

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No.

meeting date: 8 NOVEMBER 2011
title: STAN (SERVICES TO A NEIGHBOURHOOD)
submitted by: JOHN HEAP, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
principal author: CHRIS HUGHES, HEAD OF CULTURAL & LEISURE SERVICES

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To give members an update after the first twelve months of operation.
- 1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:
 - Council Ambitions – to make people's lives safer and healthier

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 STAN is a joint venture between ourselves, Rossendale and Pendle. The vehicle was provided through a grant from the North West Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (NWIEP), with each Borough paying towards the running costs, including a full time driver / advisor. The project is twelve months into a 3-year arrangement.
- 2.2 The Council's contribution is paid for by the Performance Reward Grant.

3 CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 For the last twelve months, STAN has visited 20 separate venues across the Ribble Valley, attracting 572 visits (including 2 weekend events).
- 3.2 There has been a wide range of enquiries with the top five being:
 - Council Tax Benefit
 - Attendance / Carers Allowance
 - Age Concern referrals
 - Healthy Lifestyle enquiries
 - Handyman Services

4 ISSUES

- 4.1 After taking out the weekend events, the number of enquiries is low, usually single figures per venue. There are also seasonal variations (fewer in winter) and they are weather-dependent.
- 4.2 Numbers tend to increase if there is a specific campaign or agency wishing to deliver specific services / messages eg home fire safety checks.
- 4.3 STAN is promoted through the Council's website, and each venue has posters put up and leaflets distributed prior to a visit. The more successful venues, however, are those where someone in the locality, usually a parish councillor, helps with promotional activity.

4.4 Despite low numbers, the outcome of such enquires is often positive, resulting in a high satisfaction rating by customers. The following case studies illustrate this:

- **Longridge - 19 year old man**

The customer had recently moved in with his grandparents, and wanted to know if there was any financial help with travel costs, as he was a student.

He was advised that the grandparents could claim child benefit and child tax credits for him until he was 20, as he is in full-time education. Information about help with travel costs for students was also supplied.

- **Slaidburn - 74 year old gentleman**

This gentleman had recently broken both his shoulders, and enquired about financial assistance for obtaining a specially adapted car.

He was given advice about claiming Attendance Allowance and, if eligible for this, a Blue Badge. He was also advised about home help through St Vincent's and LCC well-being directory, and home adaptations through LCC Occupational Health.

4.5 Officers will continue to assess each venue on its merits, trying to increase footfall wherever possible. It should be noted, however, that our specific emphasis is on services to more rural locations and, as a result, will limit its patronage.

5 RISK ASSESSMENT

The contents of this report may have the following implications:

- Resources - none
- Technical, Environmental and Legal - none
- Political – the project demonstrates strong partnership working with neighbouring Boroughs.
- Reputation – although there may be some concerns over value for money, the people who have received a positive outcome would view the service in a very favourable way.

5 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

Notes the contents of the report

JOHN C HEAP
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

For further information, please ask for Chris Hughes 01200 414479