

## Equality Impact Assessment

| 1                          | <b>What is being reviewed?</b>   | Proposed Council Budget for 2026/27   |             |     |                |     |                            |    |          |            |                        |     |                       |        |                |        |       |         |          |            |        |            |                        |     |         |       |                       |        |        |      |                |        |        |       |              |  |                |  |
|----------------------------|--|---|-------------|-----|----------------|-----|----------------------------|----|----------|------------|------------------------|-----|-----------------------|--------|----------------|--------|-------|---------|----------|------------|--------|------------|------------------------|-----|---------|-------|-----------------------|--------|--------|------|----------------|--------|--------|-------|--------------|--|----------------|--|
| 2                          | <b>Details about your decision:</b>  | <p>All local authorities are facing substantial financial challenges, with rises in inflation and the continued cost of living crisis. Regardless, the council has a legal responsibility to set an annual balanced budget (Local Government Finance Act 1992).</p> <p>The 2026/2027 budget aims to address the financial challenges faced by the council whilst continuing to provide essential services to residents. The council's budget is spent across a number of key areas.</p> <p>The financial strategy employed by the council in setting the 2026/2027 budget ensures the overall financial resilience of the council, to continue to sustainably provide essential services to the most vulnerable people in society who are reliant on the council to achieve a good standard of living.</p>  |             |     |                |     |                            |    |          |            |                        |     |                       |        |                |        |       |         |          |            |        |            |                        |     |         |       |                       |        |        |      |                |        |        |       |              |  |                |  |
| 3                          | <b>Service Unit</b>  | Finance   |             |     |                |     |                            |    |          |            |                        |     |                       |        |                |        |       |         |          |            |        |            |                        |     |         |       |                       |        |        |      |                |        |        |       |              |  |                |  |
| 4                          | <b>People involved in the process</b>  | <p>At an individual savings level which has informed this EIA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Corporate and Service Directors across the council and other officers where applicable including Heads of Service.</li> <li>Cabinet Members</li> </ul> <p>Chief Finance Officer and Director of Finance – Adam Richens</p>  |             |     |                |     |                            |    |          |            |                        |     |                       |        |                |        |       |         |          |            |        |            |                        |     |         |       |                       |        |        |      |                |        |        |       |              |  |                |  |
| 5                          | <b>Relevant meeting date(s)</b>  | May 2025 – January 2026   |             |     |                |     |                            |    |          |            |                        |     |                       |        |                |        |       |         |          |            |        |            |                        |     |         |       |                       |        |        |      |                |        |        |       |              |  |                |  |
| 6                          | <p><b>Who is your current or potential client base?</b></p> <p><b>Who are your key stakeholders?</b></p> | <p><b>How BCP Council is funded</b></p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Council Tax</td> <td>78%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Business Rates</td> <td>20%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Grants and New Homes Bonus</td> <td>2%</td> </tr> </table> <p><b>Where BCP Council spent its budget (2025-26)</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>People and Communities</td> <td>78%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Place and Environment</td> <td>18.094</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Modern council</td> <td>53,437</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>359,348</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Percentage</th> <th>£ 000s</th> <th>Pence in £</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>People and Communities</td> <td>78%</td> <td>128,417</td> <td>35.7p</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Place and Environment</td> <td>18.094</td> <td>15,613</td> <td>4.3p</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Modern council</td> <td>53,437</td> <td>53,437</td> <td>14.9p</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total</b></td> <td></td> <td><b>359,348</b></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | Council Tax | 78% | Business Rates | 20% | Grants and New Homes Bonus | 2% | Category | Percentage | People and Communities | 78% | Place and Environment | 18.094 | Modern council | 53,437 | Total | 359,348 | Category | Percentage | £ 000s | Pence in £ | People and Communities | 78% | 128,417 | 35.7p | Place and Environment | 18.094 | 15,613 | 4.3p | Modern council | 53,437 | 53,437 | 14.9p | <b>Total</b> |  | <b>359,348</b> |  |
| Council Tax                | 78%  |   |             |     |                |     |                            |    |          |            |                        |     |                       |        |                |        |       |         |          |            |        |            |                        |     |         |       |                       |        |        |      |                |        |        |       |              |  |                |  |
| Business Rates             | 20%  |   |             |     |                |     |                            |    |          |            |                        |     |                       |        |                |        |       |         |          |            |        |            |                        |     |         |       |                       |        |        |      |                |        |        |       |              |  |                |  |
| Grants and New Homes Bonus | 2%   |   |             |     |                |     |                            |    |          |            |                        |     |                       |        |                |        |       |         |          |            |        |            |                        |     |         |       |                       |        |        |      |                |        |        |       |              |  |                |  |
| Category                   | Percentage   |   |             |     |                |     |                            |    |          |            |                        |     |                       |        |                |        |       |         |          |            |        |            |                        |     |         |       |                       |        |        |      |                |        |        |       |              |  |                |  |
| People and Communities     | 78%  |   |             |     |                |     |                            |    |          |            |                        |     |                       |        |                |        |       |         |          |            |        |            |                        |     |         |       |                       |        |        |      |                |        |        |       |              |  |                |  |
| Place and Environment      | 18.094   |   |             |     |                |     |                            |    |          |            |                        |     |                       |        |                |        |       |         |          |            |        |            |                        |     |         |       |                       |        |        |      |                |        |        |       |              |  |                |  |
| Modern council             | 53,437   |   |             |     |                |     |                            |    |          |            |                        |     |                       |        |                |        |       |         |          |            |        |            |                        |     |         |       |                       |        |        |      |                |        |        |       |              |  |                |  |
| Total                      | 359,348  |   |             |     |                |     |                            |    |          |            |                        |     |                       |        |                |        |       |         |          |            |        |            |                        |     |         |       |                       |        |        |      |                |        |        |       |              |  |                |  |
| Category                   | Percentage   | £ 000s  | Pence in £  |     |                |     |                            |    |          |            |                        |     |                       |        |                |        |       |         |          |            |        |            |                        |     |         |       |                       |        |        |      |                |        |        |       |              |  |                |  |
| People and Communities     | 78%  | 128,417   | 35.7p       |     |                |     |                            |    |          |            |                        |     |                       |        |                |        |       |         |          |            |        |            |                        |     |         |       |                       |        |        |      |                |        |        |       |              |  |                |  |
| Place and Environment      | 18.094   | 15,613  | 4.3p        |     |                |     |                            |    |          |            |                        |     |                       |        |                |        |       |         |          |            |        |            |                        |     |         |       |                       |        |        |      |                |        |        |       |              |  |                |  |
| Modern council             | 53,437   | 53,437  | 14.9p       |     |                |     |                            |    |          |            |                        |     |                       |        |                |        |       |         |          |            |        |            |                        |     |         |       |                       |        |        |      |                |        |        |       |              |  |                |  |
| <b>Total</b>               |  | <b>359,348</b>  |             |     |                |     |                            |    |          |            |                        |     |                       |        |                |        |       |         |          |            |        |            |                        |     |         |       |                       |        |        |      |                |        |        |       |              |  |                |  |

## Equality Data for the BCP Area:

### Age:

**16%**  
Aged 0-15 years



**62%**  
Aged 16-64 years



**22%**  
Aged 65+ years



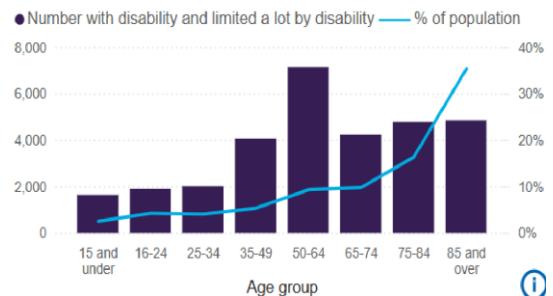
### Sex:

**49%**  
Male  
  
**51%**  
Female

### Disability:

 People with a disability that limits day to day activities a lot  
**30,616** % population  
**8%**

Number who are disabled and limited a lot by their disability, and as percent of population by age, BCP 2021 Census

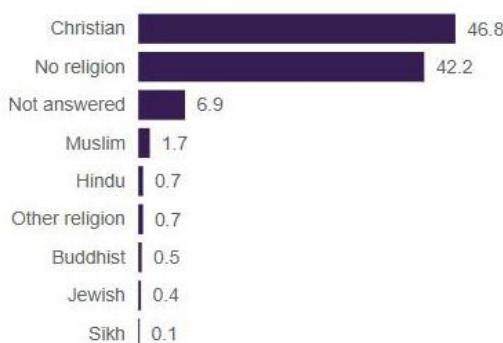


### Race:

BCP's population has become increasingly diverse. 82% of the population are White British and 18% are from an ethnic minority background, including white minorities.

### Religion:

#### 2021 Census Religion (%)



**Sexual orientation:****Sexual orientation by number and percentage of usual residents aged 16+ in BCP, 2021 Census**

| Sexual orientation        | Percent     | Value            |
|---------------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Bisexual                  | 1.6         | 5,358.0          |
| Gay or Lesbian            | 1.9         | 6,494.0          |
| Not answered              | 7.6         | 25,580.0         |
| Other sexual orientations | 0.3         | 1,221.0          |
| Straight or Heterosexual  | 88.5        | 296,257.0        |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>99.9</b> | <b>334,910.0</b> |

**Marriage and civil partnership:****43%**

Married or in a registered civil partnership

**11%**

Divorced or civil partnership dissolved

The Equality and Human Rights Commission has a measurement framework using six domains which reflect the capabilities or areas of life that are important to people and that enable them to flourish. Information about the communities within the BCP area can be found here: [Our People, Our Place: Facts, Figures and Insights](#)

**Consultation:**

To inform the budget proposal, an open consultation took place from 18 November to 14 December to understand local views on the importance of council services and priorities for council spending as well as levels of council tax.

More information is available here: [Project: Budget 2026-27 | BCP Council](#)

Respondents to both the open consultation and the sample survey (undertaken in 2024) were given a list of council service areas and information about how much of its revenue budget the council currently spends within that area. Respondents were given the total cost but also how many pence in one pound was spent on that service. They were also given a brief description of what was included within each of the services.

For both the open and sample survey, most respondents want the council to retain the same level of funding for most of its service areas. If there was additional budget, the open survey respondents prioritised highway services, street cleaning and parks and open spaces as the services where they would like to see more money spent. The sample survey respondents said they would like to see an increase in spending for school services, children's social care, highways, and street cleaning. If the council were to look at reducing spending in any service area, both the open and sample survey respondents said that the council should look at the cost of running its premises and support services costs to make savings.

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| 7 | <b>Impacts and Mitigations</b>          | <p>In this budget the council has sought to maintain appropriate services for the most vulnerable as well as improve the sustainability of services important for the wellbeing of all residents.</p> <p>The cumulative impact of the proposals indicates that low-income households and individuals will be most negatively affected, followed by older age groups and disabled people. However, the investments and mitigating actions aim to support these groups and promote equality within the community.</p> <p><b>Council Tax Increase:</b></p> <p>The council is seeking to increase council tax by 4.99% and has also sought permission from Government for flexibility to increase Council tax by a further 2.43%. It has not been possible to meet the requests of respondents to the budget consultation on lower council tax increase levels whilst also achieving a balanced budget.</p> <p><b>Negative:</b> It is likely that residents on lower earnings will be affected negatively by the increase. An increase in council tax will negatively impact on households already struggling financially which is not necessarily limited to just lower socio-economic groups given the ongoing cost of living challenges.</p> <p><b>Positive:</b> Increasing council tax also enables the council to continue to provide vital services that support the most vulnerable in society including older and younger residents and those with disabilities, as well as services which support all residents to live in sustainable, safe and healthy communities.</p> <p><b>Mitigating actions:</b></p> <p>There are several schemes in place to assist residents with their council tax bills. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Council tax Support: Residents on lower incomes can apply for assistance with their council tax bill by applying for council tax Support, further information is available on the council's website:<br/> <a href="https://www.bcp council.gov.uk/benefits-support-and-advice/council-tax-support">https://www.bcp council.gov.uk/benefits-support-and-advice/council-tax-support</a></li> <li>b) Council tax Discounts and exemptions: Discounts are available to residents in certain circumstances including care leavers, carers, those with severe mental impairment, single adults in a household and students. Further details of ways in which council tax could be reduced for qualifying households is available on the website: <a href="#">Council Tax discounts and exemptions   BCP</a></li> <li>c) Discretionary Reduction and Help with Paying Council Tax Bill: Section 13A (1c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 allows local authorities to, in exceptional circumstances, reduce the council tax liability for a charge payer. Statutory exemptions and discounts must first have been exhausted.</li> <li>d) Any further support that may become available will be announced through <a href="http://www.bcp council.gov.uk">www.bcp council.gov.uk</a></li> </ul> |
| 8 | <b>Summary of Equality Implications</b> | <p>The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) does not prevent the council from making difficult decisions when required to achieve significant levels of savings across all services in meeting a balanced budget. The PSED supports robust, fair, transparent and accountable decision-making that considers the diverse needs of local communities and the council's workforce.</p> <p>In this budget the council has sought to maintain appropriate services for the most vulnerable as well as improve the sustainability of services important for the wellbeing of all residents.</p>  |

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|  | <p>The impacts of the council budget for 2026/27 have been assessed considering the nine protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and other characteristics including low socio-economic status, carers and care leavers. The Equality and Human Rights Commission's six domains of equality measurement framework have also been considered, identified as the areas of life that are important to people and that enable them to flourish. These are: Education, Work, Living standards, Health, Justice and personal security, and Participation.</p> <p>The cumulative impact of the proposals indicates that low-income households and individuals will be most negatively affected, followed by older age groups and disabled people. However, the investments and mitigating actions aim to support these groups and promote equality within the community.</p> <p>As part of the budget, council tax is being raised to support increased service provision, which will have a positive impact on many residents. Mitigating actions have been identified to support those who would be most negatively affected.</p> <p>Individual equality impact assessments have or will be carried out to support individual savings where a potential negative impact has been identified for service users or the workforce. This will ensure conscious consideration is given to the Public Sector Equality Duty and mitigating actions are put in place to minimise any potential or actual negative impacts.</p> |
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