

Record of officer decision

Decision title:	Healthwatch Digital Access Project
Date of decision:	29 June 2021
Decision maker:	Assistant Director Corporate Support
Authority for delegated decision:	Herefordshire Council's Constitution Scheme of Delegation, Part 3: Section 7 – Officer Functions: 3.7.5 Operational decisions. Chief Executive Scheme of Delegation – Updated 7 June 2021 SA78
Ward:	Countywide
Consultation:	None required.
Decision made:	To the funding of £24,900 to Healthwatch Herefordshire to deliver a pilot Digital Access Project.
Reasons for decision:	<p>Healthwatch Herefordshire has worked with the council's Digital Inclusion Officer (part of Fastershire) to develop a pilot project to identify up to 30 individuals who have a health condition, are digitally excluded and from socially deprived areas, and to provide them with digital equipment and digital training and support for 12 months. The aim is to improve digital skills to help them manage their health and wellbeing, and for experiences from the project to be used to promote the benefits of internet access and skills to similar individuals and groups. A 'digital buddy' will also be trained to support them beyond the timeframe of the project.</p> <p>The individuals will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • learn how to use their equipment • understand the difference it can make to their lives • understand the advantages and disadvantages should they wish to use it in the future • have a 'digital buddy' who will offer longer term support to help them to grow and develop their skills • understand how to access sites and resources and services that can provide help with their specific health issues • have improved knowledge, understanding and ability to manage their health. <p>The project will give Healthwatch Herefordshire and the council a better understanding of the issues around digital access for people with health conditions, the difference support can make and the difficulties and barriers that people face even with support.</p> <p>Healthwatch is a consumer champion for health and social care. Every Local Authority in England has their own Healthwatch. The national body, Healthwatch England, gives advice and guidance to local Healthwatch. Healthwatch England is a statutory body, and an independent committee within the Care Quality Commission, accountable to the Secretary of State for Health. Healthwatch Herefordshire has strong local links with health, care and third sector organisations in the county, and has a track record of undertaking projects to support individuals and use that learning to inform service development.</p> <p>By supporting Healthwatch Herefordshire by providing £24,900 funding (the remainder of the project costs will be funded by Healthwatch), the council will have oversight of the project throughout, and will be able to use the evidence and experiences of people involved to shape future projects and support, and</p>

	to promote the benefits of internet access and skills to similar individuals and groups.
Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:	None. This price of the agreement is within budget and presents no unforeseen risks. It will be part of allocated revenue spend for digital change.
Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:	None
Details of any declarations of interest made:	n/a

Signed..... Date: 29 June 2021