

The Budget for 2025/2026 was adopted by the parish Council at its meeting on 9th January 2025.

A summary is shown below in the table along with figures for 2024/2025.

Description	2024/2025 Budget	2025/2026 Budget	Comments
Precept	149,319	161,729	Raised by Council Tax
Cemetery Fees	8,494	10,636	Burials, cremations & memorials
Fairground Fees	4,788	5,045	Hire fees & tennis courts
Bank interest and Wayleave Sponsors, grants and other income	18,243	24,243	
	5,400	-	
Parish Council Operating Income	186,244	201,653	
Administration Operating Costs	99,012	119,354	Personnel, office rent / costs, meetings, training, subscriptions
Grants to other bodies	22,082	18,489	Willink Leisure Centre, Library & other regular grants
Communications	5,270	3,857	Newsletter & website costs
Fairground & Cemetery	44,480	43,303	Grasscutting, maintenance, rent, improvement projects
Roads, Footpaths & Commons	15,400	6,650	Maintenance & improvements
Community Committee	-	10,000	Maintenance & improvements
Parish Council Operating Costs	186,244	201,653	
Parish Council Operating income less Operating Costs	0	0	Potential budget deficit covered by reserves if needed

Community Infrastructure, Projects & Reserve Spend			
Community Infrastructure Levy income	95,520	87,022	CIL income from MOR006 & other builds
Community Projects spend	254,127	456,902	Predicted spend for projects: cycleway, cemetery extension, Neighbourhood Plan, CIL expenditure, Community Grant
Community Infrastructure Income less spending / funds held for projects	(158,607)	(369,880)	Budget deficit covered by CIL reserves & earmarked reserves.

Summary			
Total Operating Income	186,244	201,653	Regular Council income
Community Infrastructure Levy & loan Income	95,520	87,022	Predicted CIL income
Total Income	281,764	288,675	
Total Operating Costs	186,244	201,653	Regular Council costs
Community Infrastructure Levy & Reserve spending	254,127	456,902	Project costs
Transfer from Reserves	(158,607)	(369,880)	
Total Spending	281,764	288,675	

The Budget

The Council is required (in law) to agree a budget. The budget ensures the Council has sufficient funds to carry out its functions and objectives and enables the Council to control its finances. In addition, it enables the Council to set its Precept.

Funding the Council

The Precept is a tax which funds the Council and enables it to perform its functions. Once the Council has forecast its budget requirements for the following financial year, it requests this funding from its 'local billing authority' – in our case, West Berkshire Council (WBC) – in the form of the Precept.

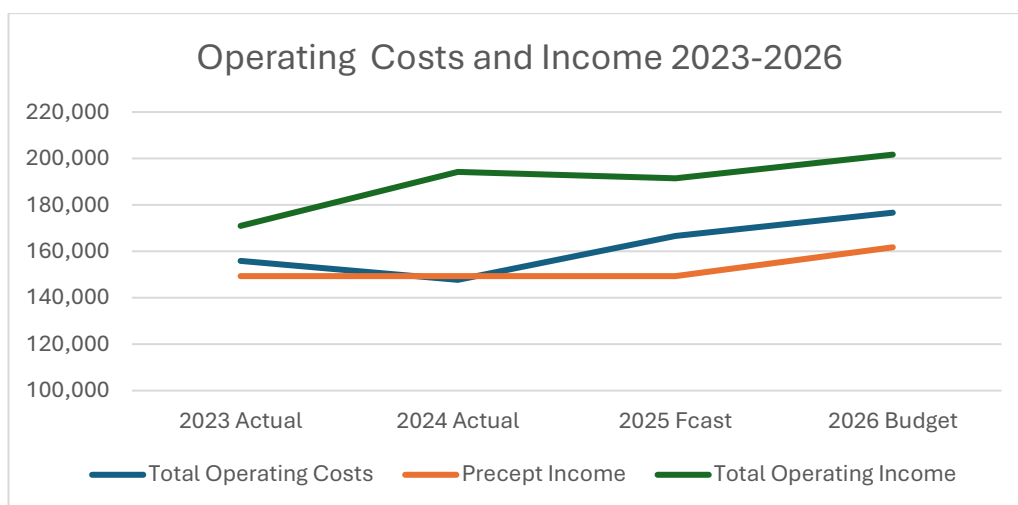
The billing authority then converts the Precept into an amount per household that is added to the Council Tax bill (according to the property band) for all the dwellings within the Parish area.

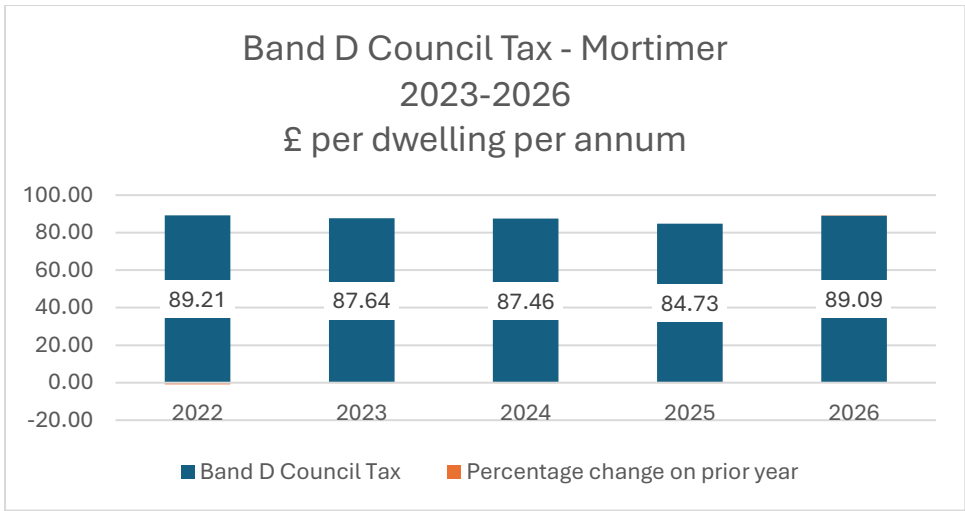
Operating Costs

The council set its budget for 2025-2026 at its meeting on **9 January 2025**. The 2025/2026 Council Tax requirement (Parish Precept) has been increased from £149,319 to £161,379 in order to cover increasing operating costs of the Council - **this is the first increase for 4 years**. The reason for this increase is that SMPC expects to incur higher operating costs in the coming year (8% on underlying costs) as a result of:

- higher staff costs (primarily National Insurance)
- higher training costs to address national training requirements for staff
- improvements to equipment to assist administration of the council
- provision for expenditure on fixed speeding devices
- provision for expenditure on involvement in community events

The good news is that although the Parish Precept has increased, the council tax for each band of house in Mortimer **remains at 2022 levels**. It is expected that the 2025/2026 charge for Band D will be £89.09 compared to £89.21 in 2022, and the same small percentage decrease will apply to all the other household bands. **This means that individual households will be paying slightly less than they did 3 years ago.**





Operating Income

The Precept is the council’s main source of revenue - other sources of revenue from cemetery fees, Fairground hire and tennis court hire are expected to remain broadly constant year on year.

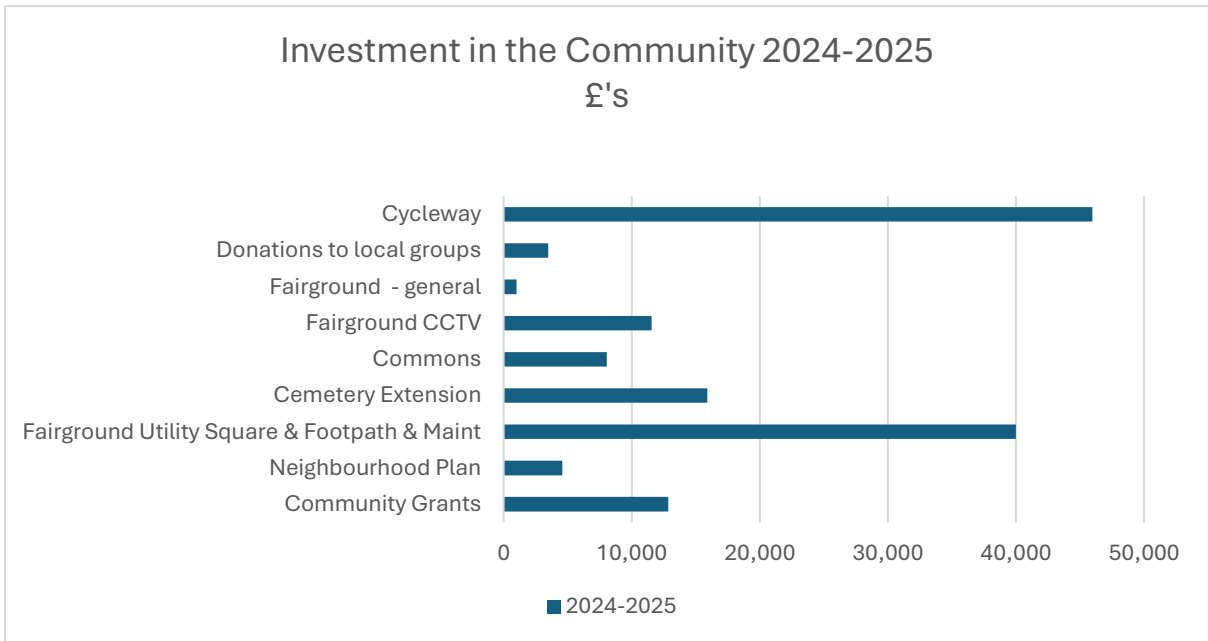
In addition to the above revenues SMPC may receive Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) , via West Berkshire Council. CIL is a payment made by developers as a result of obtaining planning permission that can only be spent to improve community infrastructure (i.e capital as opposed to revenue so can’t be spent on running the Council office, for example).

In 2024/2025 the council received £173,295 of CIL arising from housebuilding on Tower House Farm. In 2025/2026 it is expected that a further £91,000 will be received, £30,000 from Tower House Farm and the remainder from other housing projects in the parish.

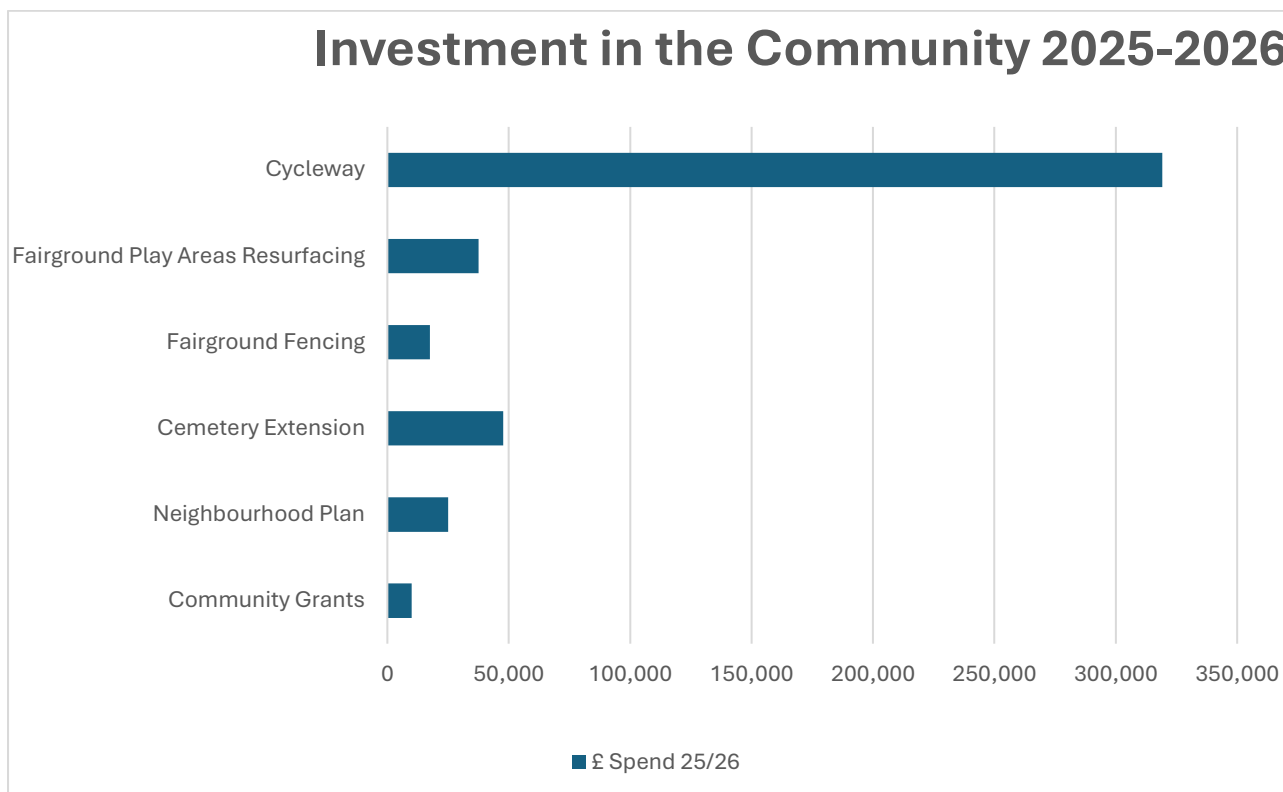
How we are investing in the Community?

A combination of CIL monies and additional reserves built up over the years enables the council to invest money in community assets.

During 2025/2026 the council has spent over £143,000 on community projects, as shown below.



As the above graph shows the projects undertaken have involved investment in a range of the council's community assets such as the Fairground, Commons, Cemetery and also financial help for other community groups. The Cycleway spend reflects preparation for the full tendering process and construction in 2025-2026. Consequently the investment in 2025-2026 reflects a much higher proportion earmarked for this. The proposed budgeted capital spend for 2025-2026 is upwards of £460.000 and is summarised in the graph below:



The key projects for the upcoming year are the cycleway (£319,000), Fairground fencing and resurfacing of play areas (£55,000) and completing the cemetery extension (£48,000).