

# RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

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Agenda Item No.

meeting date: 11 JUNE 2013  
title: FUTURE OF STAN (Services To A Neighbourhood)  
submitted by: JOHN HEAP, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES  
principal author: CHRIS HUGHES, HEAD OF CULTURAL & LEISURE SERVICES

## 1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To report on the performance of STAN and request a 12-month extension to the existing agreement.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

This report contributes to:

- **Community Objectives** - making people's lives safer and healthier
- **Corporate Priorities** - being a well-managed Council, providing efficient services, based on identified customer needs.

## 2 BACKGROUND

2.1 STAN was commissioned in partnership with Rossendale and Pendle Councils, to deliver advice/services, predominantly to rural communities.

2.2 Start-up costs were funded via a grant from the North West Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (NWIEP) with on-going running costs covered by the three partners.

2.3 In our case, this came from the Performance Reward Grant, and was based on a three year commitment.

## 3 CURRENT SITUATION

3.1 STAN will come to the end of its initial life at the end of September.

3.2 In terms of overall performance, STAN has not had a great volume in terms of footfall (see appendix), but has achieved the necessary performance to satisfy NWIEP outcomes, and helped support a number of Ribble Valley residents who, otherwise, may not have been able to access such support (please see the case studies in appendix 2). In terms of enquiries, these can be categorised as follows:

- **Health & Wellbeing – 45%** (referrals to Age UK, Handyman Service, Community Transport, Physical Activity etc)
- **Benefits Pension Enquiries – 23%**  
(Housing Benefit, Council Tax, Job Seekers, Attendance Allowance etc)
- **Home and Personal Safety – 20%**  
(Home Fire Safety checks, Scambusters, police referrals etc)
- **Housing – 6%** (Housing needs, winter warm packs etc)
- **Other – 6%**

- 3.3 STAN operates on a rota that allocates 5 days over a 3-week period in blocks of 2 and 3 days, with one week free.
- 3.4 In its early days, it visited as many locations as possible, and this has gradually been refined to those communities where the footfall has been the greatest.

#### 4 ISSUES

- 4.1 It is fair to say that, as a Council, we have not used STAN to its full potential. Interest in its first year was much better from both other departments and outside agencies, and this was reflected in the overall footfall. This was also further improved when STAN was used to promote specific campaigns, such as home fire safety checks and winter 'flu jabs. This has proved difficult to sustain, as there is no specific resource internally to co-ordinate the programme. There is, however, a core service provided by the driver/advisor, and member of Help Direct.
- 4.2 The emphasis over the last three years has also very much been based on benefits issues, as this was the main outcome identified by NWIEP.
- 4.3 If we were to extend the life of STAN, then there is an opportunity to change its emphasis to deal with other important issues facing the Council, such as promoting the roll-out of the new green bin service, changes to the waste paper collections, and promoting the work of Health & Housing Committee around Ribble Valley's 'Year of Health & Wellbeing'.
- 4.4 There may also be opportunities for additional external funding to help focus some of the health & wellbeing work.
- 4.5 If we are to make the most out of an extension to the project, then we would need to set up an inter-department steering group, to better co-ordinate activities and promote specific campaigns.

#### 5 RISK ASSESSMENT

Approval of this report may have the following implications:

- **Resources** – the original PRG scheme committed £75,000 over the three years of the project (£15,000 pa towards core running costs + £10,000 pa to support specific local priorities). The projected expenditure to the end of September is £47,920, leaving a balance of £27,080. It is hoped that all 3 original partners will agree to a 12-month extension to the project, meaning a further commitment of £15,000 plus inflation towards core costs. Pendle is yet to confirm their commitment, and so, in this case, our and Rossendale's contribution would be £22,500, but we would have increased access. We would, however, seek to identify another partner to minimise the cost to ourselves. This would also not include any additional local activities identified by ourselves.
- **Technical, Environmental and Legal** - none
- **Political** – By continuing with the project, STAN would contribute to delivering Council services to our more remote rural communities.
- **Reputation** – although we have not seen a significant footfall, STAN has established itself as a valuable resource to our more isolated communities.

## 6 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

- 6.1 Notes the contents of the report, and agrees to using the project underspend, of up to a maximum of £27,080, to extend STAN for a further twelve months from September.
- 6.2 Asks CMT/Heads of Service to develop proposals to raise the profile of STAN and extend the range of services it can offer.
- 6.3 Endorses the identification of other external funding to enhance the range of services on offer, in particular, those that will contribute to the Council's 'Year of Health & Wellbeing'.

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For further information, please ask for Chris Hughes 01200 414479

Policy & Finance Committee 11 June 2013 / Future of STAN / Chris Hughes / IW