WILTSHIRE COUNCIL   **AGENDA ITEM NO.**

CHIPPENHAM AREA BOARD
DATE: 19-MAR-18
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OurWALK Digital Walking App

Executive Summary
The Communities Team, working in partnership with the Wiltshire History Centre, Public Health Wiltshire, Wiltshire Ramblers and the Open University, is seeking to develop a mobile phone application to enable local people to create their own healthy, local history walks in the Chippenham and North Wilts area. The Application will be available to download on smartphones and it will list local walks and walking groups in the area. Users will be able to map and create their own walks, add content such as history, car parks, shops, pubs and promote these walks via social media. A funding bid has been made to the Heritage Lottery Fund to support the cost of developing the application and a contribution is now sought from Chippenham Area Board.

Proposal
The history walks proposal is set out in the Wiltshire Project Bank on the 'Our Community Matters' website and is attached as Appendix 1. The proposed specification for the application is set out in Appendix 2 (subject to further development and testing with users). The Chippenham Area Board is requested to allocate £1,000 to support the development of the application and the delivery of the project in the Chippenham and North Wiltshire areas.

It is proposed that the app will map local walks and link this to local information (including materials held at Wiltshire History Centre) creating a series of history, landscape and wildlife walks as well as family treasure hunts. The app will make it simple for local community groups to create and manage their own walks; adding waypoints on a map with short information articles about the sites on route. Users who download the app will then be able to enjoy the walks and – if they wish - join their local walking group or meet up with other local walkers. Over time it is hoped that the app will list hundreds of well maintained, safe walks in the area suitable for all ages and abilities. The app will include a social network, allowing users to add comments and notes about the walk that can be viewed by the wider user community.

The app will target health issues by logging each users' walks and providing that information in a simple to use dashboard, making it easy for people to track their own health goals or exercise plans. The app will also be useful for linking up people at risk of loneliness with local groups, social walks and likeminded individuals. Health Trainers and other professionals will be able to refer people to the app for rehabilitation following diagnosis of certain conditions and track the progress of patients.

The Open University is acting as academic sponsor for this project, bringing extensive knowledge and learning about the development of digital health solutions. They will also assist with the development of the app and the involvement of users that is planned before launch. The Communities Team will oversee the management of the app and its promotion to local communities, Town & Parish Councils and walking groups in the area.

Reasons for Proposal
The mobile app directly addresses several key JSA priorities: loneliness and isolation; healthy lifestyles; mental health and positive activities for older people, providing free, sustainable activities for all with proven health and cultural benefits.

Recommendation
That Chippenham Area Board supports the development of the OurWALK app and allocates £1,000 towards its development, subject to match funding being received from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

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