City Councillors' report for Warndon Villages Parish Council meeting, Monday 5th Jan 2026

South Worcestershire Development Plan Review (SWDPR): Full council to mees 5th Jan

Worcester city councillors will meet on Monday 5th Jan at 7pm to decide approval needed for public consultation on the SWDPR to start. Excerpt from the meeting agenda:

> ***"Recommendation***
>
> *That the Council:*
>
> *1.1 approves the South Worcestershire Development Plan Review Main Modifications schedule, Appendix 1 to the Committee report and supporting documents (Appendices 2, 3, 4 and 5) to the Committee report for publication for a statutory six-week public consultation from 6th January 2026 to 17th February 2026; and*
>
> *1.2 authorises the Head of Planning and Economic Development, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of Place and Economic Development Committee to make any necessary minor amendments to the document for consultation prior to publication."*

WVPC's Neighbourhood Plan has been impacted by delays to the SDWPR process.

Meeting details and papers at Agenda for Extra Ordinary Council on Monday, 5th January, 2026, 7.00 pm - Modern Council

Consultation of new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF): deadline 10/03/26

Just before Christmas, the Government announced significant planning reform proposals. This will take time to digest, and is in the consultation stage. Concerns have already been raised. For example, the Local Government Association (LGA) criticised the return to mandatory housing targets, arguing that removing the 'advisory' status and limiting local discretion centralises power and "removes local decision-making powers and flexibilities."

Please see LGA webpage for details Revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and other announcements on planning reform | Local Government Association

The government consultation document also states that the government wants "to establish 'in principle' support – a 'default yes' – for suitable proposals that develop land around rail stations within existing settlements, and around 'well-connected' train stations outside settlements, including on green belt land".

Also proposed is a minimum density of 40 dwellings per hectare around all stations and 50 dwellings per hectare around 'well-connected' stations as the government seeks to maximise opportunities for sustainable development and connections to jobs and services.

Further planning professionals' reactions available here: Draft NPPF: Reactions | The Planner

The consultation period ends on 10th March 2026 and the government consultation web page is :

National Planning Policy Framework: proposed reforms and other changes to the planning system - GOV.UK

Local topics:

New planning application for barber shop at 298 Tolladine Road: deadline 15/01/26

A 'change of use' planning application has been submitted for a residential property's garage at 298 Tolladine Road to be converted into a barber's shop. Planning Ref 25/01130/FUL 298.
See https://plan.worcester.gov.uk/Planning/Display/25/01130/FUL for details.

Consultation ends 15/01/26

City Council Consultations:

Budget Consultation: deadline 18/01/2026

Residents, businesses and other stakeholders are being asked to have their say on Worcester City Council's budget priorities for the next financial year.

The Council has launched **a consultation** to allow people to give their views on what services matter most to them and how the authority should deliver savings.

Worcester City Council manages essential services for the city, including emptying bins, keeping the streets clean, housing for families at risk of becoming homeless, looking after parks, and processing planning applications.

Council Leader Councillor Lynn Denham said: "Everyone knows that council budgets are very tight, so it's important that we listen to what residents have to say about where we spend their money in 2026-27.

"So I would encourage everyone in the city to give their views on our spending plans at **www.worcester.gov.uk/voiceit** and help us make the right choices for the year ahead."

Paper copies of the consultation are available from Customer Services at the Guildhall, or by calling 01905 722233.

The consultation is open until Sunday 18 January.

The Council will set its budget for 2026-27 in February.

Have your say on Worcester City Council's budget plans - Worcester City Council

Worcester City Council consultations page is https://www.worcester.gov.uk/council/consultations

Selected City Council news of local interest:

Contractors wanted to help residents live independently at home

Experienced contractors can now apply to join a new framework that will deliver vital home adaptations helping disabled and older residents live safely and independently in their own homes.

Worcester City Council is a partner in the new Worcestershire Home Adaptations Service, launching in April 2026. The service is being hosted by Wyre Forest District Council, and jointly run with Bromsgrove District, Redditch Borough, Malvern Hills District, and Wychavon District councils.

The service will provide adaptations including level access showers, ramps and extensions, enabling people to remain in their homes for longer rather than moving into residential care.

Contractors who join the framework will be carrying out work that makes a real difference to people's lives, helping them maintain their independence and quality of life. The councils are looking for skilled professionals who can deliver high-quality installations and are committed to supporting residents.

Multiple contractors will be appointed for each type of work to ensure flexibility and timely delivery across the county. Successful contractors will need to meet quality standards, demonstrate technical expertise, provide case examples of previous work, and agree to Wyre Forest District Council's code of conduct.

A set price schedule applies for level access showers, ramps and associated works, while larger projects such as extensions and conversions will be quoted individually.

Councillor Jabba Riaz, Chair of Worcester City Council's Communities Committee, said:

"Home adaptations can transform people's lives, giving them the independence and dignity to stay in their own homes as they get older or if they become disabled.

"We're looking for contractors who understand how important this work is and can deliver high-quality adaptations that meet our residents' needs. This new shared service will help us respond more quickly and efficiently to people across Worcestershire who need support to live independently."

Contractors interested in joining the framework should email wyreforest.procurement@wyreforestdc.gov.uk to request the registration link. They will receive a guide on how to register and submit details for consideration.

The closing date for submissions is 12pm on Monday 19 January 2026.

Existing customers awaiting adaptations will be contacted in the new year with an update on the new service. Find out more about Disabled Facilities Grants for Worcester residents.

Contractors wanted to help residents live independently at home - Worcester City Council

Designs for new pump track in Worcester revealed

Designs have been revealed for a new pump track next to Perdiswell Leisure Centre in Worcester. Visual plans were on display during a drop-in event held at the leisure centre before Christmas.

The new destination facility has been designed to be larger than the popular track opened at Battenhall Park last year. The outdoor track will include a progression loop for learners, alongside a faster track for intermediate and experienced users.

Construction is scheduled to begin in January, with the track expected to open in April – subject to weather conditions not causing any delays.

The proposed pump track has been carefully designed to cater for all abilities. The dedicated progression loop will provide a safe and supportive space for first-time and novice users to learn key skills such as balance, riding technique and cornering. Generous spacing between the features will help users build confidence at their own pace.

The track has been designed to be fully inclusive and suitable for people of all ages and skill levels, whether using a bike, scooter, skateboard, adaptive bike or wheelchair, or roller blades.

For more experienced riders, the alternative loop will offer a faster, flowing route that allows for continuous laps without the need to pedal.

The design includes a mixture of single, double and triple mounds, banked turns and flat-topped jumps, providing a challenging and enjoyable experience for confident users.

The pump track will also benefit from the existing facilities at Perdiswell Leisure Centre, including parking, toilet facilities and a café.

Councillor Robyn Norfolk, Chair of Worcester City Council's Place and Economic Development Committee, said: "The pump track at Battenhall Park has been a huge success, and we're excited to share plans for a more extensive project at Perdiswell.

"Pump tracks provide a fun, inclusive and active space for everyone, and this is a great opportunity for people to see how the new track will look."

You can give your feedback on the designs here

Designs for new pump track in Worcester revealed - Worcester City Council

Making Worcester a more accessible place for everyone

People from across Worcester came together recently to explore how the city can become more accessible for everyone.

Worcester City Council hosted an "Accessible Worcester" conference, bringing together a wide range of local people to discuss the accessibility challenges faced across the city.

Participants highlighted barriers people experience when accessing services, visiting shops, bars, restaurants, and attending organised events. These can include uneven surfaces, difficult to read signage, lack of accessible toilets, clutter in shop aisles and lack of seating.

The event was delivered with support from the Worcester Disability Forum, which was founded by Elena Round, CEO of DIAL South Worcestershire.

Guest speaker Rosalie Votadoro, from AccessAble, spoke about her company's website and mobile app, which enables people with access requirements to check the facilities available at various venues and plan their visits with confidence. She also stressed the value of making clear, reliable accessibility information publicly available.

Local disability charities also attended to share details of the support and services they offer.
Worcester City Council staff and councillors were joined by a wide range of organisations, including Action Deafness, Worcestershire County Cricket Club, Sensory Matters, Freedom Leisure, Worcester Dementia Action Alliance, Age UK Wyvern and others.

Worcester businesses and service providers committed to taking steps to improve accessibility, with progress due to be reviewed at a second event in six months' time.

Anyone interested in taking part in future accessibility events is encouraged to contact: **equality@worcester.gov.uk**

Councillor Lynn Denham, Worcester City Council Leader, said:
"Worcester is at its best when everyone can participate fully in community life. Events like the Accessible Worcester conference help us understand where barriers still exist and how we can work together to remove them.
"I'm grateful to everyone who shared their experiences and expertise. I'm looking forward to seeing these conversations being turned into meaningful action across our city."

Councillor Robyn Norfolk, Worcester City Council's Member Champion for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, added:
"Accessibility is a fundamental part of creating a fair and inclusive Worcester. This event brought together a powerful mix of lived experience, local knowledge and professional insight.
"We will continue working closely with partners, community groups and residents to make Worcester a place where everyone feels welcome, supported and able to thrive."
Making Worcester a more accessible place for everyone - Worcester City Council

All City Council news is listed at https://www.worcester.gov.uk/news/

Rota for future City Councillors' reports

Date of Meeting	***Responsible Councillor***
February 2026	*John Rudge*
March 2026	*Katie Collier*
April 2026	*Sarah Murray*
May 2026	*Andrew Cross*
June 2026	*John Rudge*
July 2026	*Katie Collier*
September 2026	*Sarah Murray*

Andrew Cross 02/01/2026 andrew.cross@worcester.gov.uk