

Officer Delegated Decision

Date: 23th January 2026

Decision:

To offer Morwind, a grant of £375,000 towards the £1.5m budget requirement for the development of a Full Business Case for the Channel Gateway proposal. To offer this funding on a grant-for-equity basis.

This decision is taken under the Scheme of Delegation to the Executive Director – Place, Mr. Jan Britton – in consultation with the Leader of the Council, Cllr Nick Ireland, and Cabinet Members for Finance and Economic Development, Cllrs Simon Clifford and Richard Biggs.

(Decisions included can be executive or non-executive in nature, depending on the delegation given. Please state if the delegation was granted by the Cabinet or any other Committee or is detailed within the Scheme of Delegation in the Council's Constitution.)

Key Decision:

Yes / No

Please see definition below.

Reason(s) for Decisions:

Channel Gateway

The Channel Gateway proposal by Morwind is to construct a new, £600 million, port facility in Dorset, adjacent to Portland Port, primarily to service the fixed and floating offshore wind sectors.

The facility will provide a construction and assembly platform and deep-water quay in an optimal location because of Portland's deep-water access at high and low tides, with the primary capability to manufacture substructures for the largest fixed and floating wind turbines and assemble turbines and blades for deployment in the Western English Channel and Celtic Sea.

The port platform and extensive quayside will also provide flexibility to manufacture other foundations, anchors/moorings, and marine infrastructure and support services in a strategic location for the UK and continental Europe.

Dorset Priorities

Channel Gateway is at the centre of a series of inter-related proposals that Dorset Council are supporting through the Dorset Clean Energy Super Cluster. Bringing the Channel Gateway proposal to fruition will help to unlock these other opportunities,

including fixed and floating offshore wind energy, Carbon capture and sequestration and the production and storage of green Hydrogen.

Over a five-to-ten year horizon, Channel Gateway has the potential to create between 1,500 and 2,000 direct new jobs in Portland, Weymouth and Chickereil - Dorset's area of highest economic deprivation and lowest social mobility. The wider opportunities in offshore wind, Carbon capture, Hydrogen and other advanced manufacturing, could indirectly create as many jobs again in the wider supply chain at the Dorset Innovation Park, in Dorset as a whole and across the South-West.

Morwind estimate that as a core component at the centre of the Dorset Clean Energy Super Cluster, Channel Gateway could create the conditions to unlock up to £28bn of investment in green growth and clean power, and generate a UK GVA boost of £5.5bn.

Channel Gateway is therefore directly and significantly relevant to three of Dorset Council's corporate priorities: driving economic prosperity; creating sustainable development; and creating stronger, healthier communities.

Funding Proposition

Morwind have secured a grant-to-equity offer of £750k through The Crown Estate's supply chain accelerator fund towards the forecast £1.5m cost of developing the Channel Gateway proposal from Outline Business Case (OBC) to Full Business Case (FBC).

Morwind are making a proposal that Dorset Council should contribute a further £375k towards the £1.5m budget requirement for the Full Business Case, with an undertaking that should the project proceed to commercial investment, the Council's investment will convert to equity in a special purpose vehicle at a rate of 1.25 times the initial investment.

Decision Maker (Name and Title):

Mr. Jan Britton, Executive Director – Place

Alternative options considered and rejected:

Morwind are the promoters of Channel Gateway, there are no alternative options.

Any conflict of interest declared by any member consulted:

None

Any dispensation granted in respect of any declared conflict of interest:

None

Definition of Key Decisions

Key decisions are defined in the Constitution as decisions of the Cabinet which are likely to -

- "(a) result in Dorset Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates namely where the sum involved would exceed £500,000; or
- (b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more electoral wards in Dorset."

How to complete this pro forma:

- (1) The date of the decision.
- (2) A brief description of the decision.
- (3) The reasons for the decision.
- (4) Officer title.
- (5) Details of any alternative options considered and rejected by the officer when making the decision.
- (6) Any conflict of interest declared by any member who had been consulted by the officer which relates to the decision.
- (7) Any dispensation granted by the Head of Paid Service in respect of any declared conflict of interest.

N.B. Please avoid using acronyms