

**Orbitas Bereavement Services Ltd (Orbitas)**  
**Minutes of Board Meeting,**  
**20<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at 09.00**

**Present:**

Cllr Joy Bratherton, Chair	JB
Kevin Melling, Managing Director	KM
Cllr Mark Goldsmith, Director	MG
Paul Goodwin, Director	PG
Tom Shuttleworth, Director	TS
Mark Darbyshire, COO, Orbitas	MD
Anthony Gosling, Employee Rep North	AG
Melanie Henniker, Director HR & Corp Servs	MH
Cllr Fiona Wilson, CEC Shareholder Observer	FW

**Other Attendees:**

Karen Potts, PA (Minutes)	KP
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**Apologies:**

Helen Green, Finance Lead	HG
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Agenda Item	Item Detail	Actions
	<p><b>Welcome to all participants, apologies, and declarations of interest.</b>            JB welcomed all attendees to the meeting. She advised that due notice had been given and that a quorum was present. She declared the meeting open.</p> <p>JB welcomed FW to the meeting as the replacement Shareholder Observer. FW advised she will be the observer until June 2024.</p> <p>No Conflicts of interest were declared.</p> <p><b>Apologies:</b>            HG had emailed to advise they were still working on the out-turn position and KM advised she could standdown for this meeting.</p>	
<b>07</b>	<p><b>Minutes of the last meeting and Matters Arising</b>            The minutes of the meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2024 were accepted as a true and accurate record.</p> <p><b>Matters Arising.</b>            JB advised that 7a was not a meeting it was an interment of Ashes and advised this is a beautiful sight and worthy of a visit.</p>	
<b>08</b>	<p><b>Q4/End of Year Report</b>            The report was circulated to the board prior to the meeting.</p> <p>MD presented the report to the board highlighting the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The new opportunity with High Peak (HP) and Staffordshire Moorlands (SM) Borough Councils. Working closely with AES who provide operational services within HP &amp; SM Cemeteries.</li> <li>• Success with the wild flowering in Macclesfield which has enhanced the area.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accident &amp; Incidents tables and the RIDDOR have been discussed in previous Board meetings.</li> <li>• Absence chart long term absence based on a 12month rolling period and in most cases are not work related.</li> <li>• Absences are reported quarterly to the board.</li> <li>• Approx 11/12 employees on long term absence out of 40 employees.</li> <li>• We expect this to improve over the next 12 months and as of 31<sup>st</sup> March zero absences.</li> <li>• TS advised that an additional information be added to include Average days without the long-term sick.</li> <li>• TS asked what effect this had on the business and if this was to happen again how do we mitigate these. MD advised the Operational team had prioritised their work, Agency workers although this has financial implications. Part time staff have increased their hours and other people have taken on additional work. MD advised each solution is different depending on the area within the business.</li> <li>• MD has access to a good network of retired employees who I can also ask to cover absences.</li> <li>• We need to consider the moral of employees.</li> <li>• TS suggested the board needed to understand the cause of absence and the effect it has on the business and how we mitigate, lessons learned and to ensure we do not have lost opportunities.</li> <li>• MD to provide this information on a quarterly basis when reporting on absences.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action MD.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• H &amp; S - SHEQ - 44 employees experienced on 16 training programmes.</li> <li>• Contractual Performance indicators - We have completed 4 of the 5 objectives. The only one that is to be confirmed is the death registrations due to the death registration figures not being released.</li> <li>• General Performance indicators - Cannot confirm the company net worth until the accounts have been finalised.</li> <li>• Handy person service MA1 2094 this is the first year we have been over 2000. We had two members of the Handy person. This limited impeded us from following up on private work.</li> </ul> <p>TS observations was for MD to look over this report and to consider lessons learned over the past 12 months. To reflect on what has worked well, what could be improved and report back to the board so we do not lose sight of these key points. MD advised he would report on this on a quarterly basis. <b>Action MD</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">MD</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MD</p>
09	<p><b>Health &amp; Safety Policies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>COSHH</b> – The only change to this document is the evaluation and review date.</li> <li>• <b>PPE</b> – There has been one change to the document under the general statement which advised “there will be no difference in the way that PPE is provided to workers as defined by the PPER 2022 - these being limb (a) workers – Those with a contract of employment and Limb (b) workers those who generally have a more casual employment relationship and work under a contract services. MD advised that Orbitas have always provided the same PPE for each of these groups.</li> </ul> <p>MD advised the guidance notes had been provided for reference for both policies within the board packs to complete the set of documents and to advise they had been reviewed.</p> <p><b>Board Resolution – The Board agreed to accept both policies as presented.</b></p>	

<p><b>10</b></p>	<p><b>Employee Representative Matters</b></p> <p>JB advised FW that we have two employee reps who rotate the meetings.</p> <p>AG advised nothing had been raised for him to discuss at today's meeting.</p> <p>JB asked who decides on which plants to plant. AG advised he deals with the planting in the North but in both cases, meetings take place to discuss the planting in the cemeteries. A brief is provided to our suppliers who advise on the best plants to use. Following on from the advice given we would have another meeting to discuss which plants to plant where and when. We are moving away from spring and summer planting to perennial planting and plants that flower either more than once or longer. JB advised it had been mentioned that the larger beds be planted with roses as they are more robust.</p>	
<p><b>11</b></p>	<p><b>AOB – None</b></p>	

**The Meeting closed at 10.50**  
**Next Board Meeting: 17<sup>th</sup> May 9.00**