

2025/26 Budget Timetable and Budget Process

1. The budget for 2025/26 and the MTFP should be seen in the context of a rolling, evolving process structured to enable the ongoing proactive management and prioritisation of the council's resources.
2. Setting the budgets in the first six years has been a challenge due to the lack of complete historic data and trend information for the council as a single entity. Stability around this position has been impacted by the consequences of both Covid-19 and the cost-of-living crisis.
3. The key dates in the 2025/26 budget setting process can be set out as follows.

17 July 2024	Cabinet – Quarter 4 / Financial Outturn 2023/24.
17 July 2024	Cabinet - MTFP update report (including financial strategy).
4 September 2024	Cabinet - Quarter 1 - 2024/25 budget monitoring.
9 September 2024	Budget Engagement Exercise opens.
4 October 2024	Budget Engagement Exercise closes.
30 October 2024	Cabinet - MTFP update report.
8 November 2024	Budget Workshop (1) (all councillor presentations).
18 December 2024	Cabinet - Quarter 2 - 2024/25 budget monitoring.
18 December 2024	Cabinet – MTFP update report.
15 January 2025	Cabinet (Council Tax – 2025/26 tax-base report).
16 January 2025	Audit & Governance (Treasury Management Strategy 2025/26).
22 January 2025	Budget Workshop (2) (all councillor presentation).
31 January 2025	Presentation to representatives from Commerce & Industry.
5 February 2025	Cabinet - Quarter 4 - 2024/25 budget monitoring.
5 February 2025	Cabinet – 2025/26 proposed budget & MTFP update.
25 February 2025	Council – 2025/26 proposed budget and council tax setting.

BCP Council - Budget Process 2025/26

Month		Decisions	Cabinet	Public Engagement	Budget Holders	Finance	Strategic Planning Cycle
Feb	Scrutiny	Council Budget Meeting					Budget 24/25 approved + MTFP to 31 March 2028
March							
April							
May			Based on a proposed scenario Portfolio Holders engagement with budget holders to develop proposals for balancing the 2025/26 budget. Conversations part of the Bi-weekly informal Corporate Management Board/Cabinet strategic planning session meetings		Services prepare savings, efficiency, additional income and service rationalisation proposals to enable the 2025/26 budget to be balanced	Calculate initial savings targets	Police and Crime Commissioner Elections Bi-Election
June						Draft progress update report	
June						Fundamental refresh of the MTFP baseline	
July	Scrutiny	Cabinet MTFP Update Report		Budget Public Engagement Exercise - 6 weeks		Refine savings targets	
Aug						Draft Cabinet report on savings proposals	
Sept						Draft progress update report	
Oct	Scrutiny	Cabinet MTFP Update Report			Services present proposals to Bi-weekly CMB/Cabinet strategic planning meetings		
Nov	Budget Workshop						
Dec	Scrutiny	Cabinet MTFP Update Report	Cabinet members finalise 2025/26 budget proposals		Service refine budget proposals in light of outcomes of public engagement exercise	Update MTFP and draft Cabinet report on final budget proposals	Finalisation of budget proposal for 2025/26 and MTFP for Cabinet and Council consideration
Jan	Budget Workshop						
Feb	Scrutiny	Council Budget Meeting		Statutory Consultation Commerce & Industry			Budget 25/26 approved + MTFP to 31 March 2028

Appendix A

Key Financial Reports & Events - 24/25 Budget Monitoring & 25/26 Budget Timeline

Date	Event	Report Title / Action	Detail
June to September 2024	Budget Proposals	Corporate Directors, Service Directors and Budget Holders working with Portfolio Holders	Period for preparation of proposals for maintaining a balanced 2025/26 budget.
17 July 2024	Cabinet	Medium Term Financial Plan (Update)	To include. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on MTFP. • Proposed financial strategy. • Budget process. • CIPFA Financial Resilience Review.
17 July 2024	Cabinet	Financial Outturn Report 2023/24	Summary report covering the financial outturn for 2023/24.
31 August 2024	Budget Refresh	Corporate Directors & Service Directors	Deadline to produce a refresh of the MTFP baseline financial resource requirements for each service for the three-year period to the 31 March 2028
4 September 2024	Cabinet	Quarter One 2024/25 Budget Monitoring Report	First quarter (April to June) budget monitoring for 2024/25.
9 September 2024	Budget Proposals	Budget Engagement Exercise	4 or 6-week consultation opens
20 September 2024	Budget Proposals	Corporate Directors, Service Directors and Budget Holders working with Portfolio Holders	Deadline of period for preparation of potential additional proposals for maintaining a balanced the 2025/26 Budget.

Date	Event	Report Title / Action	Detail
September 2024	Audit & Governance	2023/24 Statement of Accounts	Report presents the 2023/24 statement of accounts for BCP Council including the Annual Governance Statement.
9 October 2024	Budget Proposals	Budget Engagement Exercise	Consultation closes (assuming 4 week) 18 October if 6 weeks exercise.
30 October 2024	Cabinet	Medium Term Financial Plan (Update)	To include. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> fundamental refresh of the MTFP. progress towards delivering a balanced budget for 2025/26
8 November 2024	Budget Proposals	Budget Workshop	All Councillor Seminar
18 December 2024	Cabinet	Quarter Two 2024/25 Budget Monitoring Report	Second quarter (July to September) in-year budget monitoring for 2024/25
18 December 2024	Cabinet	Medium Term Financial Plan (Update)	Progress towards delivering a balanced budget for 2025/26
15 January 2025	Cabinet	Council Tax - Taxbase Report	2025/26 Council Tax Taxbase

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Date	Event	Report Title / Action	Detail
16 January 2025	Audit & Governance	Treasury Management Strategy 2025/26	Seek approval for 2025/26 treasury management strategy
22 January 2025	Budget Proposals	Budget Workshop	All Councillor Seminar
31 January 2025	Budget Proposals	Presentation to representatives from Commerce & Industry	Statutory consultation on 2025/26 Budget & MTFP
5 February 2025	Cabinet	Quarter Three 2024/25 Budget Monitoring	Third quarter (October to December) budget monitoring for 2024/25.
5 February 2025	Cabinet	2025/26 Budget & MTFP Update	To include. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2025/26 Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement. • 2025/26 Budget Proposal. • 2025/26 Council Tax Resolution.
5 February 2025	Cabinet	Housing Revenue Account (HRA) 2025/26 Budget Setting	Seeks approval for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) which is the separate account that ring-fences the income and expenditure associated with BCP Council's housing stock. Includes rents, service charges and other charges to tenants.

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Date	Event	Report Title / Action	Detail
5 February 2025	Cabinet	Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and Early Years Funding Formula 2025/26	Setting the 2025/26 funding formulae for early education and childcare for eligible 2-year-olds and all 3- and 4-years olds, mainstream schools for pupils in reception to year 11.
25 February 2025	Council	2025/26 Budget & MTFP Update Report	Formal approval of the following. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General fund 2025/26 budget and council tax. • Education and childcare funding formula. • Housing Revenue Account 2026/26 budget and tenant charges.
March 2025	n/a	n/a	Publish 2025/26 Budget Book
June 2025	Cabinet	2024/25 Financial Outturn Report	Summary report covering the financial outturn for the financial year 2024/25.

Subject to determination

- Specific arrangements have been made to enhance the scrutiny of the budget process which commences for 2025/26 with independent training for all members on the 29 July 2024.
- Dates of the precept meetings for the Town, Parish and Neighbourhood Councils in Christchurch and the Chartered Trustees in both Bournemouth & Poole