

West Berkshire Council Report to Theale Parish Council

9th March 2026

Council Finances

The Council meeting on February 26th approved a council tax for 2026/27 of 4.99%

The government has provisionally approved Extraordinary Financial Support (EFS) of:

- £20M for 2025/26
- £30M for 2026/27

The Medium Term Financial Statement assumes continuing use of EFS for 2027/28 and 2028/29.

Some 37 councils are relying on EFS. This allows councils to “capitalise” revenue expenditure, meaning that capital receipts or borrowing can be used.

The government has said that it will fund 90% of accumulated SEND deficits. In West Berkshire this was projected to reach £65M by the end of 2028/29. The council is awaiting details.

Members' Bids

There will be another round of members' bids this year. They will be limited to £4,000 per ward but some of the previous rules have been relaxed. For example, match funding is no longer required (but is obviously helpful).

I would welcome ideas for projects from the parish council. The deadline is likely to be in April or May.

EC Paintworks

I have received complaints from residents about the company “storing” partially repaired vehicles on the High Street. One complaint said that this had blocked the road on occasion.

I have asked council officers whether they can take action or whether it is a police matter.

Alan Macro

Councillor for Theale

West Berkshire Council

8th March 2026