



Money Matters: Have your say on Buckinghamshire Council's spending priorities for 2025 to 2026

Open date: 29 August 2024

Close date: 13 October 2024

Name: Consultation and Engagement Team

Email: consultations@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

Overview

We want to know which services you think should be the main priorities in our budget for next year, and what you think about our plans for how next year's budget should be spent.

The cost of living crisis continues to affect many of us across the country, including individuals, businesses and organisations.

Councils are no exception to the pressures of this crisis; they are also facing a steep rise in costs whilst also hearing from more and more people who need the help and support that councils can offer.

We want to ensure we can continue to provide this help and support to you, the people of Buckinghamshire. However, to be able to do this, we are having to make some difficult decisions about how we provide our services for the next financial year.

You may have already seen the news that several councils have stated they cannot meet their costs. In Buckinghamshire, we remain in a stable position, which we have been fortunate enough to maintain for the last few years.

Since becoming a unitary in 2020, we have worked hard to become more efficient and reduce our running costs. As a result of our efforts, we have saved £75.4 million to date. This year we must save a further £41.3 million. This would take our total savings to over £100 million in our first five years as a council, which is an impressive feat when we consider the challenges we have faced along the way.

We are once again faced with the difficult task of balancing the books whilst battling with rising costs and an increase in demand for our services.

Maintaining the provision of four legally required services – Adult Social Care, Children’s services, Home to School Transport and looking after homeless people – makes up 71% of our expenditure. To continue providing the rest of our services with less than 30% of our expenditure available, means difficult decisions are necessary. These decisions will not always be popular. They may look like an increase in parking charges, a change in library staffing or a reduction in some highways services.

In order to remain financially balanced, we have to accept that these decisions will mean reducing what we do and the resources we have.

With this in mind, we are asking for your feedback.

We are working up plans for the council’s 2025 to 2026 budget and we need you to tell us how you think we should be spending your money.

In considering your response, please do take time to reflect on the wider needs of the whole of Buckinghamshire in addition to the specific priorities for yourself, your family, your immediate community, your business or your organisation.

How the council is funded

We provide more than 700 different services in total and our budget sets out how much we will need to spend on these services and where that money will come from.

The money we receive from council tax covers 79% of the cost of providing all of these services – from paying for care packages for adults who need it, to providing emergency accommodation for homeless people and vulnerable children, as well as the essential services everyone relies on like bin collections, road repairs and keeping streets and open spaces clean and safe.

The other 21% of the council's budget is funded by money from Business Rates (13%), the New Homes Bonus (1%) and other un-ringfenced grants (7%).

It's also important to note that the funding for the running of our schools is not set or controlled by the council. We distribute this to schools on behalf of government as part of the Dedicated Schools Grant.

How your money is spent

All councils have a legal duty to limit their spending to the income they receive each year. In other words, our budget must balance.

Most of our budget each year needs to be spent on the services we are required by law to provide, such as social care for adults and children. This is known as 'statutory' spend.

The spending breakdown for the year 2024 to 2025 (net) is:

- Adult Social Care – £197,390,000
- Children's Social Care – £100,490,000
- Roads and Transportation – £66,841,000
- Waste and Recycling – £20,297,000
- Education (excluding Dedicated Schools Grant) – £15,888,000
- Customer Services – £11,642,000
- Housing and Homelessness – £6,998,000
- Planning – £6,061,000
- Culture and Leisure – £3,942,000
- Regulatory Services – £3,015,000
- Street Cleaning – £2,811,000
- Strategic Infrastructure, Town Centre Regeneration and Economic Growth – £2,468,000
- Community Boards – £2,116,000
- Community Safety – £1,888,000
- Environment – £1,283,000

We also spend £48,320,000 on the costs of running the council. This includes providing the following services:

- 'Helping Hand'- our scheme for helping people struggling with the cost of living pressures
- Council Tax collection and Housing Benefit payments
- Legal and Democratic services, including elections
- Risk, Audit and Insurance services
- Information Communication Technology
- Finance

- Human Resources and Organisational Development

This adds up to a total net spend of £491,450,000 for 2024 to 2025 (total takes account of rounding).

Net spend is expenditure minus the income we receive from customers and ringfenced grants.

We are proposing to allocate the 2025 to 2026 budget in a similar way.

View detailed proposals in our [Medium-Term Financial Plan 2024/25 to 2026/27](#).

More information on the service areas

Adult Social Care:

- Care and support services for older people and vulnerable adults which includes support for people:
 - living at home
 - living in care
 - coming out of hospital
 - with disabilities
- Mental health services

Children's Social Care:

- Improving outcomes and actively promoting the life chances of children in care and care leavers
- Safeguarding and encouraging the welfare of children, including protection against child sexual exploitation
- Support for children with disabilities
- Fostering and adoption services
- Helping young people stay away from crime and avoid re-offending

Roads and transportation:

- Road maintenance including inspections, pothole and road repair, and emergency response
- Client, public and home to school transport
- Transport strategy, including our ambitions, policies and plans for future investment in local transport
- Keeping roads safe and improving the flow of traffic
- Rights of way, including footpaths

Waste and recycling:

- Collection and disposal of waste, including fly-tipping and littering
- Household waste recycling centres
- Converting non-recyclable waste into electricity (Energy from waste)

Education (excluding the schools' Dedicated Schools Grant):

- School admissions, school improvement and school place planning
- Support for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities
- Support for pupils not in education, employment or training
- Early help for children and young people
- Adult learning and skills

Customer services:

- Customer Contact Centre
- Face to face information, advice and support to residents at Council Access Points
- Digital and web services

Housing and homelessness:

- Advice when looking for a home
- Help if you're homeless or at risk of homelessness
- Housing grants, loans and debt advice

Planning:

- Advice services and management of the planning application process
- Investigating alleged breaches and taking enforcement action where appropriate
- Building control
- Development management, including highways
- Strategic and local planning policy, including local development plans and neighbourhood planning

Culture and leisure:

- Country parks, parks and play areas
- Leisure centres
- Libraries
- Arts and culture
- Museums and heritage

Regulatory services:

- Cemeteries and crematoria
- Environmental health including food safety, health and safety in the workplace, pollution control and housing standards
- Trading standards
- Coroners
- Licensing
- Registrars and celebratory services

Street cleaning:

- Street cleansing
- Grounds maintenance
- Dog control

Strategic infrastructure, town centre regeneration and economic growth:

- Highways infrastructure projects
- Town centre regeneration
- Supporting the local economy through jobs, skills, homes and amenities

Community Boards:

- Local partnerships between the council, community groups, organisations and local people to identify key local issues and take action to address them

Community safety:

- Crime, anti-social behaviour and drug or alcohol abuse
- Domestic abuse, sexual violence, stalking or harassment
- Extremism and terrorism
- Modern slavery and child exploitation

Environment:

- Protecting and improving the environment
- Tackling the challenges presented by climate change
- Energy and water management
- Flood management

Public Health services are funded by specific grants. This includes services such as support for stopping smoking, alcohol and drugs, eating healthily, ageing well and being more active.

How to have your say

You can tell us your views in one of the following ways:

- complete the online survey at [buckinghamshire.gov.uk/money-matters-consultation](https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/money-matters-consultation)
- complete, and return, the printed version of the survey below

If you have any questions about this activity, or require this information in another format or language, please email us at consultations@buckinghamshire.gov.uk.

Please tell us your views by midnight on Sunday 13 October 2024.

What happens next

We will consider all the feedback we receive and use the findings to help us develop the draft budget further.

A detailed draft budget will be published in late 2024 for further feedback and scrutiny. It will then be finalised and agreed in February 2025.

Privacy

We will use the information you provide here only for this activity. We will store the information securely in line with data protection laws and will not share or publish any personal details. For more information about data and privacy, please see our [Privacy Policy](#).

If you have questions about data and privacy, please email us on dataprotection@buckinghamshire.gov.uk. Or write to our Data Protection Officer at Buckinghamshire Council, The Gateway, Gatehouse Road, Aylesbury, HP19 8FF.

Printed consultation survey

Your priorities

1. Which services would you prioritise for council funding?

You can select up to 5 services, in no particular order.

Please tick (✓) one option per column

	1	2	3	4	5
Care and support services for older people and vulnerable adults	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Car parking such as car parks, street parking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community safety such as working with other organisations to tackle anti-social behaviour, violence and hate crime	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Culture and tourism such as museums, country parks and archaeology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Educational services such as childcare, pre-school, school admissions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental health such as food safety, health and safety in the workplace, pollution control, housing standards and trading standards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Housing such as finding a home, social tenancy issues, homelessness issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Library services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maintaining parks, open spaces, playing fields, rights of way and the countryside	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pavement maintenance including footpaths	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Planning services such as advice, enforcement, development plans, planning applications, building control	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Protecting the environment such as development of green spaces, renewable energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

More answer options on the next page

Public Health services such as stopping smoking, drug / alcohol services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public transport	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Road infrastructure and planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Road maintenance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Services and support for children and young people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Services to attract and support local businesses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sport and leisure services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Town centre regeneration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Waste collection	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Waste management such as fly-tipping prosecutions and recycling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Which services would you not prioritise for council funding?

You can select up to 5 services, in no particular order.

Please tick (✓) one option per column

	1	2	3	4	5
Care and support services for older people and vulnerable adults	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Car parking such as car parks, street parking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community safety such as working with other organisations to tackle anti-social behaviour, violence and hate crime	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Culture and tourism such as museums, country parks and archaeology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

More answer options on the next page

Educational services such as childcare, pre-school, school admissions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental health such as food safety, health and safety in the workplace, pollution control, housing standards and trading standards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Housing such as finding a home, social tenancy issues, homelessness issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Library services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maintaining parks, open spaces, playing fields, rights of way and the countryside	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pavement maintenance including footpaths	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Planning services such as advice, enforcement, development plans, planning applications, building control	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Protecting the environment such as development of green spaces, renewable energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public Health services such as stopping smoking, drug / alcohol services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public transport	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Road infrastructure and planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Road maintenance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Services and support for children and young people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Services to attract and support local businesses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sport and leisure services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Town centre regeneration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

More answer options on the next page

Waste collection	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Waste management such as fly-tipping prosecutions and recycling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Proposed budget allocation for 2024 to 2025

3. To what extent do you agree or disagree with how we propose to allocate Buckinghamshire Council's budget for 2025 to 2026?

Please tick (✓) one option

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know

4. If you have any comments about the proposed budget allocation for 2025 to 2026, please tell us here:

5. How easy to understand was the following information?

Please tick (✓) one option for each statement

	Very easy	Somewhat easy	Not very easy	Not at all easy	I don't know
How the council is funded	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How the council spends its money	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What 'statutory' spend is	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The financial challenges the council faces	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

About you

We will use the information you provide here only for the purpose of this activity. We will store the information securely in line with data protection laws and will not share or publish any personal information.

6. Which of the following describe you?

Please tick (✓) all that apply

- I live in Buckinghamshire
- I work in Buckinghamshire
- I study in Buckinghamshire
- I represent or own a business in Buckinghamshire
- I represent a community or voluntary group in Buckinghamshire
- I am an elected representative in Buckinghamshire
- I represent a Parish / Town Council or Town Committee in Buckinghamshire
- I work for Buckinghamshire Council
- Other (please give details below):

7. How did you find out about this consultation?

Please tick (✓) all that apply

- Local media (newspaper, radio, TV, website or newsfeed)
- Social media (Facebook, Twitter/X, Instagram, Nextdoor or LinkedIn)
- Buckinghamshire Council website or Your Voice Bucks website
- Email or newsletter from Buckinghamshire Council
- Buckinghamshire Council staff or other professionals
- Through working at Buckinghamshire Council
- Poster or leaflet
- Friend or family member
- Local community or special interest group
- Councillor, town/parish council or community board
- Other (please give details below):

8. Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation (e.g. a business or a voluntary group)?

Please tick (✓) one option

- As an individual (go to question 10)
- On behalf of an organisation

On behalf of an organisation

9. Please provide the following details:

Name of organisation:

Your job title:

End of survey for organisations

More about you

We want to hear from as many people as possible to understand the views and needs across Buckinghamshire. The following questions help us see if the communities we serve have had the opportunity to be heard through this activity.

All questions are optional. You can skip any questions you do not wish to answer, or you can skip all the questions.

10. What is your postcode?

We want to understand the views of people living in different areas. You don't have to provide your postcode, but it helps us plan and make considered decisions.

11. What is your age?

Why we ask this: We want to understand the experiences and views of different age groups.

Please tick (✓) one option

- Under 16
- 16 to 24
- 25 to 34
- 35 to 44
- 45 to 54
- 55 to 64
- 65 to 74
- 75 to 84
- Over 85
- Prefer not to say

12. Are you:

Why we ask this: We want to understand the experiences and views of different sexes.

Please tick (✓) one option

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say

13. Do you consider yourself to have a disability / disabilities, impairment(s) or long-term health condition(s)?

Why we ask this: We want to understand the experiences and views of disabled people, people with impairments and people with long-term health conditions.

Please tick (✓) all that apply

- Disability / disabilities
- Impairment(s)
- Long-term health condition(s)
- No
- Prefer not to say

14. How would you describe your ethnicity?

Why we ask this: We want to understand the experiences and views of different ethnicities.

Please tick (✓) one option

- Asian - British
- Asian – Bangladeshi
- Asian – Chinese
- Asian - Indian
- Asian - Pakistani
- Any other Asian background - Please give details below
- Black - African
- Black - British
- Black – Caribbean
- Any other Black, African or Caribbean background - Please give details below
- Mixed or multiple ethnic groups - White and Asian
- Mixed or multiple ethnic groups - White and Black African
- Mixed or multiple ethnic groups - White and Black British
- Mixed or multiple ethnic groups - White and Black Caribbean
- Mixed or multiple ethnic groups - Mixed or Multiple Ethnic backgrounds British
- Any other Mixed or Multiple ethnic background - Please give details below
- White - English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British
- White - Irish
- White - Gypsy or English traveller
- White - Irish Traveller
- White - European
- Any other White background - Please give details below
- Other ethnic group - Arab
- Other ethnic group - Arab British
- Other ethnic group - Please give details below
- Prefer not to say

Please give other details here:

15. Are there any children aged under 18 in your household?

Why we ask this: We want to understand the experiences and views of different households.

Please tick (✓) one option

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

16. What is your employment status?

Why we ask this: We want to understand the experiences and views of different employment statuses.

Please tick (✓) one option

- Employed full-time
- Employed part-time
- Self-employed full-time or part-time
- Unemployed
- Retired
- Carer
- Student
- Looking after the family or home
- Long-term illness or condition that prevents you from working
- Prefer not to say
- Other (please give details below):

End of survey

Thank you for completing the survey.

Please return your completed survey by **Sunday 13 October 2024**. You can:

- email it to consultations@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

- post it to **Money Matters Consultation**, Business Intelligence Team, Buckinghamshire Council, Walton Street Offices, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, HP20 1UA
- take it to one of our Council Access Points