

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			Services present proposals to Bi-weekly CMB/Cabinet strategic planning meetings	Fundamental refresh of the MTFP baseline	
Aug						Refine savings targets	
Sept							
Oct	Scrutiny	Cabinet MTFP Update Report		Budget Public Engagement Exercise - 6 weeks		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