appointed with effect from 1st July 2022 and will join the July meeting.</p>	
2.	<p>2.1 Minutes of Last Meetings and Matters Arising</p> <p>The Minutes from the board meeting on 11th May 2022 were accepted as a true and accurate record.</p> <p>2.2 Matters Arising</p> <p>JB advised that the televisions have now been installed at Crewe and Macclesfield Chapels and have been well-accepted by the public.</p> <p>The wheeled bier at Crewe still needs attention. Action MD</p> <p>Internal audit feedback will be given to the auditors at the next scheduled meeting.</p>	MD

	<p>KM advised that the compound resurfacing work has started at Macclesfield. The works have been delayed slightly due to some unforeseen drainage issues that the Council's Facilities Management Team are addressing.</p> <p>MD was asked to check on progress with the road at Nantwich cemetery. Action MD.</p>	<p>MD</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>Operational Update</p> <p>The operational report was distributed prior to the meeting.</p> <p>MD advised the following:</p> <p>Volumes – cremation numbers in May were up by 19.5%. Burial numbers were also up. At times this has disrupted some of the other operations.</p> <p>MA1 numbers are still above the contracted amount, but not as high as in previous years.</p> <p>Training – MD reported good news that a member of the team has recently gained the Certificate in Cemetery Management.</p> <p>People – MD reported that recruitment is proving a very tough environment with a shortage of resources nationally. The speed with which we need to go from advertisement to appointment is very fast as otherwise we lose people to other jobs. Orbitas has been successful in recruiting several new employees recently and this is ongoing.</p> <p>Facilities – new tv screens and blinds have been fitted in the Chapels. Replacement gates at Macclesfield Cemetery have finally been fitted but require further adjustment. Quotes have been received for repairs to historic memorials at Macclesfield. Further quotes are being sought. KM noted that there is a need to look at ways to set aside sufficient funding for future similar future problems. MD suggested several options that could be discussed with the Council.</p>	
<p>4</p>	<p>H R Policies - CCTV Policy</p> <p>MH introduced this new policy which is needed as Orbitas now uses CCTV cameras at entrances and exits to Chapels and inside the Chapels. The policy details how we view, store and use cctv footage.</p> <p>The policy sets out the legal position and the Company's position. The policy mirrors the Council's policy. All cameras are visible and there will be signage erected to notify visitors that there is CCTV in operation.</p> <p>Board resolution – it was resolved to approve the CCTV policy as presented.</p>	

5	<p>Review of Metal recycling scheme including charity recipient(s)</p> <p>MD presented a paper on the subject and recapped that for a number of years Orbitas has been a member of the metal recycling scheme administered by the ICCM. He has recently held discussions with the ICCM and their supply partner to get a better understanding of the scheme.</p> <p>The ICCM scheme is constrained re the number of beneficiaries we can nominate and there is a question as to whether we would generate more funding if we operated outside the scheme.</p> <p>Data provided demonstrated the value of Orbitas being in the scheme.</p> <p>KM remarked that we are part of a national scheme where all contributions are averaged out across all participants.</p> <p>A brief discussion took place upon the merits of the scheme and how over time further monitoring will help improve performance. Action MD to set suitable monitoring procedures.</p> <p>Board Resolution - It was resolved for Orbitas to remain a member of the scheme whilst monitoring results with a view to increase the future value of donations.</p> <p>There was also a need to review the recipients of the funds. EoLP have received all the funding for the past 4 years and KM asked if anyone had suggestions for alternative recipients. There was a discussion and several potential themes emerged.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help for young widow(er)s • Hospices – St Luke’s Hospice/Hospice at Home • Suicide prevention/ support for affected families • EoLP specific workstream(s) <p>Further research is needed to identify local organisations that operate in these areas. To aid the research it was agreed to ask the Orbitas team to provide nominations and following this, further discussions to be scheduled for the July board. Action MB to add to agenda</p> <p>KM suggested that as there is the ability to split funds between two charities and there are two payments per year, we could support up to four charities. All agreed that this was a good suggestion and would provide wider benefit.</p>	<p>MD</p> <p>MB</p>
6	<p>Employee Representative Matters</p> <p>SW sent her apologies but an urgent, last minute operational matter required her attention, and she was not able to attend.</p>	

7	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>Future Employee Meetings JB requested re-instatement of the employee meetings with the board in attendance; one in Crewe and one in Macclesfield. KM supported that. Action MD to arrange forums for September.</p> <p>Bereavement Services Conferences MD and LS attended one day of the FBCA Conference last week. JB was interested in hearing about discussions especially in relation to a local council who have built their own crematorium. MD reported that about half of the papers presented focused on direct cremations and their impacts. Changes to guidance notes that cover the cremation process were mentioned and there will be new guidance issued on mercury abatement equipment although a timeframe is not yet known.</p> <p>There was a discussion about future bereavement sector events, and it was agreed that MD will circulate details, Action MD</p> <p>Pet cemetery JB would like to keep abreast of progress re the development of a local pet cemetery</p> <p>Interim Newsletter MB advised that she has drafted a newsletter to update employees on the changes to the Orbitas board. She will circulate it to the NEDs and MD for review prior to issuing. Action MB</p>	<p>MD</p> <p>MD</p> <p>MB</p>
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The Meeting Closed at 11.30am