

Orbitas Bereavement Services Ltd (Orbitas)
Minutes of Board Meeting,
23rd March 2023, 09.00am

Present:

Cllr Joy Bratherton, Chair	JB
Cllr Lata Anderson, Director	LA
Kevin Melling, Managing Director	KM
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:

Jennifer Randle, Asst PA to Group MD (Minutes)	JR
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Apologies:

Cllr Mark Goldsmith, Director	MG
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Agenda Item	Notes	Action
1.	<p>Welcome to all participants, Apologies and Declarations of Conflict of Interest</p> <p>JB welcomed attendees, she confirmed that due notice of the meeting had been given and that a quorum was present. There were no declarations of conflict of interest.</p>	
2	<p>Minutes of the Last Meeting</p> <p>The Minutes from the meeting held on 15th February 2023 were accepted as a true and accurate record.</p> <p>Matters Arising</p> <p>IT issues – There is poor internet connectivity at Macclesfield Cemetery; IT are investigating the connection speed and reliability.</p> <p>Units for Welfare facilities – KM reported the first quotation was greater than the available budget, we have since received a revised quotation from an alternative supplier that aligns with the available budget provision which we would like to go ahead and award. The project will now be funded during 2023/24 either as a one-off cost or depreciated over a longer period. There will be other minor costs for foundations and ground works. There will also be access problems at Alderley Edge. KM said we need the Board’s approval which was given.</p> <p>Resolution – It was resolved by the Board to approve the purchase of the welfare units and associated ancillary works.</p>	MD

	<p>HR Policy and Procedure – Volunteer leave - changed terminology by adding “are beneficial for more than cosmetic reasons”.</p> <p>Feedback re Signage- this hasn’t progressed any further, however, KM and MD are to discuss further and will engage with the Highways Team to see what options are available.</p>	MD
3.	<p>Operational Report</p> <p>MD presented the report which had been shared with attendees prior to the meeting. He asked if there were any comments or queries.</p> <p>February had been a very busy month for cremations and have now calmed down in March.</p> <p>SW reported that additional support had been obtained to assist with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extending the grave space at Sandbach • Extending a section at Meadow Brook to create 40 family plots and undertake a further extension to the Ruby section • construct 2 new beams at Nantwich Cemetery to extend the grave space. <p>Repairs have been carried out on the large unsafe memorials in Macclesfield. The contractor’s behaviour was excellent, and this was fed back to the company. JB asked if the memorials at Crewe would now get looked at. MD confirmed they are to be inspected. They will be prioritised by risk and budget constraints.</p>	
4	<p>Health and Safety Policies and Procedures</p> <p>The following policies and procedures were brought to the board for review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accidents Guidance – no changes • Machine Safety Policy – minor changes • Maintenance Machine Policy – no changes • Blood & Body Fluids Guidance Note – minor changes <p>It was noted front covers need to be added to the front of all policies showing the name of the person who has reviewed the policy with the review date. Action MD to speak to Amanda.</p> <p>All policies are due to be reviewed in February 2025.</p> <p>Board Resolution – it was resolved to approve the Accidents Guidance, Machine Safety Policy, Maintenance Machine Policy and Blood & Bodily Fluids Guidance Note as presented for a further period to February 2025.</p>	MD
5	<p>Employee Representative Matters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SW asked if there is any update on unauthorised memorials i.e., kerbs, and are we doing anything about it; it makes it harder to do mowing and digging next to them. JB said there has been a Cemetery review which involves unauthorised memorials. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MD – The cemetery strategy review is key; we have had the report back which residents have given their views of the various things we’re proposing. More strict enforcement is mentioned in the review, we are just waiting to see what comes out. If the guidelines are stricter, we will follow them. • JB reported the majority of the public were in favour of us stopping the unauthorised memorials. The report will be finalised in September/October, so nothing will change this year, but hopefully will next year. • KM said the consultation wasn’t clearcut. Does it mean kerbs or lanterns etc. JB said kerbs were mentioned. • SW said they needed equipment and a new digger, however MD had already contacted SW prior to the meeting to say it would happen soon. 	
6	<p>AOB</p> <p>LA discussed the recent News that in Cheshire West, where the wrong body was buried in the wrong grave, she hoped we had processes in place to prevent this happening. KM confirmed that we have robust procedures in place to minimise the risk of this type of incident</p>	

The meeting closed at 10.00am.

Next board meeting to be held on 24th April 2023 at 10.00 a.m.