

A photograph of a man and a woman smiling together in a garden. The man is wearing glasses and a grey sweater over a blue shirt. The woman is wearing glasses and a grey t-shirt. They are surrounded by colorful flowers, including yellow and red ones. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people in a garden setting.

# Annual Review 2020/21

[www.supportability.org.uk](http://www.supportability.org.uk)

**Supportability**  
Making life better for  
people with disabilities

# A joint message from the Chief Executive & Chair...

2020/21 will be a year that many of us will not forget.

When the first national lockdown was announced on the 23.03.20, few of us could comprehend what that would mean or how long the situation would last. The announcement meant that we effectively stopped delivering 75% of our services overnight, closing our day service provision and significantly reducing our 121 support to only essential support being delivered.

Cheddle Lodge, our residential care home, became a key focus and as a service effectively moved into a lockdown position two weeks prior to the national announcement. The impact of the pandemic for care homes in the first half of 2020 was devastating, with a lack of understanding of transmission of Covid-19, a lack of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) supplies available, and

advice and guidance in a constant state of change.

Our approach was to be proactive in implementing effective infection control measures, increasing the use of PPE across the service and reassuring staff who were naturally very worried about the virus and the stories that they were hearing via the media about the impact of the pandemic generally, and in particular in care homes.

We developed close links with our local public health team for advice and guidance and were linked up with wider information networks to ensure that we were doing the very best for the people living and working at Cheddle Lodge to keep them safe.



***“Cheddle Lodge had to become a key focus”***

## Life after lockdown

From July 2020, all our services started to re-open but as local restrictions were intermittent between then and Christmas this impacted adversely on people's confidence about returning to services. We also had to manage the challenge of people being identified as positive for the virus and their close contacts so both service users and staff were continually in and out of services.



**The national lockdown from December 2020 to March 2021 impacted our services less, mainly due to the vaccination programme rolling out, supplies of PPE being more accessible and statutory agencies being better informed to advise providers appropriately.**

Throughout 2020/21 we ensured that we made full use of the additional financial support available to us such as the Government's job retention scheme, accessing the various grants that were put in place to support infection control measures and testing requirements as well as grants linked to rents on office space.

Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC) in particular took a very pragmatic and positive approach to supporting providers during 2020/21 which enabled us to maintain normal income levels whilst services were closed or working at reduced capacity.

As we emerged from the lockdown at the end of March 2021, our focus has been on supporting Service Users back to their pre Covid level of service delivery, appreciating their concerns about doing this.

As a provider we are faced with new challenges such as still working to enhanced PPE and infection control measures above those expected within the general population. There have also been positives as a result of the pandemic including closer relationships with our carers from the weekly welfare calls made, progressing new ways of working that would not have perhaps been considered previously (e.g. remote working) and of course it's been great to welcome people back into services!

# Special thanks to our staff and trustees!

It is so important this year to recognise the work of our staff and the support that they have given to those accessing our services in very difficult circumstances.

Staff have been responsive, flexible, and committed to delivering quality support, whilst also managing their own concerns. As a Senior Leadership Team and Board of Trustees we cannot thank them enough for what they have done and achieved during 2020/21.

The Senior Leadership Team would also like to thank the Board of Trustees for their support during 2020/21. The Trustees are volunteers who give their time freely to the organisation and to be as committed as they have been during the height of the pandemic, when they have had their own concerns is a testament to them.



***"It's great to welcome people back!"***



# Business Plan Update for 2020/21

We entered 2020/21 at the start of our second year of a three-year Business strategy for the Charity. We had some key targets that we wanted to achieve during the year which included:

- Progressing our Estates plan to move away from Granville House
- Reviewing and addressing our IT systems within the Charity
- Planning for growth of services
- Service development plans being implemented.

Clearly the pandemic had a significant impact on us being able to pursue these targets and in particular our service development plans in terms of how we wanted to streamline processes and enable more cohesive working across all areas.

However, we were still able to progress certain actions and in November 2020 moved to a cloud based IT system and introduced Microsoft Teams across the Charity, also changing our IT support pro-

vider as part of this overhaul. Many of our staff were working remotely and we needed a more effective way of working, which this helped to achieve.

Our Estates plan also progressed in terms of identifying suitable pieces of land for a potential new build. We always knew this would be a long term action but to still be able to make some progress during the year has been positive.



***“We successfully moved to a cloud based IT system”***

As part of the plan to move out of Granville House we moved our back office staff from Meridian House in Hazel Grove back to Granville House. This saved rent costs and could be actioned earlier than we had anticipated as a result of remote working in place as a consequence of the pandemic.

Other key actions couldn't be progressed, and the pandemic and its impact made us rethink our overall strategy and plan and therefore we have implemented a revised three-year Business strategy and plan from April 2021.

# Strategic direction and future travel

**Our revised three year Business strategy and plan for 2021-24 reflects our learning from the pandemic and been influenced by our review of how we as an organisation addressed and managed the overall pandemic situation.**

Our focus for 2021/22 is very much about building our services back up to our pre-Covid levels of service delivery, whilst recognising that what service users and carers may want from us because of the previous 12 months, may now be different.

The service development plans that we had started to put in place are being revised to reflect this. We are still learning about what the impact of 2020/21 has been, so these plans will be fluid and responsive.

Our Estates plan continues, and further work has already been undertaken in

terms of the building specification needed and discussions are ongoing regarding land options.

We will also be focusing on:

- Our fundraising approach with a particular focus on our Estates plan
- Continuing to develop our IT systems, building on progress to date
- Our Plans for growth going forward
- Strengthening our service users' / carers' voice within the organisation
- Governance within the Charity, led by the Board of Trustees.



# Staff Training

This was a very difficult year for offering and delivering learning and development opportunities to our staff because of the restrictions imposed by Covid. As already referenced some of our services were effectively closed for part of the year and one major impact was the loss of our main training venue at Granville House in terms of being able to access it as a training venue due to the restrictions in place. In addition to this, for most of the year these restrictions meant we were unable to deliver face-to-face training opportunities safely in such crucial areas as Moving and Handling, First Aid, Positive Behaviour Support and Safeguarding.

Only when these restrictions were eased and following the implementation of risk assessments and the agreement of Covid safe protocols were we able to start delivering some face-to-face training in February 2021 in Moving and Handling and First Aid. Even then Covid restrictions meant that we could only deliver face-to-face training:

- To reduced numbers to enable social distancing
- To staff wearing suitable PPE in a physical environment which was being regu-

larly cleaned and had plenty of ventilation

- And only with staff who had a negative lateral flow test on the day of the training.

Similarly, we were unable to conduct face-to-face inductions for new staff. These moved online and much fun was had in delivering inductions on Zoom with all the consequent IT issues such as loss of picture, loss of volume (we had one new member of staff communicating with us via the use of messages written on small



cards).

As a result of the reduction in face-to-face training we had to temporarily increase what we were delivering via online learning and this meant that courses such as safeguarding, equality and diversity, positive behaviour support all moved online for the year. However, we still managed to offer over 850 online training opportunities for our staff.

We were also able to increase the range and frequency of online training provided for support workers so that they now complete dysphagia (difficulties with

swallowing) training on an annual basis, as well as doing other basic courses such as food hygiene and nutrition and hydration annually. Even with some of these additional challenges, overall compliance rates for our mandatory training remained very high.

In the next year we are planning to expand our learning and development offer to include more regular and detailed support in areas of complex healthcare as well as looking at the package of support that we provide for new and existing managers.

# Fundraising

Fundraising during this period was particularly challenging due to the COVID-19 restrictions. Our usual busy calendar of fundraising events including The Golf Day, The Stockport Beer Festival, The Tour De Manc, Great Manchester Run, The Manchester Marathon and the Wilmslow Running Festival all had to be cancelled due to lockdown restrictions, which significantly affected the potential monies we could raise.

What we did find however, was a sense of altruism and those who were able to help, did so, both in terms of individual donations and also organisations willing to partner with us to make the most of the trend of digital & virtual fundraisers, which emerged during lockdown.

These included:

- The Lockdown Challenge
- Appeal Donation Campaign
- Heaton's Charity Challenge
- Big Fat Virtual Quiz
- Heaton's Post Silent Auction
- Petersgate Tap Pub Quiz
- Running Bear Valentines Day Virtual Run.

The campaigns had varying levels of success with the Running Bear virtual run being the most successful individual event raising circa £1,200.

We anticipate 2021/2022 to be a much more positive picture for fundraising with the return of our Golf Day event and mass participation sporting events.

The Fundraising strategy for the organisation is also one of the key areas of focus for the 3-year business strategy.





# Financials

As we started the new financial year of 2020/21 we were immediately affected by the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in terms of service delivery being severely disrupted which had the potential to seriously affect our income streams and therefore our financial performance during the year.

However, our main funder, Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC), was quick to respond in supporting providers and put in place a financial support package with a view to ensuring the sustainability of the social care market beyond the impact of the pandemic. They recognised the importance for the market place to be as active as it had been prior to the pandemic in order to respond to an anticipated increased need for support post pandemic.

This approach coupled with the range of financial support packages and grants put in place by central Government such as;

- HMRC Job retention scheme grant
- Infection control grant
- Rapid testing grant

- Workforce development grant
- Premises costs (e.g. rent and utilities) grant
- Free Personal Protective Equipment (PPE),

has ensured that as a provider we have had a much more positive financial outcome for 2020/21 than we had budgeted for. However, it must be remembered that these approaches were put in place to ensure sustainability beyond the pandemic and therefore, the additional monies generated during 2020/21 will be utilised in the future to underpin our services as they grow back to their pre pandemic levels, which we anticipate will take a period of time.

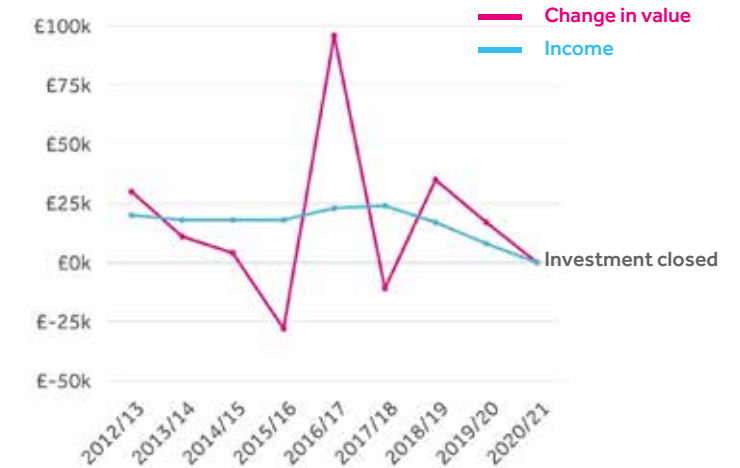
We also need to remember that at some point the impact of the additional costs to local authorities in managing the pandemic will also have to be re-couped, which

means that the ongoing and future austerity measures that Councils were facing pre pandemic are likely to be more significant going forward.

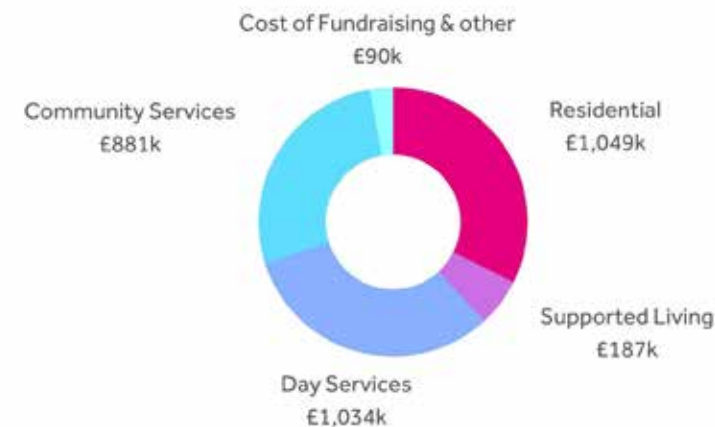
## Total income



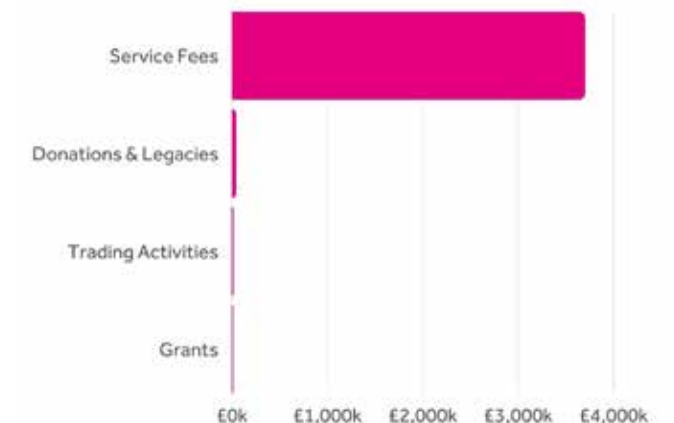
## Investments



## Expenditure



## Sources of income



# And finally...

We thought we'd share some of the comments we've received from our Service Users and their Parents & Carers about how they've found using our services, which we're delighted to hear after such a challenging year for everyone.

***"The personal support worker goes above and beyond"***

*"I know my Daughter is safe with the support workers when I leave her. She is in a group and they have known each other for a long time. Gives me peace of mind and I know she is safe and enjoying herself"*

***"Excellent care"***

*"He has only been using the service for a short time but he has settled very well due to the amazing staff. We are very happy with the service you provide"*

***"Lovely, caring staff who offer friendship and a welcome change of scene in a safe environment"***

***"Amazing staff"***

***"Thank you for making a difference"***

*"Staff are very respectful and understanding and support is person centred"*

***"Well done all, I look forward to each day cos so much planning is put into it. Thank you all"***

***"Fantastic support staff"***

***"He comes home happy which makes us happy"***



## **Chief Executive**

Sarah Thomas

## **Company Secretary**

Sarah Thomas

## **Trustees**

Rob Armstrong (Chair)

Roy Dudley Southern – (Deputy Chair)

Mike Bailey

Rory Alkin

Jonathon Bloom

Charlotte Furnival

Nikki Guy

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