

Shareholder Committee for Dorset Innovation Park Ltd

14 July 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 April 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** – a lot of preparatory work has been done since last October 2025, and the Company is intending to take over DIP asset management on the 20th July 2026. All tenants have now been informed and new contacts for operational leads circulated. The success of DIP is a joint endeavour and requires close working between the Company and teams at the council to be maintained as processes around co-working are streamlined.
- 1.3 **DIP Improvements** – Meetings with local contractors are taking place to determine suitability for key improvement works as 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. The Company is working closely with the council to determine an optimal process whereby the Company will recommend the most appropriate supplier to a future Shareholder Committee Meeting. This will be based upon location, value for money and suitability to drive the works specified.

- 1.4 **Further and Higher Education engagements** – Yeovil College have been successful with their Defence Technical Excellence College application and are committed to taking a presence on DIP. Conversations also continue with Bournemouth University, and now also Glasgow University around a Transducer Centre of Excellence.

Separately, from an industry demand perspective, a paper is being drafted by a key employer on site for sharing with other tenants. This is to pave the way for a future skills summit that will also engage other council leads so work can be undertaken towards identifying an outline design for a future Advanced Skills and Research Centre for DIP.

- 1.5 **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, with intent of seeing a 'Maker Space' created. We have jointly appointed a consultant to help drive creation of industry-led input into this offer.

- 1.6 **UKREiiF (UK Real Estate Investment and Infrastructure Forum), Leeds** - Kevin Forshaw joined Catherine Howe and Jan Britton at UKREiiF, and was a member of the Team Plymouth panel on Defence being a catalyst for regeneration and growth in the wider GSW Region. This also including Tracey Lee (Chief Executive Plymouth City Council), Babcock and MHCLG. Useful conversations with GSW and Wessex partners with follow-up needed to work through how Dorset Innovation Park will be promoted as a key Defence and Security site going forward.

- 1.7 **Defence Strategic Investment Plan Round Table 15th May** – 24 representatives attended a roundtable organised jointly by DIP Ltd and Council Economic Development on the morning of the 15th May which was chaired by Cecilia Bufton. This including key companies from Dorset and also Somerset with all enthusiastically supported the need to come together as more of a cluster to create the case for additional investment

to support additional specialist infrastructure to drive business growth, and the creation of the future skilled workforce required to fuel this. A consultant has been engaged to pull together the first draft of a prospectus for this by September.

- 1.8 **BattleLab developments** – Following ShoreLine Services being moved into an area on the first floor of BattleLab, the Company are now exploring how to sub-divide other areas of the building to accommodate additional companies. Any increase in occupation will in no way impinge on the MoD's ability to use the facility of the creation of a future events programme to be delivered. Interest in the facility as an events space continues and we are currently in negotiation with Bournemouth University around hosting a satellite centre of their Secure Operations Centre of the Future at BattleLab for which £2.3m funding has been secured from an Office for Students Grant.
- 1.9 **Major Project Development** – The Company is working with company leads driving the three major development projects currently being considered on DIP. However ongoing delays with the Defence Investment Plan are pushing timelines backwards. It is now unlikely that any of these will start in 2026, but there is cautious optimism that at least two of these will start in 2027. Although this is unlikely to prevent the Company achieving the stated KPIs by 2031, the Company and council need to consider action to ensure that the Dorset achieves proportional economic uplift soon so that job and wealth creation impacts can be maximised.
- 1.10 **Facilities Management** – closer working with the current Facilities Management agent (CBRE) is now in place with areas being explored to drive additional efficiencies. Soft market testing is being conducted to explore the potential market demand for a re-tendering of the contract later in 2026.
- 1.11 **Outstanding Lease Events and Aged Debt** – The Company is 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 having expired and therefore are occupying on terms outside the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954 (On expiry the Facilities Management agent put a rent stop in place to avoid Security of Tenure arising from an implied tenancy). A process is being implemented to ensure a more timely issue of notice or termination, an offer of a tenancy 'at will' will be made while terms are being renegotiated to enable recovery of rent to continue.

- 1.12 **Company Compliance and Operation** – The Company has appointed Womble Bond Dickinson to provide Company Secretarial support and legal services (as and when required) to the Company. Albert Goodman have been appointed as the Company's accountants, and both Employer's and Director's Liability Insurance are now in place.

By the time the Company takes over operation of DIP on the 20th July 2026 the Company will have the following policies in place:

- Ethics and anti-bribery
- Conflicts of Interest
- Directors and Staff Expenses
- Diversity, Equality and Inclusion
- Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking
- Whistleblowing
- Environmental, Social and Governance

- 1.13 **Recruitment Updates** – the appointed Property and Asset Manager started full-time at the beginning of June 2026, and a job description for administrative support has been submitted to Connect2Dorset. The company will host a Business Studies student placement over the summer period, before we look at a longer term solution for the additional administrative support required by the company. We have also registered interest for a student placement from Bournemouth University to drive the development of a communications strategy for the Company, drawing on additional consultants where needed for re-branding, revised web presence, brochure, social media campaign and press relations. Interviews will take place for this later in July.

- 1.14 **Transition Meetings** - The series of transition meetings between the council and the Company are close to being concluded, with any outstanding matters being taken up on a direct engagement basis between the council and the Company for time-efficiency. Nearly all aspects around Governance, Site Management and KPIs have been agreed, with optimal processes being created during live Capital Improvements and Major Development Projects. In terms of wider developmental trajectory, the revised Master Plan vision for DIP will be presented to the Council when complete later this year.

- 1.15 **Regional Testing and Evaluation Capability** – This is still a priority, and more detail around this will start to emerge as the offer and ask for the Plymouth City Council led LIPF (Local Innovation Partnerships Fund) project is prepared. This will be finalised by August 2026, at which point

the Company will probably appoint a consultant to help with the finer detail of negotiation with landowners for any flight corridor, and to ensure regulatory compliance process with all insurance cover needed in place. Due to the sensitivity of this project, further detail can be provided during discussion in Reserved Matters.

- 1.16 **NATO Industry Advisory Group**– Dorset Innovation Park, incorporating BattleLab was one of a select number of organisations being invited to have stand space at the NATO Industry Advisory Group day at Portsmouth Navy Base on the 24 June following an application made by DIP Ltd.

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. Appendices

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

11. Background Papers

N/A