

# Budget Consultation 2025/26

## What are we asking you?

We are asking residents and stakeholders from Bournemouth, Christchurch, and Poole for their views on our proposals to **balance the budget** for 2025/26 and beyond.

## Why are we asking you?

Before we set the budget for next year, we want to **understand your thoughts** on:

- Service priorities
- Council Tax levels
- Where you think the council should spend its money.

The views you give us now will help inform our budget setting process for next year and the following two financial years.

Due to rising service demands, increased costs and reduced funding, the council is working to maintain a balanced budget while identifying service areas for possible further savings.

Although facing financial challenges, we remain **committed to being open and transparent and protecting your key services**.

## What have we done already?

Last year, we asked you for your opinions on how to manage the budget. You **supported saving money** by changing how services are delivered, selling or ending leases on unnecessary buildings, and aligning services across Bournemouth, Christchurch, and Poole. However, **you were less supportive of increasing fees** for services like garden waste and car parking. We understand these concerns but believe that making tough decisions now will help maintain essential services.

We have already **achieved £120 million in annual savings** since 2019 through efficiencies, transformations, and additional income. We have sold several properties and increased fees for some services. We have invested in long-term savings projects like sustainable vehicles and solar panels, and we partnered with other organisations to keep services running, such as funding for community safety officers and renewable energy projects.

**The online survey is available until 29 November 2024.**

Paper versions are accessible in BCP Council libraries, and alternative formats can be requested via email.

**Our budget:** The council's budget is divided into revenue and capital expenditures. **Revenue** costs are like everyday household expenses, such as salaries, building maintenance, and operating services like refuse collection and libraries. **Capital** costs are for big investments, like road improvements and building new homes. The council can't use capital funds for daily operations due to government rules, which encourage capital spending through grants and low-cost loans for projects like housing. To manage budget pressures, we must make savings from our revenue budget. Most of our revenue spending goes towards services for adults and children.

**Our Services:** BCP council provides **statutory services**, which are required by law, such as child and vulnerable adult protection, library services, bin collections, and trading standards. Additionally, the council offers **discretionary services**, which are not legally required but are considered important for the community, such as community safety officers, playgrounds, and graffiti removal. These services can also generate income to support statutory services.

The following table sets out how much it costs us to provide our services. This list will help you decide which services we could spend more or less money on and help us understand your service priorities before setting our budget for 2025/26.

Service	Net cost	Pence in the Pound
Adults and Older People Services	£116.054M	33.8p
Children's Social Care	£65.020M	19p
School Services	£20.523M	6p
Library Services	£7.148M	2.1p
Community Services	£6.194M	1.8p
Other Children's Services	£5.466M	1.6p
Housing Services	£5.073M	1.5p
Customer service	£2.678M	0.8p
Waste and Recycling	£21.037M	6.1p
Transport Services	£17.946M	5.2p
Parks and open spaces	£6.206M	1.8p
Street Cleaning	£3.758M	1.1p
Highways	£1.964M	0.6p
Planning	£1.385M	0.4p
Support Services	£45.365M	13.2p
Other central items and accounting entries	£34.833M	10.2p
Cost of running our operational premises	£11.494M	3.4p
Commercial - We spend £37.170M on this service but we receive an income of £59,403M so our net spend is -£22.233M	-£22.233M	-6.5p
Regeneration and development - We spend £2.733M on this service but receive an income of £9.654M so our net spend is -£6,916M	-£6.916M	-2p