

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No.

meeting date: 2 SEPTEMBER 2014
title: STAN
submitted by: JOHN HEAP, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
principal author: COLIN WINTERBOTTOM, LEISURE & SPORTS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide an update on the status of the mobile resource unit (STAN), and to consider future participation in the scheme after the current funding concludes at the end of this month.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The STAN service has been jointly provided by Rossendale, Pendle, and Ribble Valley, in conjunction with Lancashire county Council's Help Direct Service. Pendle Borough Council concluded their involvement after the original three year duration of the programme and Rossendale and Ribble Valley have shared the mobile resource this year.
- 2.2 Following a successful bid to the North West Improvement and Efficiency Partnership, a grant was awarded to provide advisory services, especially targeting communities that are dispersed in rural areas. The operation of a mobile advice unit, known as Services To A Neighbourhood (STAN), was initiated and remains under the management of the responsible authority, Rossendale Borough Council.
- 2.3 In respect of Ribble Valley specifically, the van is assigned to 5-days' use over a 3-week period. Monday, Tuesday of Week 1, and Wednesday, Thursday, Friday of Week 2, with nothing in Week 3. The Van coordinator, employed and line-managed by Rossendale BC, drives the van to the neighbourhood location, and a second person, normally a staff member from Help Direct, is also in attendance for the duration of the visit.

3 CURRENT SITUATION / ISSUES

- 3.1 The project was originally funded for a period of three years, and the Council decided to continue funding STAN for a further year; (to September 2014). The funding for this extension was made possible due to a shortfall in expenditure from the original amount earmarked for its delivery, and it was sourced from the Performance Reward Grant. As the funding concludes at the end of next month, a review of the footfall figures, nature of referrals, and customer satisfaction levels over the past year, is provided to help evaluate the impact that the service has had across the Borough.
- 3.2 A new Driver Co-ordinator took up post in March 2013 and, taking some of the lessons that have been learned with respect to engagement with STAN at Ribble Valley venues into account, efforts to increase the number of people visiting included the following;
- More focussed use of locations
The itinerary was structured around a repeat visit schedule, based upon the footfall over previous visits. So, Category A locations: Clitheroe, Whalley, and Longridge venues, have been visited every three weeks. Category B venues: Such as Mellor, Sabden, Simonstone/Read, for example, every six weeks, and

the Category C venues: Including Chatburn/ Downham, Hurst Green/Ribchester, less frequently, with a visit every three or six months.

- Increased awareness of STAN

Advertising of the availability of this support service has involved continuous use of the Council's Newsletter, press releases to local media, publicity materials including posters, leaflets circulated to Parish Councils and distributed to houses at the locations visited. The itinerary has also been available on the Council's website.

3.3 Since the project commenced, data has been collated on a monthly basis with respect to;

- Footfall refers to the number of people that have visited the van, with at least one request for advice or assistance;
- The nature of the visit by category of enquiry;
- Case Study information covers specific support that has been provided to certain individuals.

A Customer Satisfaction Survey has also been undertaken on an annual basis. The data covering the last year of delivering the STAN service is attached to this report, and the main points to emerge are;

- There has been a total footfall of 377, averaging 34 per month over an 11 month period so far.
- The main types of enquiries include;
 - Winter Warm Pack referral/ Rock salt initiative
 - Attendance Allowance and Carers Allowance
 - Job Seekers Allowance
 - Employment support training
 - Housing needs
 - Help completing forms
 - Other queries of a general support nature

The responses to the Customer Satisfaction Survey revealed that there is a high level of satisfaction across all aspects of the service provided, with all respondents being either satisfied or very satisfied, and the results of the most recent quarter assessed, April to June 2014, are attached to this report.

In addition to the recording of visitors to STAN, certain personalised information collected as case studies helps in illustrating how people have benefited from assistance with a variety of problems, and are strongly supportive of the service provided.

3.4 There have been a variety of partners supporting the service, and their presence on STAN has served to enhance the provision of information available to visitors. The Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) has volunteered a member of staff to provide face to face contact with people seeking advice on a wide range of issues including benefits, debt, housing, and employment, and they have enabled appointments to be made with clients close to their homes. The possibility of the CAB becoming involved in helping to sustain the project across the Borough in some way has been explored, but to no success, and the availability of any funding source remains the main obstacle to any further continuation of the scheme.

3.5 It is understood that Help Direct would continue to provide staff support to the STAN coordinator in taking the van out into the communities, as they have done throughout the duration of the STAN project, and it also believed that Rossendale is going to

continue as the sole provider if Ribble Valley withdraws as a partner. The footfall has always been substantially higher in Rossendale than in Ribble Valley, and has created an impact especially with respect to assisting residents of Rossendale with benefit claims.

- 3.6 The possibility of continuing to utilise the van if there were a specific need on providing an outreach session has been raised with Rossendale, and we have been advised that the daily rate is £180 for STAN and the driver. This is an option available, should the need arise, and depending upon availability.

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Resources – the overall cost to the council of providing this service from September 2010 to 2014 is in excess of £60,000. It has not been possible to identify further funding to support our continued involvement in this partnership project. If Ribble Valley were to share the cost with Rossendale (and no other Boroughs or organisations have indicated an interest in joining the scheme), then the financial commitment would be between £15-20,000 for another year commencing October 2014.
- Technical and Legal – none identified
- Political – none identified
- Reputation – the project has been very favourably received by a relatively small number of Borough residents and has contributed significantly to personal circumstances in specific cases. It is possible that there will be a degree of unhappiness especially amongst those that have become regular visitors to the VAN, if it was no longer available to them.

5 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

- 5.1 Concludes the Council's involvement in the service, and informs Rossendale BC that STAN will not be provided in Ribble Valley as from the end of September 2014.
- 5.2 Requests that officers contact all Parishes and partners (especially Help Direct) involved with delivering the service over the last four years, to notify them and express appreciation for their contribution towards delivery of the service.

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DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

For further information, please ask for Colin Winterbottom, 01200 414588

Colin Winterbottom/ 2.9.14 / Community Services /STAN /IW

Enquiry Type	Sep-13	Oct-13	Nov-13	Dec-13	Jan-14	Feb-14	Mar-14	Apr-14	May-14	Jun-14	Jul-14	Aug-14	
Housing Benefit/DHP	4	1	4	1	0	0	0	4	3	1	3		21
Council Tax Benefit	3	2	2	3	1	1	0	2	3	3	4		24
JSA/ESA/I/S	5	4	2	3	2	4	0	2	6	3	2		33
Attendance Allowance/DLA/Carers Allowance/PIP	2	8	4	4	7	4	1	13	5	4	5		57
Pension Credits/State Pension	3	2	0	1	1	2	1	2	1	3	1		17
Energy Saving Bulbs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
Water Saver	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
Fire Safety Check	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	5		11
Blue Badge Referrals	1	2	1	1	1	2	0	1	0	0	1		10
Ferrule fettling	10	0	0	5	1	0	0	0	0	0	0		16
Now Card Applications/Queries	0	3	0	0	2	6	0	2	0	0	0		13
Safe Trader	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	2	5	2		13
Scambuster	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
Staying Steady/Trips and Falls/Ceda Centre	10	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0		11
St Vincent's Handyman Service/Lancashire Care and Repair	2	0	1	0	0	2	1	1	0	1	0		8
Age Concern/Age UK	0	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	2		7
Children's Activities ie farm, mother and baby groups etc, Brownie groups	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0		1
Healthy Activities	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	8		14
Carers Info	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1		3
Community Transport	5	2	0	2	1	2	0	0	0	1	0		13
Community Grants and Services ie Warm Front	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		1
Occupational Health Referrals (Lcc/Ceda Centre)	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0		3
Floating Support Referrals	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0		3
LCC Highways	1	2	0	0	0	3	1	1	0	0	1		9
Debt Advice/Money Management	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	3	0	1	0		7
Referral to Community Solutions Volunteer's/Befriending Service	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		1
Housing Needs	0	8	3	2	4	1	0	1	2	3	3		27
Employment Support/Training	1	1	2	3	4	2	3	3	2	4	3		28
Personal Alarms ie Lifeline	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
Support Services ie Inspire, Carers Link, Carers Contact	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1		5
Educational Courses	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1		4
Help with Housing/Re-housing	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1		4
Cleansing/Streetscene	5	1	6	0	7	1	1	3	0	0	2		26
Planning Enquiries	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	0		5
Census	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0

Council Tax Queries/Coc's	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0		3
Environmental Health	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
Referral to Young Peoples Services	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
Young people's sexual health team referral / advice	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
Referral to Children's Centre / Services	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
Tax Credits	0	0	3	2	2	2	0	3	3	3	0		18
Power Down Kit	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
Energy Savings	0	5	2	3	2	2	2	3	0	3	1		23
Trading Standards	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0		2
Help completing forms	2	5	1	3	3	9	1	7	4	0	2		37
Referred from CAB	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1		3
Referral to Pension Service	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
Social Activities	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0		3
Referral to Welfare Rights / CAB	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	4	0	2	0		7
Health Checks and clinics ie Flu Jabs, Blood Pressure, Cholesterol etc	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
Referral to Stop Smoking Service	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
Inland Revenue Query	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0		1
NHS Advice / Referral	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		1
Help Direct Vulnerable List	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
Winter Warm Pack referral/Rock Salt Initiative	0	0	0	0	26	33	0	0	0	0	0		59
Referral to Police / PCSO's	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
Other Query	10	9	3	2	12	7	4	11	6	21	9		94
General Info on Stan	2	3	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	3	0		10
Food Parcels	0	1	1	3	0	0	0	1	0	1	0		7
TOTAL	79	65	44	42	82	90	18	70	43	71	59		663

