

## Joint Strategic Economic Committee

### Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership

1 April 2015

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#### Porton Science Park – Project Update

##### Purpose of Report

1. To update the Committee on the progress of the Porton Science Park project since the Government announcement on 7 July 2014 of a £4 million commitment to the project through the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Growth Deal. To include commentary on the overall funding package and pending ESIF application and an outline of the key milestones for the delivery of Phase 1.

##### Background

2. The delivery of a Science Park at the Porton campus to support and evolve the established science base and research activity at Porton and in the surrounding area has been a long-standing goal of Dstl, PHE and Wiltshire Council. This is enshrined in the [Porton Down Masterplan](#)<sup>1</sup> adopted in 2007.
3. The Science Park is also a key strategic priority of the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership<sup>2</sup> (SWLEP) and was included in the allocation of the national Local Growth Fund announced by government on 7 July 2014 as part of the SWLEP's Growth Deal.

##### Strategic Context

4. The Porton Campus is home to the Defence Science technology laboratory (Dstl) and Public Health England (PHE) and already provides a focus of nationally important government research facilities in defence and public health. A science incubator facility (Tetricus) is already located at Porton adjacent to Dstl, 'inside the wire' and will relocate to the Science Park as part of Phase 1.
5. Recent research undertaken for the LEP by Wessex Academic Health Science Network (WAHSN) has established the existence of an emergent

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<http://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&ret=j&q=&esrc=s&frm=1&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CCMQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.wiltshire.gov.uk%2Fland-at-porton-down-masterplan-2007-february.pdf&ei=PO9yVJnYFJDaauC6gPAM&usq=AFQjCNEEUHiY6ny96QfmJTmOtshdh0cRA&bvm=bv.80185997,d.eXY>

<sup>2</sup> The Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership, *The Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Business Plan Jan 2012 – Mar 2015: The Pivotal Place for Growth in Southern England*, <http://www.swlep.biz/resources/document634891940048410000.pdf>, accessed 2013-10-21.

Life Sciences Cluster based around Porton encompassing over 130 private sector organisations and 30 public sector institutions. In addition to the Life Science sector, the proximity of the Porton campus to QinetiQ at Boscombe Down offers convergences between high value engineering and health and life sciences.

6. UK Trade and Investment (UKTI) has identified that the mix of expertise and facilities in specialist areas at Porton is unique within the UK and an asset of international importance.
7. The Tetricus science incubator already situated at Porton is home to around 20 small companies within an existing 22,500 sq. ft facility. This is operating at capacity. Tetricus provides laboratory facilities and specialist support to new and growing science SMEs many of which have links to other activities taking place within the Porton Campus.
8. The delivery of the first phase of the Porton Science Park project will safeguard the businesses and jobs at Tetricus, as these need to be re-sited to enable Dstl to deliver Project Helios - the relocation of its facility at Fort Halsted in Kent. This £115m project will entail the relocation of around 650 staff to the site and the Defence Minister (Philip Dunne) attended a 'turf cutting' ceremony on site in March 2015.
9. The consolidation of Dstl's activities at Porton is also expected to lead to many new opportunities for spin-off companies 'outside the wire', and whilst elements of PHE may relocate under the Project Chrysalis programme to Harlow, a PHE presence will remain under any scenario with clear synergies with the Science Park. When complete, the Science Park will create up to 2,000 new, high value jobs as well as providing a focal point and platform for innovation, research and development in the health and life sciences in Wiltshire and the wider area.

### **The Project**

11. Porton Science Park comprises a 7.96 hectare site adjacent to the Defence Science & Technology Laboratory (Dstl) facility and the Public Health England (PHE) Porton site. Outline planning permission has been granted for 355,502 sq ft of research and development accommodation.
12. Reserved Matters (detailed planning permission) has been secured for the first phase of development comprising a 45,000 sq ft (GIA) innovation building and 'grow-on' space with related infrastructure to enable the remainder of the site to be opened up for the delivery of subsequent phases.

## **Outline of Next Steps to Deliver the Science Park**

### Funding

13. Funding for the first phase of the Science Park will comprise a package of funding from three separate sources. These are the government 'Growth Deal' funding, Wiltshire Council Capital funding and European ESIF funding.
14. On 7 July 2014 the government announced a £4 million commitment for grant funding to support delivery of Phase 1, via the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership. This money comes via the government's Growth Deal.
15. At a meeting on 20 January 2015 Wiltshire Council's Cabinet resolved to provide capital funding for the project of c. £2.5m as part of its match contribution. Over £0.5m of this has already been committed to design the Phase 1 building and secure the detailed planning permission which now exists.
16. The Council is supporting the SWLEP in the creation of its European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) strategy which will enable the deployment of a £41.5 million allocation of European funding for Swindon and Wiltshire. In the strategy, a portion of this funding is allocated for use under the 'Smart Specialisation' activity, which will include capital funding for the Porton Science Park as well as revenue funding for innovation targeted activity within the life sciences sector.
17. It is anticipated that a call will shortly be invited (in March 2015) for projects seeking European Capital Funding (via the European Structural and Investment Fund) this being the final component required of the overall funding package to deliver the first Phase project. The Council will be seeking between £2-3 million from this source.

### Delivery Programme

18. In terms of the programme, it is anticipated the overall funding package will be confirmed by the Summer of 2015. Alongside this the Council is finalising its lease arrangements with Dstl and making any necessary refinements to the design to accommodate the requirements of its prospective occupiers and meet any additional design demands arising from the ESIF funding source.
  19. The detailed programme is not yet confirmed, however it is anticipated that a procurement process to appoint a contractor (via OJEU) will commence in the summer with the appointment of a contractor anticipated in the autumn. The first phase building will be ready for occupation towards the end of next year (2016).
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## **Background Papers**

HM Government: *Strategy for UK Life Sciences: One Year On* (2012) <  
<http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/innovation/docs/s/12-1346-strategy-for-uk-life-sciences-one-year-on>> Retrieved 16 April 2014

BIS: *Encouraging a British Invention Revolution* (2013)  
<<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/universities-and-growth-the-witty-review-call-for-evidence>> Retrieved 16 April 2014

Outline permission for Porton Science Park:  
<http://services.wiltshire.gov.uk/UniDoc/Document/Search/DSA,517453>

Reserved matters permission for Phase 1 of Porton Science Park:  
<http://services.wiltshire.gov.uk/UniDoc/Document/Search/DSA,505850>

Swindon and Wiltshire Growth Deal:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/swindon-and-wiltshire-growth-deal-2014>