Public Document Pack

Shareholder Committee for Dorset Innovation Park Ltd

Date: Wednesday, 4 February 2026
Time: 10.00 am
Venue: Council Chamber, County Hall, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ

Members (Quorum: 3)
Cllrs Nick Ireland (Chair), Richard Biggs (Vice-Chair), Shane Bartlett, Simon Clifford and Ben Wilson

Chief Executive: Catherine Howe, County Hall, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1XJ

For more information about this agenda please contact Democratic & Governance Services Meeting Contact lindsey.watson@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting, apart from any items listed in the exempt part of this agenda. If you would like to attend this meeting and have any specific requirements please contact the Democratic Services Officer named above.

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Agenda

Item		Pages
1.	**APOLOGIES**	
	To receive any apologies for absence.	
2.	**MINUTES**	5 - 8
	To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 3 November 2025.	
3.	**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**	
	To disclose any pecuniary, other registrable or non-registrable interest as set out in the adopted Code of Conduct. In making their disclosure councillors are asked to state the agenda item, the nature of the interest and any action they propose to take as part of their declaration.	

If required, further advice should be sought from the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Representatives of town or parish councils and members of the public who live, work, or represent an organisation within the Dorset Council area are welcome to submit either 1 question or 1 statement for each meeting. You are welcome to attend the meeting in person or via MS Teams to read out your question and to receive the response. If you submit a statement for the committee this will be circulated to all members of the committee in advance of the meeting as a supplement to the agenda and appended to the minutes for the formal record but will not be read out at the meeting. **The first 8 questions and the first 8 statements received from members of the public or organisations for each meeting will be accepted on a first come first served basis in accordance with the deadline set out below**. Further information read Public Participation - Dorset Council

All submissions must be emailed in full to
lindsey.watson@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk
by 8.30am on 30 January 2026.

When submitting your question or statement please note that:

- You can submit 1 question or 1 statement.
- a question may include a short pre-amble to set the context.
- It must be a single question and any sub-divided questions will not be permitted.
- Each question will consist of no more than 450 words, and you will be given up to 3 minutes to present your question.
- when submitting a question please indicate who the question is for (e.g., the name of the committee or Portfolio Holder)
- Include your name, address, and contact details. Only your name will be published but we may need your other details to contact you about your question or statement in advance of the meeting.
- questions and statements received in line with the council's rules for public participation will be published as a supplement to the agenda.
- all questions, statements and responses will be published in full within the minutes of the meeting.

5. COUNCILLOR QUESTIONS

To receive questions submitted by councillors.

Councillors can submit up to two valid questions at each meeting and sub-divided questions count towards this total. Questions and statements received will be published as a supplement to the agenda and all questions, statements and responses will be published in full within the minutes of the meeting.

The submissions must be emailed in full to lindsey.watson@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk by 8.30am on 30 January 2026.

Dorset Council Constitution – Procedure Rule 13

6.	**FORWARD PLAN**	9 - 14

To consider the draft Forward Plan.

7.	**DORSET COUNCIL OFFICER UPDATE**	15 - 18

To consider a report of the Head of Growth and Economic Regeneration.

8.	**DORSET INNOVATION PARK LTD MANAGING DIRECTOR UPDATE AND APPROVAL OF BUSINESS PLAN**	19 - 24

To consider a report of the Managing Director, Dorset Innovation Park Ltd.

Please note that Appendix 1 – 2026/27 Dorset Innovation Park Ltd Business Plan, is an exempt document (paragraph 3).

9. URGENT ITEMS

To consider any items of business which the Chair has had prior notification and considers to be urgent pursuant to section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972. The reason for the urgency shall be recorded in the minutes.

10. EXEMPT BUSINESS

To consider passing the following recommendation:

Recommendation

That in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the public from the meeting for the business specified in item(s) No 11 and 12 because it is likely that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph(s) 1 and 3 of Part 1 of schedule 12A to the Act and the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information to the public.

The public and the press will be asked to leave the meeting whilst the item of business is considered. (Any live streaming will end at this juncture).

Reason for taking the items in private

Paragraph 1 - Information relating to any individual.

Paragraph 3 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

SHAREHOLDER COMMITTEE FOR DORSET INNOVATION PARK LTD

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 3 NOVEMBER 2025

Present: Cllrs Nick Ireland (Chair), Richard Biggs (Vice-Chair) and Shane Bartlett

Present remotely: Cllrs Simon Clifford

Apologies: Cllrs Ben Wilson

Also present: Cllr Les Fry

Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):
Jan Britton (Executive Director - Place), Grace Evans (Head of Legal Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer), Kevin Forshaw (Managing Director, Dorset Innovation Park), David Happy MBE (Chair, Dorset Innovation Park Board), Timothy Robertson (ICT Project Manager), Nick Webster (Head of Growth and Regeneration), Colin Wood (Innovation Lead), Lindsey Watson (Senior Democratic and Governance Officer) and Louis Wicks (Democratic Services Officer Apprentice)

16. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 July 2025 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

17. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

18. **Public Participation**

There were no questions or statements from members of the public or local organisations.

19. **Councillor Questions**

There were no questions from councillors.

20. **Forward Plan**

The forward plan was noted.

21. **Introduction of Managing Director and Chair**

The shareholder committee welcomed the Chair of the Dorset Innovation Park Ltd Board, David Happy MBE and the Managing Director of Dorset Innovation Park Ltd, Kevin Forshaw, who both provided a short introduction.

22. **Vision discussion (presentation)**

The shareholder committee received a presentation from the Managing Director, Dorset Innovation Park, which provided an overview of the planning and implementation of the transition from Dorset Council to Dorset Innovation Park Ltd. The presentation included information on the role of the company, details around the fundamental company set-up, priority workstreams to support future operations and proposals to agree and communicate future park development.

The Chair of the Board recognised the work being undertaken to move the company forward and thanked all those that attended a recent open day at the park.

The shareholder committee discussed the matters covered in the presentation and comments were made in the following areas:

- Dorset Council was ambitious for the potential of the site and in particular the opportunities to innovate and create higher paid, skilled jobs
- A discussion was held in respect of the role of large data centres and whilst it was recognised that these were important, other innovative options would be investigated including green energy and use of lower energy chips, being more appropriate and energy efficient
- In response to a question on the aspiration to take the innovation park into profit, the Managing Director noted that at this stage, it was hoped that this would happen in year 4, although this could potentially be earlier dependant on the progress with planned projects
- A question was raised relating to the configuration of the building and provision of hot desks. Further consideration was required in respect of this, including discussion with the Ministry of Defence
- The Dorset Innovation Park Business Plan would be brought to the February 2026 meeting of the shareholder committee for consideration. This would include a one-year plan and a forward look to the future
- The company would be looking at issues relating to the buildings including heating requirements
- The company would be investigating opportunities and proposals for the innovation park. The Business Plan to be presented to the shareholder committee would include staffing and budget information and plans to promote the site on a wide scale
- The company board had plans to raise the profile and show the potential of the innovation park through events, lobbying and wider promotional activities including with Government and industry sectors
- The Chair made a number of comments following on from the presentation including opportunities to use the conference centre on site for events (particular reference made to a forthcoming “Great South West” board meeting and a Paths to Prosperity meeting) and the importance of links with education providers with reference made to links with sixth form colleges, Coastland College and Kingston Maurward

- Education outreach was key in considering skills development, raising awareness and aspirations
- Reference was made to wider issues of the affordability and availability of housing and how this linked to the provision of jobs. It was recognised that this linked to wider council policies.

23. **Shareholder agreement**

The shareholder committee received a report of the Managing Director, Dorset Innovation Park, which presented the Shareholder Agreement between Dorset Council and Dorset Innovation Park Ltd.

The Chair highlighted that appendix 1 to the report was an exempt document and therefore the committee would need to move into exempt business if it wished to discuss the contents of the document.

In addition, it was confirmed that Cabinet had given delegation to the Executive Director Place, to conclude the Shareholder Agreement and that the report and Shareholder Agreement were for noting by the committee.

The report and Shareholder Agreement were NOTED.

24. **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

25. **Exempt Business**

The shareholder committee did not go into exempt business at the meeting.

26. **Shareholder agreement - Exempt appendix**

There was one exempt appendix associated with agenda item 9 – Shareholder Agreement. However, the shareholder committee did not go into exempt business for the item.

Duration of meeting: 11.10 am - 12.03 pm

Chair

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Shareholder Committee for the Dorset Innovation Park Ltd
Forward Plan - March to July 2026 - Draft Forward Plan
(Publication date – 12 MARCH 2026)

Explanatory Note:
This Forward Plan contains future items to be considered by the Shareholder Committee for the Dorset Innovation Park Ltd. It is published 28 days before the next meeting of the committee. The plan includes items for the meeting including key decisions. Each item shows if it is ‘open’ to the public or to be considered in a private part of the meeting.

Definition of Key Decisions
Key decisions are defined in Dorset Council's Constitution as decisions which are likely to -

(a) to result in the relevant local authority incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the relevant local authority’s budget for the service or function to which the decision relates (***Thresholds - £500k***); or
(b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards or electoral divisions in the area of the relevant local authority.”

In determining the meaning of *“significant”* for these purposes the Council will have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State in accordance with section 9Q of the Local Government Act 2000 Act. Officers will consult with lead members to determine significance and sensitivity.

Committee Membership 2025/26
Cllr Nick Ireland – Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Climate, Performance and Safeguarding
Cllr Richard Biggs – Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Property & Assets, and Economic Growth
Cllr Shane Bartlett – Cabinet Member for Planning and Emergency Planning
Cllr Simon Clifford – Cabinet Member for Finance and Capital Strategy
Cllr Ben Wilson – Cabinet Member for Corporate Development and Transformation

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Cabinet Member	Officer Contact
April 2026				
Managing Director's report **Key Decision** - No **Public Access - Open** To consider a report of the Managing Director – Dorset Innovation Park Ltd.	**Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Dorset Innovation Park Ltd**	**Decision Date 13 Apr 2026**	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Property & Assets and Economic Growth	*Managing Director – Dorset Innovation Park Ltd* *Executive Director, Place (Jan Britton)*
Dorset Council Officer update **Key Decision** - No **Public Access** - **Open** To receive a report of the Head of Growth and Economic Regeneration.	**Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Dorset Innovation Park Ltd**	**Decision Date 13 Apr 2026**	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Property & Assets and Economic Growth	*Nick Webster, Head of Growth and Regeneration* *nicholas.webster@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Executive Director, Place (Jan Britton)*
Support contract **Key Decision** - No **Public Access** - **Part exempt** To update the committee on progress towards finalising the Support Contract between Dorset Council and Dorset Innovation Park Ltd.	**Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Dorset Innovation Park Ltd**	**Decision Date 13 Apr 2026**	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Property & Assets and Economic Growth	*Nick Webster, Head of Growth and Regeneration* *nicholas.webster@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Executive Director, Place (Jan Britton)*

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Cabinet Member	Officer Contact
July 2026				
Managing Director's report **Key Decision** - No **Public Access - Open** To consider a report of the Managing Director – Dorset Innovation Park Ltd.	**Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Dorset Innovation Park Ltd**	**Decision Date**	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Property & Assets and Economic Growth	*Managing Director – Dorset Innovation Park Ltd* *Executive Director, Place (Jan Britton)*
Dorset Council Officer update **Key Decision** - No **Public Access - Open** To receive a report of the Head of Growth and Economic Regeneration.	**Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Dorset Innovation Park Ltd**	**Decision Date**	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Property & Assets and Economic Growth	*Nick Webster, Head of Growth and Regeneration* *nicholas.webster@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk* *Executive Director, Place (Jan Britton)*
Review of Terms of Reference **Key Decision** - No **Public Access - Open** To note the shareholder committee terms of reference.	**Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Dorset Innovation Park Ltd**	**Decision Date**	Leader and Cabinet Member for Climate, Performance and Safeguarding	*Grace Evans, Head of Legal Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer* *grace.evans@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk*

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Cabinet Member	Officer Contact
Annual items				
Dorset Innovation Park Ltd Business Plan (January) **Key Decision** - Yes **Public Access - Part exempt** To agree the Dorset Innovation Park Ltd Business Plan for the year ahead.	**Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Dorset Innovation Park Ltd**	**Decision Date January**	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Property & Assets and Economic Growth	*Managing Director – Dorset Innovation Park Ltd* *Executive Director, Place (Jan Britton)*
Dorset Innovation Park Annual Report (April) **Key Decision** - Yes **Public Access - Open** To agree the annual report for the past year.	**Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Dorset Innovation Park Ltd**	**Decision Date April**	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Property & Assets and Economic Growth	*Managing Director – Dorset Innovation Park Ltd* *Executive Director, Place (Jan Britton)*
Review of Terms of Reference (July) **Key Decision** - No **Public Access - Open** To note the shareholder committee terms of reference.	**Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Dorset Innovation Park Ltd**	**Decision Date July**	Leader and Cabinet Member for Climate, Performance and Safeguarding	*Grace Evans, Head of Legal Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer* *grace.evans@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk*

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Cabinet Member	Officer Contact
Dorset Innovation Park Ltd (October/November) **Key Decision** - Yes **Public Access - Part exempt** To outline the emerging Dorset Innovation Park Ltd Business Plan for the coming year.	**Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Dorset Innovation Park Ltd**	**Decision Date October/November**	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Property & Assets and Economic Growth	*Managing Director – Dorset Innovation Park Ltd* *Executive Director, Place (Jan Britton)*

Private/Exempt Items for Decision
Each item in the plan above marked as 'private' will refer to one of the following paragraphs.

1. Information relating to any individual.
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.
5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
6. Information which reveals that the shadow council proposes:-
   (a) to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
   (b) to make an order or direction under any enactment.
7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

Shareholder Committee for Dorset Innovation Park Ltd

4 February 2026

Dorset Council Update Report

For Review and Consultation

Cabinet Member and Portfolio:
Cllr R Biggs, Property & Assets and Economic Growth

Local Councillor(s):
Cllr L Beddow, Cllr M Baker

Executive Director:
J Britton, Executive Director for Place Services

Report Author: Nick Webster, Head of Growth and Regeneration
Email: nicholas.webster@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Report Status: Public (the exemption paragraph is N/A)

Brief Summary:
This report presents an update on the current position regarding the establishment of Dorset Innovation Park Ltd.

Recommendation:
Shareholders are asked to note the progress made and support the continued cooperation between the Council and the Dorset Innovation Park Ltd.

Reason for Recommendation:
Progress continues to be sustained enabling the company to focus on developing a Business Plan and delivering a high-quality innovation park for the benefit of the council, its tenants and wider economic prosperity.

1. **Report**

1.1 This report provides an overview of the current position in relation to the establishment of Dorset Innovation Park Ltd (DIP Ltd) and an update on Dorset Council activity required to support the company formation and wider progress across the Innovation Park.

1.2 The Council and DIP Ltd have agreed the Shareholder Agreement, the contract between Dorset Council as the shareholder and the company, and are in the process of arranging signature. This defines their rights, obligations and the management and governance of the Company.

1.3 Council officers and DIP Ltd continue to work towards the establishment of both a Services Contract – the services the company will be supplying the Council, and a Support Contract – the services the council will be supplying to the company to support the delivery of the company business plan. A final version of these documents will be presented to the April Shareholder Committee.

1.4 Council officers and DIP Ltd employees have established procedures to help manage the transition between the Council's current management of the Innovation Park to the future under DIP Ltd management. Officers and employees are in contact on a daily basis and hold weekly working group meetings to discuss and agree the operational approach to ongoing Park management.

1.5 To provide ongoing capacity within the company and to support the wider defence sector in Dorset, one of the company's key target sectors, the council have recruited a new Defence and Innovation Lead officer, and the company are in the process of recruiting a Property and Assets Manager.

1.6 The council Defence and Innovation role will focus on support to the Dorset based defence sector, raising its profile regionally and nationally, will work with key partners such as the South West Regional Defence and Security Cluster, and DIP Ltd, and provide one to one account management of the major defence firms within the county. The role will work directly alongside DIP Ltd and closely with the Managing Director and his team.

1.7 The relationship between council officers and the Park will evolve once the Company has taken over responsibility for the Park management and operation. Officers will no longer be responsible for the day to day management of the site but instead will perform a role in ensuring the Park is aligned and embedded into the council's wider economic priorities of supporting the Defence sector, promoting Clean Energy opportunities, and securing economic growth.

1.8 Other relationships between the Company/Park and council officers will become more formalised within the Services Contract to be agreed between the Company and council, and potentially through the use of

Service Level Agreements for the provision of specific services, for example legal conveyancing.

1.9 In December, the council, in its planning authority capacity, approved a Local Development Order application at the Innovation Park for a 78,000 sqft development to extend an existing tenants presence on site. The Cabinet Member for Property & Assets and Economic Growth has approved the sale of circa 3 acres on the Park to the tenant to facilitate the development.

1.10 In December Cabinet approved the purchase of land neighbouring the Innovation Park which will help develop the long-term strategic role of the Park as the centre of the defence industry in Dorset. The additional 6.1 hectares will enable the Council to maintain a controlled supply of employment land, supporting the delivery of the company Business Plan, Council Plan and Economic Growth Strategy.

1.11 In an aligned project, officers have commissioned expert advice from hotel specialists at Colliers International real estate services to understand the feasibility / viability of a hotel development that could service both the Innovation Park and the local visitor economy.

1.12 Colliers initial study has concluded that the operation of a hotel at DIP would be operationally profitable. Phase two of this study is investigating potential ownership and investment structure options and whether there is sufficient profitability in the hotel operation to finance its construction. A final report from Colliers is due back in early January 2026 and officers will provide a verbal update at the Shareholders Committee.

2. Alternative Options Considered

2.1 Not applicable

3. Legal Implications

3.1 No decisions are requested from this report, consequently there are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from this report.

5. **Natural Environment, Climate & Ecology Implications**

5.1 There are no specific environmental implications arising from this report.

6. **Well-being and Health Implications**

6.1 N/A

7. **Other Implications**

7.1 There are no other implications arising from this report.

8. **Risk Assessment**

8.1 There are no specific risk implications arising from this report.

9. **Equalities Impact Assessment**

9.1 No decisions are requested from this report. As such, an Equality Impact Assessment is not required.

10. **Appendices**

N/A

11. **Background Papers**

N/A

12. **Report Sign Off**

12.1 This report has been through the internal report clearance process and has been signed off by the Director for Legal and Democratic (Monitoring Officer), the Executive Director for Corporate Development (Section 151 Officer) and the appropriate Portfolio Holder(s)

Shareholder Committee for Dorset Innovation Park Ltd

4 February 2026

Dorset Innovation Park Ltd Managing Director Update and Approval of Business Plan

For Decision

Report Author: Kevin Forshaw
Title: Dorset Innovation Park Managing Director

Report Status: Part Exempt Para 3

Brief Summary:
This report provides an update on the current situation at the Dorset Innovation Park Ltd ("the Company") and presents the 2026/27 annual business plan for approval by the Shareholder. The Shareholder is asked to note the content of this report and to continue its support for the Company.

Recommendation:
Shareholders are asked to:

a) Approve the presented 2026/27 annual business plan for Dorset Innovation Park Ltd, and:
b) Note the progress made on company development and the transition of responsibilities to Dorset Innovation Park Ltd, and support the continued cooperation between the Council and the Company.

Reason for Recommendation:
Progress continues to be sustained enabling the company to focus on developing a Business Plan and delivering a high-quality innovation park for the benefit of the council, its tenants and wider economic prosperity.

1. **Report**

1.1 This report provides an overview of the current position in relation to the work to date by the Company to establish both itself as an operational entity and on delivering the ambitions of the Shareholder for the Innovation Park.

1.2 Since the commencement of my employment in early October the Company have developed a strong working relationship with council officers and begun the transition process to get DIP Ltd ready to take on full responsibly for operation of the Innovation Park by approximately June 2026.

1.3 An additional member of staff was recruited temporarily via Connect to Dorset to bring some additional capacity. She has demonstrated huge potential and so we are looking to retain her full-time in an Office Manager type role to support me as MD, but also to ensure full compliance of the company.

1.4 The Company are also currently in the process of recruiting a full-time Property and Asset manager for the company who will have responsibility for managing the commercial property elements of the Innovation Park and supporting me on property and asset management issues.

1.5 An early priority has been tackling the issue of continuing losses with the BattleLab building and a paper presented to the MOD will now see a range of measures being implemented that will start to generate revenue in the building, without detracting from the key purpose of the building for MOD purposes. This includes partitioning up one area on the first floor to provide space for a new company on site, with plans being developed around a reinvigorated events programme.

1.6 In addition, good working relationships have been formed with MOD representatives on site, and those within the newly formed UK Defence Innovation. These, although at an early stage, are looking to shape a new way of partnership working to maximise the potential of BattleLab as a technology incubator to produce solutions for the rapidly growing UK Defence and Security sector.

1.7 Our focus currently is on drawing together the depth and breadth of Testing and Evaluation capability for uncrewed system development we have on site and in the wider south Dorset area as a unique selling point for the Park.

1.8 Conversations with both Further Education and Higher Education providers continue, with a view to working up the commercial case for both to have a permanent presence on site. This will support industry led Research and Development with specialist facilities, and a focus on Apprenticeship training to provide the future skilled workforce for new jobs being created on site.

1.9 We are aware of one, and possibly two, new major developments that are due to start on site in 2026, and are aware of a further project being currently explored by a private sector company. If they proceed they will support the vision of the Innovation Park as a centre for defence technology and manufacturing.

1.10 Dialogue with the Nuclear Decommissioning Agency's section of the wider site is now in place, and I and Non Exec Directors are involved in the council led master planning process for this land. I consider that the recent decision to purchase the neighbouring land at the entrance of the site will provide a new opportunity to look holistically at what this combined area can achieve for economic growth in the region.

1.11 There is a strong argument that the Company needs to lead on the development of a site wide master plan for the site which can then be used as the basis of discussion with a growing list of potential companies we are seeking to attract to the Park in future.

Annual Business Plan

1.12 The Business Plan is an exempt item and sets out how the Company will address the Shareholder requirements and begin the delivery of the private sector jobs set as Key Performance Indicators in the Shareholder Agreement.

1.13 DIP Ltd's strategy for the first year of operation is to get the Park ready for growth to create significant high-value jobs, and to maximize return during the remaining Enterprise Zone status to 2040. This also creating wealth and extended supply chain efficiencies within the regional economy.

1.14 The plan for growth is based upon a range of additional developments that need to be put in place. Beyond making the park more visually appealing and ready for external investment these measures include a desire to get both permanent HE and FE presence on site to drive industry led R&D via specialist facilities, and to create the necessary skilled workforce via an apprenticeship training centre to fuel growth.

1.15 These measures will create the ideal location, space and infrastructure to support innovation and economic growth in defence, food and energy security.

1.16 The Business Plan financials set out that the Company administration and the Park operational costs can be covered from within the income raised from rent, service charges and retained business rates.

1.17 This assessment relies on the generation of retained business rates as predicted in the council's end of year assessment of the retained business rate income. It should also be noted that the government's recent changes to the ratings assessments may also have an impact on future retained business rate income.

1.18 As currently modelled the operation of the Company and the Innovation Park will have no adverse impact on the council's revenue position. It should be noted that the Company are currently recruiting for a Property and Assets Manager and that an early priority for this post will be a review of all commercial property income and expenditure. Consequently modelling for future Business Plan's may vary from the 2026/27 Plan.

1.19 The Business Plan sets out an intent to secure capital funding from the council to undertake works on site in the form of general site improvements, plot preparation works, and potentially new commercial units. The Company recognises that the council will need to consider capital business cases for this investment and take an appropriate governance decision.

1.20 However it should be noted that this additional investment is required to unleash the full potential of the Park and to generate the new private sector jobs set as a target within the Council Plan and Shareholder Agreement. Similarly an increased investment in the Park will bring an uplift in retained business rates over and above that achieved if no investment is made. The full impact and scope of these benefits will be presented in business cases for new council investment.

2. Alternative Options Considered

2.1 Not applicable

3. Legal Implications

3.1 Council officers and the Company are currently in negotiations regarding the Services Contract the council hold with the Company. This will set out the detailed specification of the services that the Company will be supplying to the council. These negotiations are ongoing and a further decision report will be brought to a subsequent Shareholder Committee.

4. **Financial Implications**

4.1 The council have previously agreed (Cabinet Report - Dorset Innovation Park - Arms Length Management Company Final.pdf) that the Company will be funded through a combination of retained business rates and Park income (where available). The Business Plan demonstrates that, based on predicted business rate income, the Company and Park operation and management can be fully funded from these sources.

4.2 There is an element of risk in that the full impact of government changes to the business rates assessment process have yet to be fully understood and this information will not be able to be calculated until the new financial year.

4.3 Any changes to the Company finances as a result of variations in business rate income will be considered in the 2027/28 Business Plan which will benefit from a full years Company operation and increased Company commercial capacity.

5. **Natural Environment, Climate & Ecology Implications**

5.1 There are no specific environmental implications arising from this report. Full environmental implications of specific council interventions will be considered through the appropriate governance decisions.

6. **Well-being and Health Implications**

6.1 There are no direct well-being or health implications from a decision to agreed the Company Business Plan. However, a reinvigorated Innovation Park will contribute to economic growth and lead to an increase in people's well-being through more and better paid employment, and access to skilled training and education opportunities.

7. **Other Implications**

7.1 There are no other implications arising from this report.

8. **Risk Assessment**

8.1 A risk assessment has been included within the Business Plan and sets out appropriate levels of mitigation for identified risks.

9. **Equalities Impact Assessment**

9.1 The Board has not conducted an Equality Impact Assessment for this report as the high level, strategic nature of the Business Plan precludes its consideration at this stage. However the potential equalities impacts are assessed as positive due to the principals outlined in the Business Plan, particularly to support economic growth, employment generation, and skills development.

10. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Exempt document - 2026/27 Dorset Innovation Park Ltd Business Plan

11. Background Papers

N/A

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Agenda Item 12

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