

# New Dawn of Localism?

Parish and Town Councils (Local Councils) are not new!

- 1875 saw them enabled to make byelaws in regard to pleasure grounds;
- 1936 gave them power to deal with ponds and ditches
- 1953 extended their powers to the provision and maintenance of bus shelters



# and today ....

The modern local council looks very different:

- 1972 – power to provide and maintain websites;
  - 1990 – right to be notified of planning applications;
  - 2011 - right to nominate and bid for assets of community value;
  - 2011 – power to act as lead body for a Neighbourhood Plan;
- ..... and many, many more



# A safe pair of hands

- Local Councils can only do what the law (various Acts of Parliament) permits
- Volunteers but not 'voluntary sector'
- Under constant scrutiny:
  - Local Electors
  - Code of Conduct/Ethical Standards Regime
  - Audit Commission/Audit Regulations
- Bound by the law of the land – Employment; Health and Safety; Freedom of Information; Data Protection etc



# Planting the seeds of change locally...

As a precepting (tax raising) body your local council can give financial support for local activities such as:

- an evening bus taking people to the nearest town
- affordable housing to rent
- pond clearing
- refurbishing the village hall or community centre
- a teenagers' drop-in club
- a summer festival
- equipment for a children's activity group
- transport to hospital



# Local services determined locally

## Changes in local Democratic Governance

- County Council X
- Cheshire West and Chester ✓
- Cheshire East Council ✓
- Warrington Borough Council ✓
- and ... LOCAL COUNCILS ✓

## What does this mean for our electors?

- Locally raised monies
- Local priorities
- Some winners and some losers



# Looking forward ...

Government push towards creating a level playing field:

- parishing initiatives

and through new rights enshrined in legislation:

- community right to bid
- community asset transfer
- community shares
- community right to challenge
- community budgeting



# So how might you get involved?

Get to know your local council:

- attend meetings
- put yourself forward to stand as a local councillor
- find out about them through their website
- annual parish meeting
- parish newsletters etc

Get involved in the creation of a new Council for your area

- what would it look like?
- what would you call it?
- how would you like it to operate?



# Useful contacts:

National Association of Local Councils (NALC)	<a href="http://www.nalc.gov.uk">www.nalc.gov.uk</a>
Cheshire Association of Local Councils (ChALC)	<a href="http://www.chalc.org.uk">www.chalc.org.uk</a>
Create a Council Website	<a href="http://www.createacouncil.nalc.gov.uk">www.createacouncil.nalc.gov.uk</a>

