

Orbitas Bereavement Services Ltd (Orbitas)
Minutes of Board Meeting,
21st November 2022, 10.00am, via Teams

Present:

Kevin Melling, Managing Director	KM
Cllr Joy Bratherton, Chair	JB
Cllr Lata Anderson, Director	LA
Cllr Mark Goldsmith, Director	MG
Mark Darbyshire, COO, Orbitas	MD
Helen Green, Finance Business Partner	HG
Melanie Henniker, Director HR & Corporate Service	MH
Sarah Worthington, Employee Rep South	SW
Cllr David Brown (CE Observer)	DB

Other Attendees:

Karen Potts, PA to Group MD (Minutes)	KP
Vicki Dutton, Presentation from Papyrus Charity	VD

Apologies:

None

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.</p> <p>KM welcomed Cllr David Brown and confirmed that he has been nominated as a Shareholder observer to the board. He will receive board papers and attend meetings.</p> <p>KM went on to explain that at the CEC Finance Sub Committee meeting on 7th September 2022, it was agreed to set up a Shareholder Working Group (SWG) drawn from members of the sub-committee. The observer can ask questions to clarify matters but will not take an active role in discussions.</p> <p>DB gave a brief introduction and some background details about his former role as the Chairman of CERF outlining his knowledge of the Council’s ASDV programme. He confirmed his support for the ASDV’s and feels that Orbitas and Ansa are both a phenomenal success.</p>	
2	<p>Minutes of the Last Meeting</p> <p>The Minutes from the board meeting on 20th October 2022 were accepted as a true and accurate record.</p>	

	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>Item 2 – JB asked for clarification on the board resolution relating to recipients of funding from Metals Recycling Scheme via Orbitas. How the split will be and with dates when this would be brought back to the board for review. MD advised that the next one will be 17th March 2023. JB requested that this item is on the agenda prior to this date. Action KP/MB</p> <p>Item 3 Turning Circle - MD confirmed that he has received a verbal agreement from the Council and it's confirming that additional works will be undertaken to resolve at their own cost. He is waiting for written confirmation.</p> <p>Item 3 Rebranding - KM wanted to acknowledge the rebranding may be raised at the SWG meeting in December when they review the Business Plan.</p> <p>Item 7 Future Employee Meeting Dates – No dates have been agreed for the Employee face to face sessions and confirmed that the two formal meetings with Directors are scheduled to take place in spring and autumn. Action dates to be agreed KM/MD</p> <p>Item 7 Welfare Facilities – MG advised that he was recently on a site where they had a welfare unit which included a canteen and drying facilities. The company is Ecosmart and the units are a combination of solar panels with a back-up hydrogen fuel cell to eliminate local carbon emissions. KM asked MG to forward the details. Action MG to email details to KM & MD</p> <p>Item 10 – JB advised that the Council Working Group is to meet in March 2023</p>	<p>KP MB</p> <p>MD</p> <p>MG</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>3a. Mid-Year Performance Q2 Board Report</p> <p>Page 8 – MD advised the board that this table is used to monitor the KPI's and explained how the figures are collected.</p> <p>A discussion took place around current performance levels along with actions that could better understand the data and aim to improve performance.</p> <p>MD also brought to the boards attention that burials are down when compared to previous years. He also confirmed that we had been discussing with the Council. And JB agreed with MD that this is a future priority. Action MD continue to pursue within the Cemetery Strategy Project.</p> <p>3b. Operational Report</p> <p>MD asked were there any questions in relation to the report provided as part of the Board Pack.</p> <p>JB highlighted that there was a slight decline in the figures for cremations. MD advised that October was a quieter month, but we are still up on our year-to -date figures compared to last year.</p>	<p>MD</p>

4	<p>Presentation by Papyrus</p> <p>JB introduced Vicki from Papyrus who she had invited to present their work to us due to the number of suicides that we are coming face to face within Cheshire East. They have recently had an advertisement on TV with the 'three dads walking' to promote the charity.</p> <p>PAPYRUS Prevention of Young Suicide is the UK charity dedicated to the prevention of suicide and the promotion of positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in young people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Started 25years ago by a group of parents whose children had died from suicide. • After 10 years they set up HOPELINEUK • They want to provide a 24/7 service, currently this is 9am to midnight every day of the year including weekends and bank holidays. • This line is for those who are having suicidal thoughts and people who are concerned for others including professional services. <p>Presentation face to face or online.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SP-ARK- Suicide Prevention – Awareness, Resource, Knowledge. An introduction to PAPYRUS and Suicide Prevention. Duration 30 minutes <p>The following are training courses they provide.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SP-OT – Suicide Prevention – Overview Tutorial. What EVERYONE needs to know. Duration 1.5 Hours • SP-EAK - Suicide Prevention – Explore, Ask, Keep-Safe. An introduction to Suicide Prevention skills. Duration 3.5 Hours • ASIST Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (2 days): A skills building workshop that prepares caregivers to provide suicide first aid interventions. Duration 2 days. <p>Fundraising Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based in Warrington and covers the whole of the UK unfortunately this is mainly bereaved parents and friends that come to them, like the three dads on the recent advertisement. It is a way to help them to come to terms with their grief. <p>How we can help:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All donations will go towards the running of HOPELINEUK increased costs when we introduce a 24/7 service. • Studies completed show that most of these crises are between the hours of 12.00am to 6.00 am. • Funding will also contribute to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ trained advisors ○ text and email services ○ designing a web chat portal social media. <p>JB asked where you can find their advertisements. VD advised that this is mostly on social media posts, it could be sharing supporting stories or thank you for fund raising. We had</p>	

	<p>a young girl who ran a half marathon to raise funds. Three dads advertising on the TV. This promoted more fathers to ring and ask questions. We leave literature in schools when they have recently been affected by a suicide.</p> <p>KM asked about the costs to run the HOPELINEUK in the crucial hours and from the discussion it was concluded that this would be in the region of £15-£20k per month.</p> <p>VD also advised that they would be able offer the SP-ARK presentation to our employees.</p> <p>LA asked were they linked with drug rehabilitation centres and Universities. VD advised that they do a lot of work with universities and assist teachers to identify the signs. She also advised that they are currently developing a programme suitable for children as they receive a lot of calls from children worried about their friends.</p> <p>The board thanked VD for her presentation and advised she would be in touch. VD left the meeting.</p> <p>A discussion took place after the presentation where KM also advised that although we could support up to 4 charities from the Metals Recycling Scheme it was unlikely that we would be able to find 4 and he would be happy to support both the EoLP and Papyrus.</p> <p>DB commented that he thought this was an excellent presentation and he was not aware that Orbitas supported charities. He also suggested that as we were looking at initiatives to support this charity that it would be worth considering including the council.</p> <p>KM thought that there is the option to promote our support for the charities through the council's newsletter.</p> <p>KM advised the board that if there are any other charities that they wish to be considered for future payments form the Metals Recycling Scheme, to contact either MB/KP to arrange presentations for future board meetings.</p> <p>Board Resolution – the board unanimously agreed to support the Papyrus in March 2023 and to consider them if future payment awards.</p>	
5	<p>Progress Update on establishment of Friends of Cemeteries groups</p> <p>MD gave a verbal update on the Friends of Cemeteries group. There have been a couple of activity mornings where they have planted a thousand bulbs. We will continue to support them in their actives. We expect the activities to pick up in the Spring and will keep in touch with them.</p> <p>JB thanked Ingrid for the time and organisation she has put into the group.</p> <p>LA asked who provides the tools. MD confirmed that we provided the tools.</p>	
6	<p>H R Policies Review</p> <p>MH advised that there were five polices to look at today to stay compliant.</p>	

	<p>The Codes of Conduct that set out the behaviours and expectations we expect of employees and Agency Workers: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee Code of Conduct • Agency Worker Code of Conduct • Drugs and Alcohol Testing Policy & Procedure <p>Since we started testing for drugs and alcohol, we have only had 3 positive test outcomes – one in 2019 and two in 2020. The random test takes place once a year and we are committed to testing 20% of the workforce.</p> <p>Redundancy Policy & Procedure – This has remained the same since we transferred over from the council.</p> <p>Pensions Discretion – MH explained the requirement for the Company to decide its position in relation to a number of discretions as outlined in the policy, and to keep these under review. Once the discretions have been reviewed, recommendations are brought to the board each year for consideration and approval.</p> <p>We are not suggesting any changes at this time to the above policies.</p> <p>Board Resolution – the board unanimously agreed to retain above policies in their current formats.</p>	
7	<p>Employee Representative Matters</p> <p>SW prompted a discussion about grave depths and partial collapses.</p> <p>MD confirmed that employees are trained for excavating and supporting the graves. Partial collapses can happen at varying depths.</p> <p>A discussion took place around the options available. To prevent future incidents.</p> <p>It was agreed that MD and SW would discuss this in more detail to look at the options and alternatives available and report back in due course.</p>	
8	<p>AOB</p> <p>None</p>	

The meeting closed at 12.00 p.m. Next meeting to be held on 15th December 2022 at 10 a.m.