

Report subject	Council Tax - Tax base 2026/27
Meeting date	14 January 2026
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	It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet: (a) Approves the report for the calculation of the council's tax base for the year 2026/27 and recommends the tax base to Full Council. (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 2026/27 is 152,481.7
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 2026/27.
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Mike Cox, Portfolio Holder for Finance
Corporate Director	Aidan Dunn, 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 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 2026/27 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 151,574.2 in 2025/26 to 152,481.7 in 2026/27 (0.6%).
6. The increase is due to additional properties being built, a lower number of dwelling claiming as part of the local council tax support scheme as well as a specific reduction in a discount rate as set out in paragraph 7 below. The weighted average collection rate is estimated at 98.5% (98.5% 2025/26).
7. The tax base has been calculated with the assumption that beach huts at Mudeford Sandspit and Hengistbury Head, which currently receive a 50% Council Tax discount, will be removed entirely.
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 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 2026/27, which is to be approved by BCP Council on the 10 February 2026, 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 2026/27.
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 2026/27

Appendix B – Parish, town and neighbourhood council tax bases 2026/27

Appendix A – BCP Council tax base 2026/27

[illegible]

Appendix B – Parish, town and neighbourhood council tax bases 2026/27

Parish / Town	Tax Base
Christchurch	12,989.4
Highcliffe & Walkford	6,865.0
Burton	1,629.4
Hurn	269.7
Poole	58,261.0
Bournemouth	67,246.3
Throop & Holdenhurst	306.3
Broadstone	4,914.6
Total	152,481.7