

# Ensuring an Influential Role for Parish Councils in Neighbourhood Governance

## Willoughby Parish Council

### Motion for Resolution

Date: 14 April 2026

Proposed by: Cllr Beech

Seconded by: Cllr Honess

---

### Motion

#### This Council notes:

1. That the Government's English Devolution and Community Empowerment (EDCE) Bill introduces a new duty on all local authorities to establish "effective neighbourhood governance" structures, with further detail to be set out in forthcoming regulations.
  2. That the Government has stated it wants all local authorities to have a way of working with neighbourhoods "**so they are not relying on town and parish councils to do it,**" indicating that parish and town councils may not automatically be recognised as the primary neighbourhood governance mechanism.
  3. That the Secretary of State will have powers to define neighbourhood areas and set criteria for neighbourhood governance arrangements, but these definitions and criteria have **not yet been published**, creating uncertainty about the future role of parish and town councils within the new framework. [\[nalc.gov.uk\]](http://nalc.gov.uk)
  4. That parish and town councils are the most local and democratically accountable tier of government, with established relationships in communities and a strong track record of facilitating local engagement and service delivery.
- 

#### This Council believes:

1. That parish and town councils should play a **central and influential role** in any new system of neighbourhood governance, reflecting their democratic mandate and deep local knowledge.
  2. That any new neighbourhood governance structures should **complement, not duplicate or marginalise**, existing parish and town councils.
  3. That clear guidance from Government is essential to avoid confusion, overlap, and the dilution of local democratic accountability.
  4. That parish and town councils are offered the opportunity to join any neighbourhood governance structures created in their area.;
- 

#### This Council resolves to:

1. **Call on our local Member of Parliament** to press the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government to:
    - Ensure that parish and town councils are formally recognised as key partners within the emerging neighbourhood governance framework;
    - Guarantee that the forthcoming regulations and guidance clearly set out how parish and town councils will be integrated into neighbourhood governance structures;
    - Provide assurance that new neighbourhood governance arrangements will not duplicate functions or undermine the democratic legitimacy of parish and town councils.
  2. **Write to the MP** enclosing this motion and requesting active lobbying on behalf of parish and town councils during the development of regulations under the EDCE Bill.
  3. **Engage with our principal authority** to express the Council's expectation that parish and town councils be meaningfully involved in shaping local responses to the neighbourhood governance duty.
  4. **Publicly communicate** this Council's position to residents, reaffirming our commitment to maintaining strong, local, democratic representation.
-