

**REPORT OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR AND MONITORING OFFICER
POLICY PLANNING AND CORPORATE SERVICES****INVITE TO VISIT ADASTRAL PARK****Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek approval to send a delegation to visit BT's global innovation and development centre at Adastral Park, Ipswich, Suffolk on 19th February 2013.

Information and Advice

2. As the County Council enters the procurement phase of its co-investment rural broadband programme, it is recommended that a small group of elected members and officers see for themselves the latest developments in connectivity and experience the transformational properties that a fibre infrastructure can yield.
3. Paul Bimson, BT's Regional Partnership Director, has invited the Council to send a delegation to visit BT's global innovation and development centre at Adastral Park, Ipswich, Suffolk. Adastral Park is also the home of Innovation Martlesham – a joint initiative by BT, Local Authorities and the Haven Gateway Partnership that has brought an established high-tech cluster of ICT companies to the Park. It would therefore also be an opportunity to see this project first hand.
4. Adastral Park was launched in 1999, and is recognised as one of the leading centres of technical innovation in the communication world, specialising in pioneering work in optical technologies and digital switching, through to work in advanced software techniques and protocols. It is one of the biggest centres for jobs and commercial activity in the East of England and is now home to more than 20 other companies, supporting around 4,000 jobs and bringing more than £800 million into the local economy each year.
5. Such engagement with BT will not be in breach of any procurement rules and regulations. Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK – who are administering the Government's broadband allocation) are actively encouraging Local Authorities to engage with the suppliers on the Framework (currently BT and Fujitsu) by building into the pre-procurement phase a period of 'supplier engagement'.

6. It is suggested that the Nottinghamshire delegation consists of: the Leader of the County Council, the Chairman of the Economic Development Committee, one member of the Labour Group and one member of the Liberal Democrat Group, the officer Project Sponsor, and Project Manager namely Jayne Francis-Ward and Nicola McCoy Brown and up to two members of the Project Delivery Board.
7. The suggested agenda for the day would involve the delegation experiencing, at first hand, BT's latest innovations and a tour of the 4 acre site (to include a tour of the government and local community showcase as well as a tour of the home and retail supply chain).
8. The only costs would be transport costs and it is suggested that attendees travel together by mini bus.

Other Options Considered

9. The Committee could decide not to agree to a delegation visiting Adastral Park.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

10. To ensure that the Nottinghamshire delegation experiences, at first hand, the latest technological innovations in the communications sector.

Statutory and Policy Implications

11. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) That approval is given for Leader of the County Council, the Chairman of the Economic Development Committee, one member of the Labour Group and member of the Liberal Democrat Group, to attend Adastral Park on 19 February 2013.
- 2) That a mini bus be hired to transport all attendees to and from Adastral Park.
- 3) That the Project Delivery Board be asked to nominate two members of the Project Delivery Board to attend.

Jayne Francis-Ward

Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer, Policy Planning and Corporate Services

For any enquiries about this report please contact:
Nicola M^cCoy-Brown Tel: 0115 977 2580

Constitutional Comments [SHB.15.11.12]

12. Committee have powers to decide the Recommendation.

Financial Comments (DJK 15.11.2012)

13. The contents of this report are duly noted; the cost of hiring the mini-bus will be contained within existing revenue budgets in PPCS.

Background Papers

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

None.