



Shareholder Committee for Dorset Innovation Park Ltd

Date: Wednesday, 4 November 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

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Agenda

Item	Pages
1. APOLOGIES To receive any apologies for absence.	
2. MINUTES To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2026.	7 - 10
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 October 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 October 2026.

6. FORWARD PLAN 11 - 18

To consider the Forward Plan.

7. DORSET COUNCIL UPDATE REPORT 19 - 24

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

8. MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT 25 - 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. DIP LTD GOVERNANCE REPORT 31 - 32

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

10. 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.

11. 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 12, 13, 14 and 15 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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|------------|---|---------|
| 12. | Managing Director's Report - Exempt Appendix
<i>Para 3</i>
Exempt appendix associated with agenda item 8 – Managing Director's report. | 33 - 34 |
| 13. | Dorset Innovation Park Ltd - Emerging Business Plan for coming year
<i>Para 3</i>
To consider a report of the Managing Director, Dorset Innovation Park Ltd. | 35 - 38 |
| 14. | Dorset Innovation Park Finance Report
<i>Para 3</i>
To consider a report of the Managing Director, Dorset Innovation Park Ltd. | 39 - 58 |
| 15. | Chesil House Options Report
<i>Para 3</i>
To consider a report of the Managing Director, Dorset Innovation Park Ltd. | 59 - 64 |

Public Participation, Accessibility and Emergency Evacuation Information

Public Participation

This meeting may be viewed live or after the event via the YouTube link on the Dorset Council committee webpage. Members of the public may also attend in person. Details of the meeting venue are provided at the top of the agenda.

Members of the public wishing to participate in the meeting may do so in person or via a hybrid link. Further information is available in the [Getting Involved](#) guidance.

Please ensure mobile phones are set to silent during the meeting.

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Members of the public may film, photograph or report on proceedings that are held on public, including via social media, provided this is done unobtrusively and in accordance with the Chair's directions. Anyone wishing to film or record the meeting is asked to inform the Chair or the Democratic & Governance Services Officer.

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Password: Jurassic

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- If the alarm sounds, leave the building immediately using the nearest safe exit as directed by a council officer.
- Proceed to the designated muster point in the car park opposite County Hall.
- Do not use lifts during an evacuation.
- Do not re-enter the building until advised that it is safe to do so.
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Anyone requiring first aid should go to the main reception at County Hall. Outside of normal office hours the first aid contact will be a member of the Facilities Team.

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SHAREHOLDER COMMITTEE FOR DORSET INNOVATION PARK LTD

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 14 JULY 2026

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

Present remotely: Cllrs Ben Wilson

Also present: Cllr Piers Brown and Cllr Les Fry

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

Jan Britton (Executive Director - Economy and Environment), Nick Webster (Head of Growth and Regeneration), Grace Evans (Head of Legal Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer), Kevin Forshaw (Managing Director, Dorset Innovation Park Ltd), Cecilia Bufton (Chair of the Board, Dorset Innovation Park Ltd) and Lindsey Watson (Senior Democratic and Governance Officer)

1. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 April 2026 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

3. **Public Participation**

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

4. **Councillor Questions**

There were no questions from councillors.

5. **Forward Plan**

The Forward Plan was noted.

6. **Review of Terms of Reference**

The terms of reference for the shareholder committee were noted.

7. Dorset Council Update Report

The shareholder committee considered a report of the Head of Growth and Regeneration, which presented an update on the current position regarding the council's support for Dorset Innovation Park Ltd and the operation of the Dorset Innovation Park.

In presenting the report, the Head of Growth and Regeneration provided an overview of the position with the 2025/26 year-end business rates, the outcome of the commissioned study into a hotel development at the park, conversations taking place with partner authorities regarding Wessex devolution proposals, the implications of the recent government published UK Defence Investment Plan and the planning application related to the Winfrith Nuclear site and Nuclear Restoration Services.

Councillors considered the issues arising from the report and during discussion the following points were raised:

- It was noted that Dorset Council had commissioned a masterplan to guide the future development of the Winfrith Nuclear site, with the aim that the masterplan would be a material consideration in future planning decisions. It was planned for this to be considered by Cabinet later in the year
- A planning application submitted on behalf of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority, presented some conflict with what was to be included in the masterplan, and representations from the council's economic development team had been made to the planning authority, which would need to be considered alongside other representations
- The importance of the emerging proposals, which prioritised clean energy-led employment, including opportunities in nuclear, hydrogen, advanced engineering and research and development, were highlighted
- Consideration of the proposals for a potential hotel development at the park were ongoing with further discussion to be held with Cabinet members in the Autumn, before a report was brought for decision by Cabinet
- In response to a question, it was confirmed that a detailed finance report would be brought to the next meeting of the shareholder committee. This would provide further information to assist with shareholder decision-making.

The report was noted.

8. Dorset Innovation Park Ltd Managing Director's report

The shareholder committee considered a report of the Managing Director, Dorset Innovation Park, which provided an update on the current situation at the Dorset Innovation Park Ltd and on matters since the last meeting in April 2026.

The Managing Director, Dorset Innovation Park, provided an overview of the areas covered by the report, which included work undertaken to establish the company, including putting policies in place, staffing and legal requirements. It was confirmed that the intention was for the company to take over Dorset Innovation Park asset management on 20 July 2026.

The Chair of the Board, Dorset Innovation Park noted the close working that continued with Dorset Council and thanked those officers involved in this area. In addition, the Chair reflected on recent meetings held with tenants on site and future support requirements.

Those present considered the issues arising from the report and during discussion the following points were raised:

- In response to a question regarding the pace of council decision-making, it was noted that close working with officers to date, had ensured there were currently no issues. The need to drive development at a commercial pace was recognised and the Local Development Order and company framework for decision-making being developed would assist with this, whilst retaining the independence required by the company
- There had been improvement seen in the pace of decisions being made by the council, particularly as required by some recent areas of work
- Reference was made to the local skills improvement plan and there was a need for further work to understand how any collaborations would work moving forward. Areas of skills gaps had been noted and there was a need for a specific defence investment plan. Further discussion would take place during exempt business
- It was agreed that a report on company governance would be brought to the next meeting of the shareholder committee, to ensure transparency
- In addition, a quarterly finance report would be presented to the next meeting and there was a request for an informal briefing for shareholder committee members ahead of the meeting
- Work was ongoing by the company, working closely with the council's legal team, to review aged-debt issues
- Security arrangements were being reviewed, with funding requested and a security committee to be reinstated. Key companies on site were engaged in the process. Security arrangements would satisfy Ministry of Defence and NATO requirements
- A proposal for a new gate house for the site was being developed and a report would be presented at the appropriate time.

The report was noted.

9. **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

10. **Exempt Business**

It was proposed by S Bartlett seconded by R Biggs

Decision

That the press and the public be excluded for the following items in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the meaning of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

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).

The livestream ended at this point.

11. Dorset Innovation Park Ltd Managing Director's Report - Exempt Appendix

The shareholder committee considered issues arising in the reserved matters section of the report of the Managing Director, Dorset Innovation Park, with responses provided to questions and comments. Updates as appropriate, would be provided at future meetings.

12. Innovation Park Training and Education Update

The shareholder committee received a presentation from the Head of Growth and Regeneration and the Managing Director, Dorset Innovation Park, regarding training and education matters associated with the Dorset Innovation Park.

In response to a question, consideration would be given to the level of information that could be made available publicly for future reporting purposes.

Duration of meeting: 11.30 am - 1.26 pm

Chair

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Shareholder Committee for the Dorset Innovation Park Ltd
Forward Plan - November 2026 to January 2027
(Publication date – 6 OCTOBER 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 2026/27

Cllr Nick Ireland – Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Climate, Performance, Communications and Safeguarding
Cllr Richard Biggs – Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economic Growth and Strategic Assets
Cllr Shane Bartlett – Cabinet Member for Planning and Infrastructure
Cllr Simon Clifford – Cabinet Member for Resources and Finance
Cllr Ben Wilson – Cabinet Member for Transformation, Customer and Workforce

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Cabinet Member	Officer Contact
November 2026				
Dorset Council Update Report Key Decision - No Public Access - Part exempt To receive a report of the Head of Growth and Economic Regeneration.	Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Dorset Innovation Park Ltd	Decision Date 4 Nov 2026	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economic Growth & Strategic Assets	<i>Nick Webster, Head of Growth and Regeneration</i> <i>nicholas.webster@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Director - Economy and Environment (Jan Britton)</i>
Managing Director's report Key Decision - No Public Access - Part exempt To consider a report of the Managing Director – Dorset Innovation Park Ltd.	Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Dorset Innovation Park Ltd	Decision Date 4 Nov 2026	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economic Growth & Strategic Assets	<i>Managing Director – Dorset Innovation Park Ltd</i> <i>Executive Director - Economy and Environment (Jan Britton)</i>
DIP Ltd Governance Report Key Decision - No Public Access - Open Summary of all governance measures now in place for DIP Ltd.	Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Dorset Innovation Park Ltd	Decision Date 4 Nov 2026	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economic Growth & Strategic Assets	<i>Managing Director – Dorset Innovation Park Ltd</i> <i>Executive Director - Economy and Environment (Jan Britton)</i>

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Cabinet Member	Officer Contact
Dorset Innovation Park Ltd 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 4 Nov 2026	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economic Growth & Strategic Assets	<i>Managing Director – Dorset Innovation Park Ltd Executive Director - Economy and Environment (Jan Britton)</i>
Dorset Innovation Park Finance Report Key Decision - No Public Access - Fully exempt To agree a summary report of DIP Ltd Operational Expenditure and the overall Park Profit and Loss.	Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Dorset Innovation Park Ltd	Decision Date 4 Nov 2026	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economic Growth & Strategic Assets	<i>Managing Director – Dorset Innovation Park Ltd Executive Director - Economy and Environment (Jan Britton)</i>
Chesil House Options Report Key Decision - No Public Access - Fully exempt A summary report of options for future use of Chesil House.	Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Dorset Innovation Park Ltd	Decision Date 4 Nov 2026	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economic Growth & Strategic Assets	<i>Managing Director – Dorset Innovation Park Ltd Executive Director - Economy and Environment (Jan Britton)</i>

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Cabinet Member	Officer Contact
January 2027				
Dorset Council Update Report Key Decision - No Public Access - Part exempt To receive a report of the Head of Growth and Economic Regeneration.	Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Dorset Innovation Park Ltd	Decision Date 13 Jan 2027	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economic Growth & Strategic Assets	<i>Nick Webster, Head of Growth and Regeneration</i> <i>nicholas.webster@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Executive Director - Economy and Environment (Jan Britton)</i>
Managing Director's report Key Decision - No Public Access - Part exempt To consider a report of the Managing Director – Dorset Innovation Park Ltd.	Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Dorset Innovation Park Ltd	Decision Date 13 Jan 2027	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economic Growth & Strategic Assets	<i>Managing Director – Dorset Innovation Park Ltd</i> <i>Executive Director - Economy and Environment (Jan Britton)</i>
Dorset Innovation Park Ltd Business Plan 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 13 Jan 2027	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economic Growth & Strategic Assets	<i>Managing Director – Dorset Innovation Park Ltd</i> <i>Executive Director - Economy and Environment (Jan Britton)</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 Regeneration, Economic Growth & Strategic Assets	<i>Managing Director – Dorset Innovation Park Ltd Executive Director - Economy and Environment (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 Regeneration, Economic Growth & Strategic Assets	<i>Managing Director – Dorset Innovation Park Ltd Executive Director - Economy and Environment (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, Communications, Performance & Safeguarding	<i>Grace Evans, Head of Legal Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer 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 Regeneration, Economic Growth & Strategic Assets	<i>Managing Director – Dorset Innovation Park Ltd</i> <i>Executive Director - Economy and Environment (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

4 November 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's support for 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:

Following the full hand over of Innovation Park responsibilities to Dorset Innovation Park Ltd (the Company) earlier this year, progress continues to be made on the working relationship between the Council and the Company. There continues to be considerable alignment of work and resources to support the work of the Company on the Park and in supporting the defence, security and manufacturing sectors across Dorset.

1. Report

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of the current position in relation to the Dorset Council support provided to Dorset Innovation Park Ltd (DIP Ltd) and an update on wider progress on strategic actions in relation to economic growth that align with the Innovation Park.
- 1.2 Hand over of full responsibility for Park operations occurred on 20th July and although the Company are now fully responsible for the management and operation of the Park there remains a close working relationship with the Council on all operational and strategic matters.
- 1.3 It is worth reflecting that the past twelve months have seen a transition between Council and Company operations and that the Company's first officer resource (the Managing Director) commenced employment only a year ago and the important commercial property resource was secured only six months ago.
- 1.4 The Council continue to provide support as laid out in the Services Contract and, through the Economic Growth service, provide a coordination of activity both at strategic and operational level.

Finance

- 1.5 The Company and Council have prepared a separate paper updating the financial position of the Park and the Company.
- 1.6 Outside of that report, it is worth noting that the Company have made considerable progress in regularising lease agreements, addressing the service charge position, and securing due income.

Commercial Interest

- 1.7 The Company has negotiated a sale of land within the Park to an existing tenant in the defence sector. The Cabinet Member for Property & Assets and Economic Growth has signed an executive decision selling 3.8 acres of land on a long leasehold basis. This sale is now progressing to exchange of contracts with completion conditioned on securing of a planning permission.
- 1.8 The Company has also agreed heads of terms on another potential land purchase, this time to a new prospective tenant who also operate in the defence sector. Progression beyond heads of terms is conditional on securing of commercial contracts.

- 1.9 Officers and the Company continue to engage with Yeovil College over their ambition to invest in the site following their successful Defence Technical Excellence College award.

Defence sector and investment

- 1.10 Relationships continue to be built between the Council, the Company and the local defence industrial base. Dorset has been included in the successful Local Innovation Partnership Fund (LIPF) programme led by Plymouth university.
- 1.11 Focused on developing a national cluster for Defence Autonomy in the South West, the £20m programme is with UK Research and Investment for final sign off and, will include additional research availability for Dorset businesses, specialist personnel based in DIP, and access to a capital fund.
- 1.12 Following conversations with industry partners Dorset will be requesting support from the LIPF programme for a Multi Domain Command and Control facility that will enable autonomous system testing across air, sea and land. Work has already been commissioned to create an autonomous systems air corridor between Portland, Lulworth and DIP.
- 1.13 Of the back of these same conversations Officers and the Company are preparing a Dorset Defence Investment Prospectus. To be used as an investment tool targeting government investment and private sector businesses, the Prospectus coordinates all current investment in the sector and identifies a series of future investments that would strengthen our competitive advantage.
- 1.14 Officers are coordinating with local businesses on the launch of this prospectus and are hopeful that an appropriate Council delegation will be present at launch.

Defence BattleLab

- 1.15 The Company have received a request from the MOD investigating the potential to increase their personnel presence within the building. It is considered that an increased MOD presence and use of the Defence BattleLab is a positive step forward from a strategic and visibility perspective. There will be lease and commercial negotiations with the MOD if this interest coalesces which would be commercially confidential.

Council Plan Target Measures and Job Creation

- 1.16 Shareholders will be aware of a Council Plan target measure relating to the Innovation Park - "A new delivery company for the Dorset Innovation Park will be launched in 2025 creating 300 jobs by 2029". Officers undertook a benchmarking exercise in 2025 and establish that there were circa 820 full time equivalent (fte) positions in businesses on the Innovation Park.
- 1.17 The Company undertook a monitoring exercise in summer 2026 and established that there were circa 945 fte positions in businesses on the Innovation Park, an increase of 125 jobs. Officers and the Company are establishing where the increase has happened and whether the roles are in new businesses coming to site or in existing companies expanding their workforce.
- 1.18 The current trajectory in terms of jobs numbers would result in the 300 jobs target being met by the target date of 2029. Shareholders will be aware that job numbers could be subject to a reduction should businesses move off site.

Winfrith Nuclear Site and Nuclear Restoration Services planning application

- 1.19 An update was given at the last Shareholders Committee on the Nuclear Restoration Services planning application, to which the Economic Growth service submitted a representation. This application is still in the determination period.
- 1.20 Further work is being undertaken to understand the potential opportunity for clean energy production at the Winfrith Nuclear Licensed Site and conversations are ongoing with NRS and the Nuclear Decommissioning Agency, in addition to discussions with private sector partners.

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. Where projects referenced in the report require a formal decision to proceed or to agree

any council involvement, advice from legal colleagues will be sought at an early stage to inform Green Papers or decision reports.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no specific financial implications or decisions arising from this report. Where projects referenced in the report require a formal decision to proceed or to agree any council involvement, advice from financial colleagues will be sought at an early stage to inform Green Papers or decision reports.

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. Where projects referenced in the report require a formal decision to proceed or to agree any council involvement, an equalities impact assessment will be undertaken at an early stage to inform Green Papers or decision reports.

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 November 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 / Appendix One 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 13th July 2026 report provided to the 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 Dorset Innovation Park (DIP). It also provides an update on key deliverables cited in the company Business Plan presented and approved at the 4th February 2026 Shareholder Committee.

1.2 Transfer to the Company of Dorset Innovation Park Asset

Management – The Company took over DIP asset management on the 20th July 2026. All tenants have now been informed and new contacts for operational leads circulated. Since June an extensive programme to tidy up lease terms in place on the Park, and also to recover bad debts has been underway. This has placed a significant burden on the Company Property and Asset Manager, and also the Council Legal Team, but getting all of this sorted will provide a firm foundation for growth from 2027 onwards.

- 1.3 **DIP Improvements** – A Project Management firm has now been appointed to drive key improvement works as outlined in the Business Plan. These include: updating the proposed design, selection and then construction of the replacement gatehouse and demolition of redundant brick switching house. This process was completed with full compliance of the PPR based upon location, value for money and suitability to drive the works specified.
- 1.4 **Major Development Projects** – at a high-level, the prospects for the Park are now looking very encouraging. A pre-application for planning permission has been submitted for one major development, and Heads of Terms have been agreed for another. We are also working through plans for an Advanced Skills and Research Centre (see 1.5), and interest in a further plot is currently being explored with more enquiries for other areas now having been received.
- 1.5 **Further and Higher Education engagements** – Yeovil College have committed £2.6m to a new campus at the Park and we are currently exploring how Dorset Council can match this with a further £2m to urgently create the future skilled workforce for Defence Sector expansion in the County. Conversations also continue with Bournemouth University and Glasgow Universities to see how they can also engage with this. It is likely that this wider development will also include Maker Space that will benefit from Rapid Prototyping equipment and conversations continue with the MoD to try to prevent duplication with any equipment they will purchase. Engagement in the Plymouth led LIPF fund would also provide grant funding for this.

Heads of Terms have now also been supplied to Bournemouth University's for the Security Operations Centre of the Future (SOCOF) development in BattleLab this being funded out of the £2.3m funding secured from an Office for Students Grant.

- 1.6 **Local Innovation Partnerships Fund** – The council's Economic Development team and the Company are continuing to work jointly to shape Dorset engagement in the Plymouth City led Local Innovation Partnerships Fund application. The Dorset Offer and Ask was submitted to Plymouth focussed on a £1.7m capital request for a Multi-Domain Autonomy Command and Control Centre that also incorporates a flight corridor from the Park to Portland and hopeful 'Maker Space'. We are now awaiting the formal application form for this to be released before bringing all delivery partners together to work through precise system

specification, cost and matching funds available. The project will also provide funding for R&D and testing and evaluation and hopefully a new post to be based at DIP from February 2027.

1.7 Defence Strategic Investment Plan, Second Round Table 21st October

The draft wording for the Dorset Defence prospectus, the LIPF response and also plans for the Advanced Skills and Research Centre were discussed at a second roundtable of key Defence companies on the 21st October which engaged around 25 attendees. The intention now is to finalise the words with images and to get the prospectus printed by the end of this year. This flagging the very significant contribution that Dorset companies are making to UK Defence and Security and also key asks for support from Westminster, noting that Lloyd Hatton MP has been discussing the need for the Advanced Skills Centre on the Park in the House of Commons.

1.8 Regional Testing and Evaluation Capability – A booking system has now been developed for use for all drone flying demonstrations on the Park. This included an assessment of the Risk Assessment and Methodology submitted for each intended booking. Work also continues on the drone corridor to Portland via Lulworth, and we are planning to increase awareness of the depth and breadth of the Dorset multi-domain autonomous test capability via revision to the website and in a section of the new Dorset Defence Prospectus.

Note also that the LIPF project is intending to form challenge cohorts, with companies enrolled onto these being funded for R&D and T&E.

1.9 BattleLab developments – ShoreLine Services continue to occupy an area on the first floor of BattleLab, but all plans for the Company to further sub-divide other areas of the building to accommodate additional companies are now on hold (see Exempt business).

1.10 Facilities Management – closer working with the current Facilities Management agent (CBRE) continues with additional efficiencies indicated in Exempt Business. The FM Contract will also now be market tested in 2027.

1.11 Outstanding Lease Events and Aged Debt – The Company has been working closely with the council's legal team to review a list of tenants on DIP who are not paying rent or service charge because of their lease terms have expired. Similar tidying up has also been initiated for aged debt and further information is also contained in Exempt Business.

- 1.12 **Company Compliance and Operation** – A separate report has been produced on company Governance.
- 1.13 **Recruitment Updates** – The company has temporarily engaged a Senior Finance person who is working part-time to work through the detail of financial forecasting with CBRE and also Council Accountancy leads to determine a very accurate financial position for the Park that will also allow us to forecast out the impact from development projects now taking place.

This role will establish a robust set of financial reporting processes that can be used to report into the Shareholders and Company Board, and will work with appointed accountants - Albert Goodman - to ensure accurate presentation of company accounts in line with the operating and funding model envisaged.

We have also appointed a Bournemouth University Masters Student parttime to assist with the development and implementation of a communications strategy for the Park.

- 1.14 **Transition Meetings** - The series of transition meetings between the council and the Company have now concluded, but we are revisiting a number of specific issues to work through the most time-efficient and commercially responsive way for the company to progress various matters, while ensuring compliance with PPR and other regulation for the Council. These specifically seeing to optimise processes relating to Capital Improvements and Major Development Projects, with a need to refocus on how wider development on the Park can be financed going forward (more detail in Finance Paper in Exempt Business).
- 1.15 **Wider Dorset Innovation Park Promotion** – The Innovation Park has been included in an article being prepared for Dorset Life, and Dorset Echo are now also seeking to produce a separate article on developments.

DIP had a stand at the Alan Turing Technology Festival in Sherborne on the 16th October with exhibits kindly loaned by Latent Drive and Vaspba. The event also included stands from our partners Yeovil College, Bournemouth University and Dorset Council UK, and other organisations including BAE Systems, Thales, Leonardo, University of Bath and the Bletchley Park Trust.

I am chairing a Panel on Defence Investment representing DIP at the South Coast CPS Conference in Southampton on the 12th November, and

am also on a Mission Critical Panel on the 18th November at Venture Fest South at the Utilita Bowl, Southampton.

- 1.15 **University of Connecticut Visit on 17th and 18th November** – previous contact made with University of Connecticut has led to a meeting being convened in BattleLab that will engage Plymouth, Bath, Exeter, Southampton and Portsmouth Universities along with representatives from key Dorset and wider South West Defence Companies and the Society of Maritime Industries.

2. **Alternative Options Considered**

- 2.1 Not applicable

3. **Legal Implications**

- 3.1 No decisions are requested from this report and it is provided to note, 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. Background Papers

N/A

11. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Reserved Matters (Exempt document – Paragraph 3)



Dorset Innovation Park Ltd

Governance Report

Prepared for November 4th 2026 Shareholder Committee Meeting **PUBLIC, DECISION REQUESTED**

1.0 Governance and Remuneration Committee

The DIP Ltd Board has approved the Terms of Reference for the Governance, Appointments and Remuneration Committee (GARC) that will support the Board by providing oversight, advice and recommendations on Company governance, composition, senior personnel appointments, succession planning and remuneration of Board members including the Managing Director. The Committee is required to meet three times per year.

2.0 Policies

2.1 The DIP Board approved the Corporate Governance Manual in August and at the October Board meeting, reviewed and approved the next level documents:

- Reserved Matters Schedule, which details how the matters reserved to the Shareholder as described in the Services agreement, are to be implemented through matters reserved to the Board of Directors and Executive team
- Delegated Authority Framework, which establishes the authority delegated by the Board to officers of the Company
- Financial Policy, which establishes the framework for the proper stewardship of the financial affairs of the Company
- Procurement and Contract Management Policy, which establishes the principles and procedures governing the procurement of goods, services and works by the Company
- Risk Management Framework, which establishes a consistent approach to identifying, assessing, managing, monitoring and reporting risk across the Company. This Framework applies to all activities undertaken by or on behalf of the Company.

These documents form the main operating framework for the Company

2.2 The following DIP Ltd policies have been agreed by the Board, in line with the Services Agreement, dated 10th April 2026:

- Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking,
- Ethics hospitality and Anti-Bribery,
- Directors and Staff Expenses

2.3 Other policies approved to date:

- Corporate Governance Manual
- Conflicts of Interest Policy
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion policy
- Whistleblowing policy

2.4 Policies under development include:

- Health & Safety (although this only mandated by Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 for companies with more than 5 employees)
- Environmental Social and Governance (ESG)
- Data management
- Enquiries and complaints
- Site security
- Brand and communication
- Cyber security

3.0 Finance Audit and Risk

3.1 The Board have agreed that Finance, Audit and Risk matters will be dealt with by the full Board and not delegated to a sub-committee.

3.2 For the financial year 2026/27, DIP Ltd will remain well below the statutory audit thresholds and the financial activity of DIP Ltd is comparatively straightforward, comprising mainly payroll, professional fees, limited event income and management-service funding from Dorset Council. For this year, the more complex property-related income and expenditure is administered separately by CBRE, while DIP Ltd's statutory accounts are prepared by an ICAEW-regulated firm. In these circumstances and given that indicative audit fees have been approximately £20,000, the additional assurance obtained from a full external audit is unlikely to be proportionate to its cost at this stage. It is therefore recommended that the Shareholder agree that DIP Ltd may claim the available small-company audit exemption for the current financial year, provided that there is no contrary requirement in the company's articles, shareholder agreement or other governing documents.

Decision Required:

Following the DIP Ltd Board Meeting on 14th October 2026, we are requesting that the Council support the decision for DIP Ltd to claim small-company audit exemption for financial year 2026/27

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of the Local Government Act 1972.

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