

2026/27 Budget Timetable and Budget Process

1. The budget for 2026/27 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. As a sector local authorities have been grappling with sustained financial pressures since 2010. Recently councils have had to become more efficient in navigating the uncertainty and volatility caused by global macro-economic factors, the legacy and long-term consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic, alongside those caused by the recent cost-of-living crisis, and changes in public policy.
3. The key dates in the 2026/27 budget setting process can be set out as follows.

May 2025	Cabinet - MTFP update report (including financial strategy).
July 2025	Cabinet - Quarter 4 / Financial Outturn 2024/25.
September 2025	Cabinet - Quarter 1 - 2025/26 budget monitoring.
October 2025	Cabinet - MTFP update report
October 2025	Budget Consultation Exercise Opens
November 2025	Budget Consultation Exercise Closes
November 2025	All Members – Draft developing 2026/27 Budget Presentation
December 2025	Cabinet - Quarter 2 – 2025/26 budget monitoring
December 2025	Cabinet - MTFP update report
January 2026	Cabinet – Council Tax 2026/27 taxbase report
January 2026	Audit & Governance Committee (Treasury Management Strategy)
January 2026	All Member – Final proposed 2026/27 Budget Presentation
January 2026	Presentation to representatives from Commerce and Industry
February 2026	Cabinet – Quarter 3 – 2025/26 budget monitoring
February 2026	Cabinet – 2026/27 proposed budget and MTFP
February 2026	Council – 2026/27 proposed budget and MTFP

BCP Council - Budget Process 2026/27

Month		Decisions	Cabinet	Public Engagement	Budget Holders	Finance	Strategic Planning Cycle
Feb	Scrutiny	Council Budget Meeting					Budget 25/26 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 2026/27 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 2026/27 budget to be balanced	Calculate initial savings targets	
June							
June						Draft progress update report	
July	Scrutiny	Cabinet MTFP Update Report					
Aug						Fundamental refresh of the MTFP baseline	
Sept						Refine savings targets	
Oct	Scrutiny	Cabinet MTFP Update Report		Budget Public Engagement Exercise - 6 weeks	Services present proposals to Bi-weekly CMB/Cabinet strategic planning meetings	Draft Cabinet report on savings proposals	
Nov	Budget Workshop					Draft progress update report	
Dec	Scrutiny	Cabinet MTFP Update Report	Cabinet members finalise 2026/27 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 2026/27 and MTFP for Cabinet and Council consideration
Jan	Budget Workshop						
Feb	Scrutiny	Council Budget Meeting		Statutory Consultation Commerce & Industry			Budget 26/27 approved + MTFP to 31 March 2029

Key Financial Reports & Events - 25/26 Budget Monitoring & 26/27 Budget Timeline

Date	Event	Report Title / Action	Detail
May 2025	Budget Proposals	Corporate Directors, Service Directors and Budget Holders working with Portfolio Holders	Start of period for preparation of proposals for delivering a balanced 2026/27 budget.
May 2025	Cabinet	Medium Term Financial Plan (Update)	To include. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on MTFP. • Proposed financial strategy. • Budget process.
July 2025	Cabinet	Financial Outturn Report	Summary report covering the financial outturn for 2024/25.
August 2025	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 2029
September 2025	Cabinet	Quarter One Budget Monitoring Report	First quarter (April to June) budget monitoring for 2025/26.
September 2025	Budget Proposals	Corporate Directors, Service Directors and Budget Holders working with Portfolio Holders	Close of initial period for preparation of proposals for delivering a balanced 2026/27 budget.
October 2025	Audit & Governance	2024/25 Statement of Accounts	Report presents the 2024/25 statement of accounts for BCP Council including the Annual Governance Statement.

Date	Event	Report Title / Action	Detail
October 2025	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 2026/27
October 2025	Budget Proposals	Budget Engagement Exercise	4 or 6-week consultation opens
November 2025	Budget Proposals	Budget Engagement Exercise	Consultation closes (assuming 4 week) 18 October if 6 weeks exercise.
November 2025	Budget Proposals	Budget Presentation	All Councillor Seminar
December 2025	Cabinet	Quarter Two Budget Monitoring Report	Second quarter (July to September) in-year budget monitoring for 2025/26
December 2024	Cabinet	Medium Term Financial Plan (Update)	Progress towards delivering a balanced budget for 2026/27
January 2026	Cabinet	Council Tax - Taxbase Report	2026/27 Council Tax Taxbase

Appendix B

Date	Event	Report Title / Action	Detail
January 2026	Audit & Governance	Treasury Management Strategy 2026/27	Seek approval for 2026/27 treasury management strategy
January 2026	Budget Proposals	Budget Presentation	All Councillor Seminar
January 2026	Budget Proposals	Presentation to representatives from Commerce & Industry	Statutory consultation on 2026/27 Budget & MTFP
February 2026	Cabinet	Quarter Three Budget Monitoring	Third quarter (October to December) budget monitoring for 2025/26.
February 2026	Cabinet	2026/27 Budget & MTFP Update	To include. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2026/27 Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement. • 2026/27 Budget Proposal. • 2026/27 Council Tax Resolution.
February 2026	Cabinet	Housing Revenue Account (HRA) 2026/27 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.

Appendix B

Date	Event	Report Title / Action	Detail
February 2026	Cabinet	Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and Early Years Funding Formula 2026/27	Setting the 2026/27 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.
February 2026	Council	2026/27 Budget & MTFP Update Report	Formal approval of the following. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General fund 2026/27 budget and council tax. • Education and childcare funding formula. • Housing Revenue Account 2026/27 budget and tenant charges.
March 2026	n/a	n/a	Publish 2026/27 Budget Book
July 2026	Cabinet	Financial Outturn Report	Summary report covering the financial outturn for the financial year 2025/26.

Subject to determination

- Scrutiny arrangements associated with the 2026/27 budget process.
- Dates of the precept meetings for the Town, Parish and Neighbourhood Councils in Christchurch and the Chartered Trustees in both Bournemouth & Poole