

Cllr's Dawn Johnson and Habib Farbahi March report

Financial Recovery and Balanced Budget

Somerset Council has approved a balanced 2026/27 budget marking a step from financial emergency toward long term recovery. Independent national organisations recognise the council's decisive action and transparent leadership.

Key points

Council funding gap reduced from £101m in March 2025 to £25m in February 2026

Council tax increase of 4.99 percent with the average Band D bill £1,950.30 per year which is about £1.78 per week

Transformation programme investing £45m to deliver long term efficiencies and protect essential services

Even with these increases Somerset continues to have one of the lowest council tax rates among neighbouring unitary councils.

Comparison with neighbouring councils

- Somerset Council £1,950.30 following a 4.99 percent increase
- North Somerset Council approximately £1,955 after approving an 8.99 percent one year increase
- Bath and North East Somerset approximately £1,914.03 before police fire and parish precepts

Despite increases of 7.49 percent in 2025 /26 and 4.99 percent in 2026 27 Somerset still remains below many neighbouring authorities and broadly below the average council tax level for comparable unitary councils.

Investing in Roads Pavements and Cycleways

Up to £5m will be invested over three years to improve drainage road markings signage and vegetation clearance along walking and cycling routes across Somerset.

Supporting Children and Young People with SEND

Plans include creating more than 250 specialist SEN unit places across Somerset while supporting more children in mainstream education with earlier intervention.

Road Safety Improvements

Consultation is planned on reducing the speed limit on the A361 Frome bypass to improve safety along a route used by approximately 15000 vehicles each day.

National Recognition for Somerset

Somerset Council has been shortlisted for two national Local Government Chronicle awards recognising fostering recruitment work and programmes helping young people with SEND into employment.

Investment in Culture Yeovil Octagon Theatre

A £15m refurbishment will upgrade accessibility stage technology and facilities ensuring the theatre continues to serve the community for many years.

Community Highlights

Somerset libraries continue supporting families including World Book Day costume swaps and community events marking thirty years of Taunton Library on Paul Street.

Global Context Conflict in Iran and Economic Impact

While council work focuses on Somerset global events can influence everyday costs locally. The conflict in Iran has raised concerns about stability around the Strait of Hormuz through which around one fifth of global oil supply travels. Disruption to this route can increase oil and gas prices worldwide which raises transport food and household energy costs contributing to inflation. A stable Middle East therefore remains important not only for regional peace but also for economic stability affecting households and businesses across the United Kingdom including Somerset.

Somerset Council Contact Details and Useful Services

General enquiries telephone 0300 123 2224

Somerset Council website www.somerset.gov.uk

Highways and road issues

Report a road problem [Report a problem on the road](#)

Report potholes or road damage [Potholes and road damage](#)

Report street lighting faults [Street lighting faults](#)

Roadworks and travel updates [Roadworks information](#)

Waste and recycling

Bins recycling and waste services [Waste and recycling](#)

Report a missed bin collection [Missed bin collection](#)

Public consultations

Take part in Somerset Council consultations [Somerset consultations](#)

Climate and environment

Climate news and updates [Somerset climate programme](#)