



Shareholder Committee for Dorset Innovation Park Ltd

Date: Monday, 13 April 2026
Time: 2.00 pm
Venue: Meeting Room 1, 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 To confirm the minutes of the meetings held on 4 February and 23 March 2026.	5 - 12
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 8 April 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 8 April 2026.

[Dorset Council Constitution](#) – Procedure Rule 13

6. FORWARD PLAN 13 - 20

To consider the Forward Plan.

7. DORSET COUNCIL UPDATE REPORT 21 - 26

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

8. DORSET INNOVATION PARK LTD MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT 27 - 30

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

Please note that Appendix 1 – Reserved Matters, 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) 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 item in private

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

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|-----|--|---------|
| 11. | Dorset Innovation Park Ltd Managing Director's report - Exempt Appendix
<i>Para 3</i>
Exempt Appendix associated with agenda item 8 – Managing Director's report. | 31 - 32 |
| 12. | Dorset Council Aged Debt Report
<i>Para 3</i>
To consider a report of the Head of Growth and Economic Regeneration. | 33 - 38 |



SHAREHOLDER COMMITTEE FOR DORSET INNOVATION PARK LTD

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 4 FEBRUARY 2026

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

Apologies: None

Also present: Cllr Les Fry

Also present remotely: Cllr Ryan Holloway

Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):

Jan Britton (Executive Director - Place), Nick Webster (Head of Growth and Regeneration), Colin Wood (Innovation Lead), Jen Cook (Lawyer - Contracts and Commercial), Caitlin Stone (Paralegal), Kevin Forshaw (Managing Director, Dorset Innovation Park Ltd), Alice McAlpine (Non-Executive Director, Dorset Innovation Park Ltd), Kate Critchel (Senior Democratic & Governance Services Officer) and Lindsey Watson (Senior Democratic and Governance Officer)

Officers present remotely (for all or part of the meeting):

Sean Cremer (Corporate Director for Finance and Commercial)

27. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 November 2025 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

28. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

29. Public Participation

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

30. Councillor Questions

There were no questions from councillors.

31. Forward Plan

The Forward Plan was noted.

32. Dorset Council Officer update

The shareholder committee received a report of the Head of Growth and Regeneration, which presented an update on the current position regarding the establishment of Dorset Innovation Park Ltd.

In presenting the report, the officer noted that progress continued towards the establishment of both a Services Contract – the services the company would be supplying the Council, and a Support Contract – the services that the Council would be supplying to the company to support the delivery of the company business plan. It was planned to bring the two documents to the next meeting of the shareholder committee. In addition, an update was provided regarding the commissioning of expert advice from hotel specialists, to understand the feasibility and viability of a hotel development to service the site and local visitor economy.

Councillors considered the issues covered by the report and during discussion, points were raised in the following areas:

- In response to a question, the Managing Director noted that as part of the company set up, regular meetings were held with Dorset Council officers, and data was being made available. Further processes needed to be completed for the company to take over a number of operations from June
- It was confirmed that although the company would manage property on site, property would be retained as council assets
- A discussion was held regarding travel surveys that had been undertaken in connection with access to the site. Further investigation would be required in terms of the long-term aspiration to improve provision of access to the site
- A separate discussion would take place with Wool Parish Council in respect of potential transport provision within the locality.

The report was NOTED.

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

The shareholder committee considered a report of the Managing Director, Dorset Innovation Park Ltd, which provided an update on the current situation at the Dorset Innovation Park Ltd and presented the 2026/27 annual business plan for approval.

The Managing Director provided a presentation at the meeting which included updates since the last meeting of the shareholder committee, an overview of activity contained within the business plan and an overview of required processes, and capital and revenue expenditure required in order to achieve the vision for and operation of the park.

A discussion was held and points were raised in the following areas:

- The Managing Director provided an overview of his previous experience which would be relevant to the plans for the Dorset Innovation Park

- Councillors welcomed opportunities to streamline processes in order to progress development of the park
- The agreement of a site master vision was key for effective working between the innovation park and the council
- A discussion was held regarding legal input and requirements. The Dorset Council Legal team had been working closely with officers and the company in terms of the set-up processes and would continue to be part of the transition meetings. In addition, the company was putting in place their external legal arrangements. There was confidence that the emerging model would prove effective
- There was a shared aspiration for the park to succeed and to achieve a turnaround of the financial position, and part of the transition was to ensure that all parties understood and agreed required timescales for objectives
- A point was raised that there needed to be more balanced information in reporting, to include information about any current issues with the site and tenants. There also needed to be recognition of risks, such as any financial risks, including in relation to future funding by the council
- In terms of the development of the master vision, there was a request that the income generation of the site be maximised
- The Managing Director provided an overview of support being provided to tenants, including support to start-up companies and an update could be provided at a future meeting
- It was noted that regular discussion was held with tenants in terms of addressing any issues
- The position with aged debt and debt recovery was raised and a request for an item to consider this at the next meeting of the shareholder committee
- A discussion was held regarding issues around capital required to develop the park
- Further consideration was required in terms of the local development order and issues around future development of the wider site.

It was proposed by R Biggs seconded by B Wilson

Decision

That the Shareholder Committee:

- 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 the decision

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.

34. Urgent Items

There were no urgent items.

35. **Exempt Business**

It was proposed by S Bartlett seconded by R Biggs

Decision

That the press and the public be excluded for the following item in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the meaning of paragraph 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

Reason for taking the item in private

Paragraph 1 – Information relating to any individual.

Dorset Innovation Park Ltd company representatives left the meeting at this point.

36. **Dorset Innovation Park Ltd Managing Director Update and Approval of Business Plan - Exempt Appendix**

There was one exempt appendix associated with agenda item 8 – Dorset Innovation Park Ltd Managing Director Update and Approval of Business Plan. However, the shareholder committee did not go into exempt business to discuss the appendix.

37. **Board Composition**

The shareholder committee considered an exempt report of the Head of Growth and Regeneration with regard to the board composition.

It was proposed by R Biggs seconded by S Clifford.

Decision

That the Shareholder Committee agree recommendations 2 and 3 as set out in the exempt report.

Reason for the decision

As set out in the exempt report.

Duration of meeting: 10.00 - 11.45 am

Chair

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SHAREHOLDER COMMITTEE FOR DORSET INNOVATION PARK LTD

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 23 MARCH 2026

Present: Cllrs Nick Ireland (Chair), Richard Biggs (Vice-Chair), Simon Clifford and Ben Wilson

Apologies: Cllrs Shane Bartlett

Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):

Nick Webster (Head of Growth and Regeneration), Grace Evans (Head of Legal Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer) and Lindsey Watson (Senior Democratic and Governance Officer)

38. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

39. Public Participation

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

40. Councillor Questions

There were no questions from councillors.

41. Dorset Innovation Park Board Composition

The shareholder committee received and considered a report of the Head of Growth and Regeneration which provided an update on the Dorset Innovation Park Ltd Board composition and included a recommendation for the formal ratification of the Company Chair and appointment of a Non-Executive Director.

It was proposed by S Clifford seconded by N Ireland

Decision

That the Shareholder Committee for the Dorset Innovation Park Ltd:

1. Formally ratify the choice of Cecilia Bufton as the Dorset Innovation Park Ltd Chair for an initial period of 12 months
2. Approve the re-appointment of Mark Ovens as a Non-Executive Director of Dorset Innovation Park Ltd.

Reason for the decision

Dorset Innovation Park Ltd (the Company) has been established as an “arms length” company of Dorset Council to take on the management and operation of the Dorset Innovation Park (DIP). An external Board of Directors has been appointed to oversee the management of the Company. In February 2026 the Chair of the Company resigned their position and the Shareholder approved the commencement of an appointment process for a new Chair. That process has secured Cecilia Bufton as the new Chair of the Company and this appointment has been confirmed by the Leader of the Council. The Shareholder Committee is now asked to formally ratify this decision.

In addition, the Company Managing Director has requested that the Shareholder consider the reappointment of Mark Ovens to the Company Board as a Non-Executive Director.

42. Urgent Items

There were no urgent items.

43. Exempt Business

There was no exempt business.

Duration of meeting: 3.03 - 3.07 pm

Chair

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Shareholder Committee for the Dorset Innovation Park Ltd Forward Plan - March to July 2026 (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
March 2026				

Dorset Innovation Park Board Composition Key Decision - No Public Access - Open To confirm the appointment of a Chair for Dorset Innovation Park Ltd and consider the board composition.	Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Dorset Innovation Park Ltd	Decision Date 23 Mar 2026	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Property & Assets and Economic Growth	<i>Nick Webster, Head of Growth and Regeneration</i> <i>nicholas.webster@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Director, Place (Jan Britton)</i>
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	<i>Managing Director – Dorset Innovation Park Ltd</i> <i>Executive Director, Place (Jan Britton)</i>
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Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Cabinet Member	Officer Contact
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	<i>Nick Webster, Head of Growth and Regeneration</i> <i>nicholas.webster@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Director, Place (Jan Britton)</i>
Support contract and Services Contract Key Decision - No Public Access - Part exempt To update the committee on progress towards finalising the Support Contract and Services 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	<i>Nick Webster, Head of Growth and Regeneration</i> <i>nicholas.webster@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Director, Place (Jan Britton)</i>
Dorset Innovation Park Aged Debt Position Key Decision - No Public Access - Fully exempt A report on the current position regarding aged debt owed to the council by occupants of the Dorset Innovation Park.	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	<i>Nick Webster, Head of Growth and Regeneration</i> <i>nicholas.webster@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Director, Place (Jan Britton)</i>

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 14 Jul 2026	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Property & Assets and Economic Growth	<i>Managing Director – Dorset Innovation Park Ltd</i> <i>Executive Director, Place (Jan Britton)</i>
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 14 Jul 2026	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Property & Assets and Economic Growth	<i>Nick Webster, Head of Growth and Regeneration</i> <i>nicholas.webster@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Director, Place (Jan Britton)</i>
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 14 Jul 2026	Leader and Cabinet Member for Climate, Performance and Safeguarding	<i>Grace Evans, Head of Legal Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer</i> <i>grace.evans@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i>

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	<i>Managing Director – Dorset Innovation Park Ltd</i> <i>Executive Director, Place (Jan Britton)</i>
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	<i>Managing Director – Dorset Innovation Park Ltd</i> <i>Executive Director, Place (Jan Britton)</i>
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	<i>Grace Evans, Head of Legal Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer</i> <i>grace.evans@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i>

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Cabinet Member	Officer Contact
Dorset Innovation Park Ltd (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 November	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Property & Assets and Economic Growth	<i>Managing Director – Dorset Innovation Park Ltd</i> <i>Executive Director, Place (Jan Britton)</i>

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.

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Shareholder Committee for Dorset Innovation Park Ltd

13 April 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 council support for the establishment of Dorset Innovation Park Ltd and the operation of the Dorset Innovation Park.

Recommendation:

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

Reason for Recommendation:

Progress continues to be sustained both on the establishment and strengthening of the Dorset Innovation Park Company and on aligned projects that will benefit the operation of the Innovation Park, the Council, the Park tenants and wider economic prosperity across Dorset.

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 Council officers and DIP Ltd employees continue to operate in close cooperation and the transition process from the Council to the Company is managed by a Transition Group chaired by the Executive Director for Place.
- 1.3 The Council and DIP Ltd are in the final stages of agreeing the Services Contract between Dorset Council and the company. This contract sets out the services the Company will be supplying to the Council, and the support the Council will be providing the Company to assist the delivery of their business plan.
- 1.4 It has been agreed that the Council will provide support to the Company for Information Technology services for the Company Executive team and Board, and for Property and Legal services relating to the sale of land or lease of land or buildings.
- 1.5 It has also been agreed that the Company will provide a range of services to the Council, in summary, at the time of this report, these are:
 1. Management of BattleLab offices and workshop.
 2. Management of Stakeholder relations, including with the Ministry of Defence and academia.
 3. Site promotion and marketing.
 4. Site development and plot preparation, including drafting business cases to draw down finance made available for capital spending as allocated to Dorset Innovation Park under the Business Plan.
 5. Onboarding new tenants to secure lettings/sales.
 6. Generating and managing an events programme in support of the innovation ecosystem and job creation above.
 7. Managing test and evaluation services/infrastructure on site, including access to physical and digital capabilities.
- 1.6 These services must be delivered within the agreed Business Plan budget and any additional Capital funding awarded by the Council to fund specific projects, and the Company must ensure the park operates efficiently and

legally while meeting Dorset Council's key outcomes and performance indicators.

- 1.7 With the signature of this Contract all the relevant governance documentation for the Company, and its relationship with the Council, will be in place. Signature also facilitates the transfer of funds from the Council to the Company for the services outlined in the Contract. It is envisaged that the contract will be signed by the date of the Shareholder Committee meeting and a verbal update will be given at that time.
- 1.8 To assist in the development and sale of plots within the Innovation Park the Council commissioned work to undertake site investigations, plot access arrangements, and a site wide sustainable drainage strategy. This study focused on the main development plots within the central area of the Park. Detailed cost and design work is being commissioned to inform a report requesting approval of capital funds against this activity.
- 1.9 The Council have concluded the purchase of 6.1 hectares of land neighbouring the existing Innovation Park. Acquisition of this land will diversify the land offer available at the Innovation Park and open up new market interest.
- 1.10 The developable area, at approximately 2.5 hectares, is substantially larger than the development plots currently available within the Innovation Park. There is a shortage of sites locally, and regionally, of this size and the acquisition represents an opportunity to accommodate new, larger businesses to the site, alongside the organic growth of existing occupants.
- 1.11 It is estimated the site could generate around 200 new jobs, strengthening Dorset's economic resilience and improving local well-being.
- 1.12 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 as part of this newly acquired land that could service both the Innovation Park and the local visitor economy.
- 1.13 Colliers initial study has concluded that the operation of a hotel at DIP would be operationally profitable. Phase two of this study is investigating a range of potential ownership and investment structure options to determine the potential financial return and risk to the council. Further consideration is required of the detailed business case and the financial risks and implications of such an investment.

- 1.14 The council has commissioned masterplanning and feasibility work to investigate the potential for employment use of the land to the immediate west of the Innovation Park, which is currently owned and being decommissioned by the Nuclear Decommissioning Agency (NDA).
- 1.15 This work is investigating the suitability of the site to accommodate clean energy and employment uses recognising the significant decontamination and remediation process to be concluded, and the need to protect existing landscape protection designations in the vicinity.
- 1.16 The process for adoption of this masterplan is being investigated and will form the basis of further conversations with local and national stakeholders and potential to be a material planning consideration.
- 1.17 Officers from the council and the Company are working jointly with Plymouth City Council on a Local Innovation Partnerships Fund application. This application seeks to establish a genuine multi-domain (land, sea and air) Global Autonomy Cluster where autonomous systems move from R&D to real world deployment at pace and scale. The Innovation Park, BattleLab, and the Lulworth Ranges all feature as significant component parts of this regional bid, and are an example of how Dorset can play a more advanced role within national security capabilities.

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)

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Shareholder Committee for Dorset Innovation Park Ltd

13 April 2026

Dorset Innovation Park Ltd Managing Director Update For Review and Consultation

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 an update from the 4th February Shareholder Committee.

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. It also provides an update on key deliverable cited in the company Business Plan presented and approved at the 4th February Shareholder Committee.
- 1.2 **Park Improvements** – extensive work is underway to streamline the process to accelerate the delivery of key works outlined in the Business Plan. These include; updating the proposed design for replacement gatehouse, demolition of redundant brick switching house and further plot development works. Finalised costing to be provided at later Shareholder Committee Meeting.
- 1.3 **Further and Higher Education engagements** – DIP Ltd has been supporting funding applications including the Defence Technical Excellence College application by Yeovil, and Bournemouth University’s application for Defence-Related Skills funding which if funded, would be a

satellite presence of the Secure Operation Centre of the Future being located at the Park. The Council and DIP Ltd jointly supported the Plymouth City Council led Local Innovation Partnerships Fund application, that if supported could see the creation of 'Maker Space' created. DIP Ltd are also working with the National Oceanography Centre in Southampton on a joint application for Innovate UK funding to support a national robotics hub.

- 1.4 **BattleLab developments** – ShoreLine Services are now occupying an area on the first floor of BattleLab generating income, and early indications are that a vibrant events programme will take place in the Conference Facility this year generating at least £20k income. Further options for income generation are being considered towards intent of reducing the annual loss on this building by 50%.
- 1.5 **Company Secretarial Support** – DIP Ltd has commissioned Womble Bond Dickinson to provide Company Secretarial support for the company, and separately an engagement letter has been signed for provision of legal services as and where needed.
- 1.6 **Skills Summit** - Following the Tenants Forum meeting in February, DIP Ltd intend to arrange a Skills Summit with key employers on the Park. This to bring together a range of University and College providers to work through what sort of facility could be created for skills delivery on site following the success of the skills centre created at the Daedalus Park by Fareham Borough Council. Any skills summit around May or June this year will be co-created and jointly delivered with Dorset Council.
- 1.7 **Recruitment Updates** - Louise Leat (Asset and Facility Manager) will officially start at the beginning of June, but will engage in some project type work from April. This with an initial focus on the development of a Robust Financial Model and current Estate Agent relationships, particularly with respect to generation of national and international interest. Emily Ward, initially contracted from Connect2Dorset has also now been made permanent as Office and Operations Manager for the Company.
- 1.8 **Transition Meetings** - A series of transition meetings have been created focussing on key themes around Governance, Site Management and Capital Improvements, Major Development Projects, Developmental Trajectory and Agreed KPIs. These engaging core Team from the Council and DIP Ltd occurring every two weeks working through agreed priority areas to ensure that the company have all systems, governance

and document repository in place before taking over operation of the Park around June this year.

- 1.9 **Regional Testing and Evaluation Capability** – DIP Ltd and Dorset Council are collaborating on the development of new DIP web pages to effectively promote the depth and breadth of testing and evaluation capability in region to drive industry investment into the region. This is vital as potentially the Park and wider region are one of only three areas in the UK where multi-domain testing and evaluation of uncrewed systems is possible acting as a magnet for companies seeking to expand in the growing Defence and Security market. Following feedback on initial web page development, we are hoping to get these finalised and published by end of May. In tandem DIP Ltd is exploring conversations with a number of organisations including 'Open Skies Network' for the development of a turn-key process to allow companies to easily access facilities that complies with all current regulatory requirements.

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. **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.

N/A

10. Appendices

Appendix 1 – reserved matters – Exempt document (Para 3)

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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