

Report subject	Council Tax - Tax base 2025/26
Meeting date	15 January 2025
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	This report calculates and presents the proposed council tax base for council tax setting purposes in line with current legislation and guidance.
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <p>(a) Cabinet approves the report for the calculation of the council's tax base for the year 2025/26 and recommends the tax base to Full Council.</p> <p>(b) Pursuant to the report, and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as amended, the amount calculated as the council tax base for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council for 2025/26 is 151,574.2.</p>
Reason for recommendations	The Council is required by the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as amended, to calculate the council tax base for the financial year 2025/26.
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Mike Cox, Portfolio Holder for Finance
Corporate Director	Graham Farrant, Chief Executive Officer
Report Author	Matthew Filmer, Assistant Chief Financial Officer Russell Oakley, Finance Manager - Technical
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Recommendation

Background

1. Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP) Council is required to calculate its tax base in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations

1992, as amended, and provide this information to the Dorset Police & Crime Commissioner, the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Authority as well as the relevant parish, town and neighbourhood councils and charter trustees in the BCP Council area.

Calculation of the council tax base

2. Under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and accompanying regulations, detailed procedures exist for calculating the tax base which will be used for calculating the levels of council tax charged to residents. The tax base for BCP Council is expressed as the number of band D equivalent properties and will be used to calculate BCP Council's element of council tax as well as the council tax charged by other preceptors.
3. The detailed calculation of the BCP Council tax base is provided in Appendix A.
4. The calculations include estimated changes in the Valuation Office's Valuation List that will take place during 2025/26 by reference to the following:
 - a) Provision for successful appeals
 - b) Provision for exempt properties
 - c) Changes in the number of properties (demolitions and new additions)
 - d) Cost of local council tax support scheme (LCTSS)
 - e) Estimated single person and other discounts
 - f) Estimated collection rate
5. The total estimated tax base for BCP Council has increased from 146,342 in 2024/25 to 151,574.2 in 2025/26.
6. The increase is down to the implementation of a second homes premium and additional properties being built in the conurbation. The weighted average collection rate is estimated at 98.5% (98.5% 2024/25).
7. The second homes premium has added an additional 5,110.8 band D equivalents. There has also been a reduction in long term empty properties reducing from 1,444 properties to 826. Although a positive to get more properties back into occupancy this means the premium being charged has reduced.
8. In addition to calculating the tax base for BCP Council, a separate tax base must be calculated for each part of the council's areas to which a special item of expenditure relates. Parish, town and neighbourhood councils and charter trustee precepts are all treated as special items for these purposes and their precepts are charged only over the tax base for the relevant area. This is provided in Appendix B to this report.
9. The council tax requirement for 2025/26, which will be approved by BCP Council in February 2025, will be divided by the calculated tax base to arrive at the charge for a band.

Options Appraisal

10. The council can make differing assumptions regarding the estimated additions, deletions, exempt properties, discounts, cost of LCTSS and the collection rate and their impact on the tax base. However, these have been set at a level based on historical trends and with due regard to the current economic environment in order to ensure as far as possible that a deficit does not occur on the collection fund.

Summary of financial implications

11. As set out in the body of this report.

Summary of legal implications

12. The calculation and approval of the tax base is a crucial step in the council being able to set a legal balanced budget for 2025/26.
13. The council must set its tax base in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as amended, and inform other preceptors of their relevant tax base.

Summary of human resources implications

14. None

Summary of sustainability impact

15. None

Summary of public health implications

16. None

Summary of equality implications

17. None

Summary of risk assessment

18. None

Background papers

None

Appendices

Appendix A – BCP Council tax base 2025/26

Appendix B – Parish, town and neighbourhood council and charter trustee tax bases 2025/26

Appendix A – BCP Council tax base 2025/26

[illegible]

Appendix B – Parish, town and neighbourhood council and charter trustee tax bases 2025/26

Parish / Town / Charter Trustee	Tax Base
Burton	1,666.2
Hurn	271.8
Christchurch Town Council	12,885.0
Highcliffe and Walkford	6,816.3
Unparished Christchurch	25.7
Throop and Holdenhurst Parish	312.2
Bournemouth Charter Trustee	67,763.4
Poole Charter Trustee	61,833.5
Total	151,574.2