Place & Resources Scrutiny Committee

22 January 2026

Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan Strategy Report (MTFP)

For Review and Consultation

Cabinet Member:
Cllr S Clifford, Finance & Capital Strategy

Local Councillor(s): **All**

Senior Leadership Team:
S Cremer, Corporate Director, Section 151 Officer

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Statutory Authority: **Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972**

Report status: Public Choose an item.

Executive Summary:

This report sets out proposals for Dorset Council's 2026/27 revenue and capital budgets and summarises the medium-term financial plan (MTFP), which covers the following years. As part of preparing budget proposals the draft Cabinet report is presented to both scrutiny committees, People and Health Scrutiny Committee and Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee. As this committee is receiving an advance copy of the Cabinet report, there are some sections highlighted in the report which identify where a paragraph or sentence is subject to change ahead of Cabinet. For example, where the Cabinet paper refers to the feedback arising from this committee.

In this context, the role of the Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee is to review the proposals for:

1. Place (appendix 1g)
2. Corporate Services (appendix 1i)
3. Central Finance (appendix 1j).

The budget proposals are built around the priorities identified in the Dorset Council Plan.

This budget continues to reflect members' priorities of resource allocation into front line services wherever possible and this is reflected in the areas of growth set out in the analysis in this paper.

Recommendation:
The Scrutiny Committees is asked to review and comment on the budget proposals covering the Place Directorate (appendix 1g), Corporate Services (appendix 1i) and Central Finance (appendix 1j) which are set out in the draft Cabinet report which are attached to this covering report and provide any feedback to Cabinet in time for responses to be included in the report being considered on 29 January 2025.

Reason for Recommendation:
The Council is required to set a balanced revenue budget, and to approve a level of council tax as an integral part of this. A balanced budget is essentially one where all expenditure is funded by income without unsustainable use of one-off or short-term sources of finance.

Part of the approval process includes the budget proposals being considered formally by Scrutiny Committees prior to Cabinet approval.

1. **Financial implications**

1.1 All covered within the Cabinet report.

2. **Natural Environment, Climate & Ecology implications**

2.1 All covered within the Cabinet report.

3. **Well-being and health implications**

3.1 None specifically identified in the Cabinet report.

4. **Other implications**

4.1 None specific.

5. **Risk Assessment**

5.1 HAVING CONSIDERED: the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as:
Current Risk: High
Residual Risk: High

6. **Equalities Impact Assessment**

6.1 The budget is a framework for the Council to achieve its priorities and the requirement to achieve a balanced budget is delivered through a number of key assumptions, and the delivery of programmes of transformational change.

6.2 The overall budget framework has not been the subject of a separate equality impact assessment but the programmes and changes upon which delivery of the budget will depend will themselves be assessed.

7. **Appendices**

7.1 Appendix A – Draft Cabinet report on budget and MTFP strategy

8. **Background Papers**

8.1 None