



Town & Parish Council Conference

1st May 2012



Welcome

Richard Carr
Chief Executive



The Localism Act 2011 – new community rights

Cllr James Jamieson
Leader of the Council

Background

- Localism Bill launched 2010
- Gained Royal assent
15 November 2011
- Act is 497 pages long...has
241 clauses and 25 schedules
- Parts are still work in progress



Localism, Decentralisation, Big Society

Localism

Is the ethos ...

Doing everything at the lowest possible level and only involving central government if absolutely necessary

Decentralisation

Is the process ...

Giving away power to individuals, professionals, communities and local institutions

Big Society

Is the vision ...

A society where people, neighbourhoods and communities have more power and responsibility and use it to create better services and outcomes

Community Empowerment

- Right to challenge
- Right to bid
- Right to veto excessive Council Tax rises
- Neighbourhood planning
- Right to build



National Planning Policy Framework

- New Government policy on planning issues – 50 pages
- Replaces previous “PPGs” and “PPSs” – 1,000+ pages
- Focus on Localism, less central control
- Positive framework for growth, especially housing and jobs
- Emphasis on plan-led system
 - Evidenced based, Inspector
 - Presumption in favour sustainable development
- Short transition period – need to get plans in place quickly

CBC- Core Strategy timeline



Oct 2011 to Apr 2012	Evidence gathering
Feb/Mar 2012	Initial stakeholder involvement
Jun 2012	Consultation on draft plan
Dec 2012	“Publication” stage
May 2013	Submission to Secretary of State
Sept 2013	Examination hearing sessions
Dec 2013	Draft Inspector’s report
Feb 2014	Adoption

Social Housing – New Freedoms

- Locally determined approach
 - to promote social mobility; and raise aspirations
- Flexible ‘5 year’ social tenancies:
 - for those in greatest need, whilst they remain in need
- Examine priorities to access social housing:
 - fair & flexible, to enable people to be employed
- Local Lettings – rural approach; also, local approaches across the area
- Local regulation and accountability – e.g. tenants’ scrutiny
- £165m borrowed. As a landlord, the council is able to build new homes



What Localism means to us...

- Communities taking on the delivery of some services
- Ensuring services are delivered by the most appropriate organisations
- Exploring alternative models of delivery

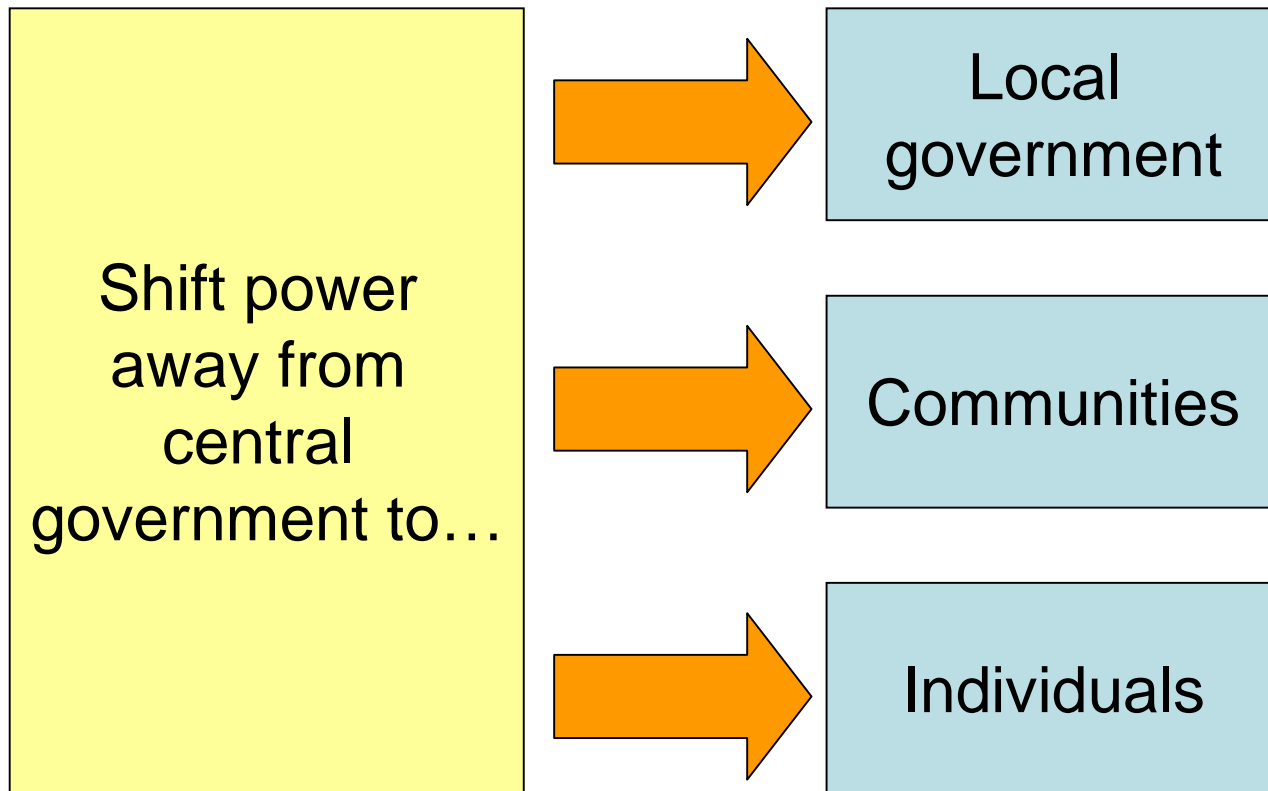




Localism Framework

Cllr David Hopkin
**Deputy Executive Member for Corporate
Resources and Lead Member for Localism**

National drive to...



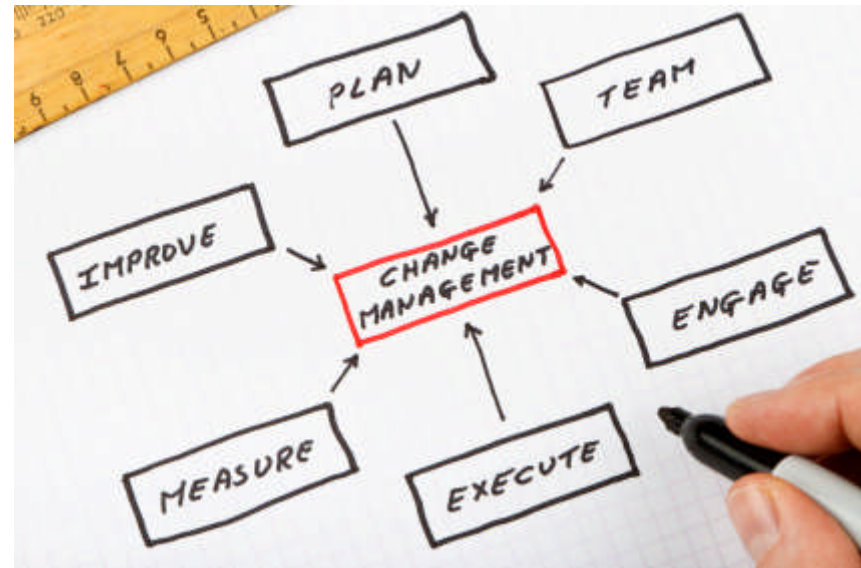
Aims:

- Improve customer satisfaction
- Provide greater local influence
- Enhance standards wherever possible
- Enhance the role of local councils
- Generate community pride in their areas
- Engage local communities in service delivery
- Achieve value for money



Options for involvement:

- Influencing and monitoring
- Joint delivery / enhancing services
- Delegated service delivery
- Service transfer



Option: Influencing service delivery

- Contract specifications
- Monitoring performance
 - Fly tipping
 - Gully cleaning



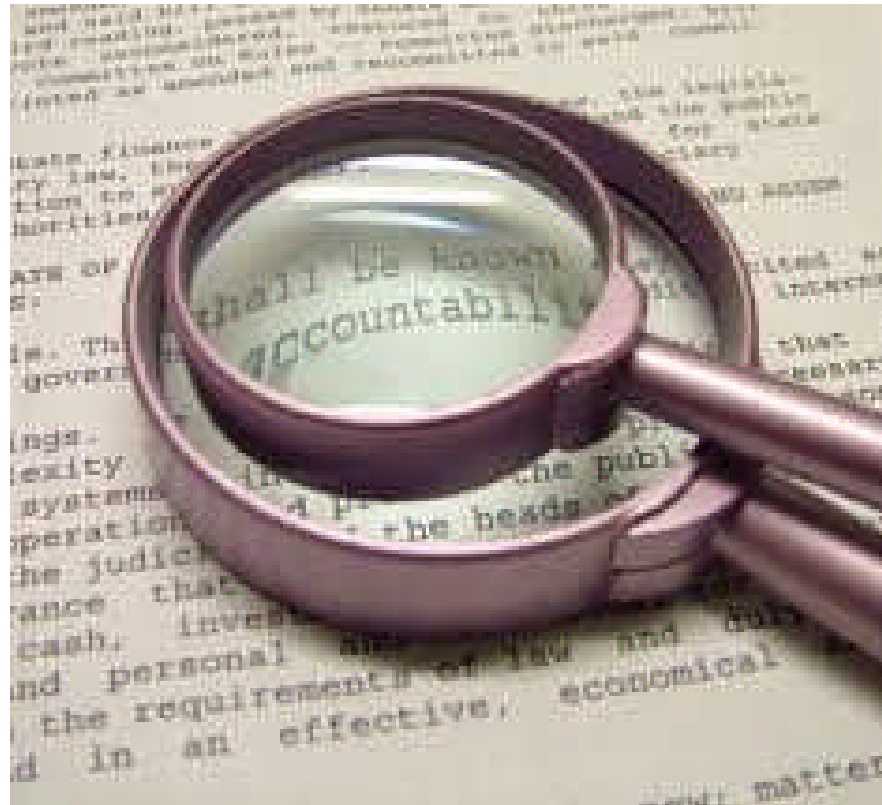
Option: Joint delivery

- Joint delivery
- Service enhancement
 - Street cleansing
 - Graffiti removal



Option: Delegated service delivery

- Full delivery
- Statutory services
 - Planning enforcement
 - Street naming



Option: Transfer of a service

- Markets
- Public conveniences
- Grass cutting
- Sports facilities /play areas



Exclusions

- Specialist skills and equipment
- High level risks
- Strategic review
- County-wide function



Process

- Key point of contact – Member and officer
- Corporate approach
- Business case
- Delegation agreement / Service Level Agreement



Business case

- Quality
- Cost
- Practicality
- Local views
- Capacity
- Equality



Questions?



Localism – Sharing Experiences

Carol Carter

Town Clerk Flitwick

Chairman of The Society of Local Council Clerks
for Bedfordshire

Delia Shephard

Town Clerk Sandy, Secretary of The Society of
Local Council Clerks for Bedfordshire

FLITWICK

- Leisure Centre
- Street lighting
- Equipped play areas
- Dog litter bags
- Youth Hub
- Youth Service provision



SANDY

- Tourist Information Service
- Countryside Access projects
- Public Toilets
- Footway Lighting
- Grass Cutting



AROUND THE PARISHES ...

AMPTHILL

- Grass cutting
- Public toilets
- Market
- Additional weed spraying
- Gritting pavements
- Litter clearance
- Street lighting

ASPLEY HEATH

- Street lighting
- Supporting the Library
- Cutting verges

BIGGLESWADE

- Public toilets
- Managing the Market Square
- Gritting town centre and routes to schools including paying for the grit
- Maintaining hedges in London Road (owned by CBC)
- Maintaining Pocket Park (owned by CBC)

CLOPHILL

- Street lighting
- Grass cutting
- Recreation ground/play areas

■ ■ ■

HARLINGTON

- Grassing cutting
- Parish Hall
- Street lighting

HOUGHTON REGIS

- Public toilets

MARSTON MORTEYNE

- Grass cutting
- Street lighting
- Service Level Agreement for verge and amenity cutting
- Marston Park
- New development – managing open spaces and play areas

MAULDEN

- Grass cutting
- Recreation ground
- Play areas
- Street lighting

STOTFOLD

- Street lighting
- Cutting the verges
- Weed spraying the footpaths
- Open spaces
- Memorial Hall



Localism in Central Bedfordshire - Making it Happen !

Tony Hansen

Chairman of Caddington Parish Council

Ken Crossett

Chairman of Slip End Parish Council

“Grit and Determination in Caddington and Slip End”

A true story of Localism in action...



Dec 2009: the week before Christmas...



Burst pipe + Gas leak + Electricity outage + Sub zero temp



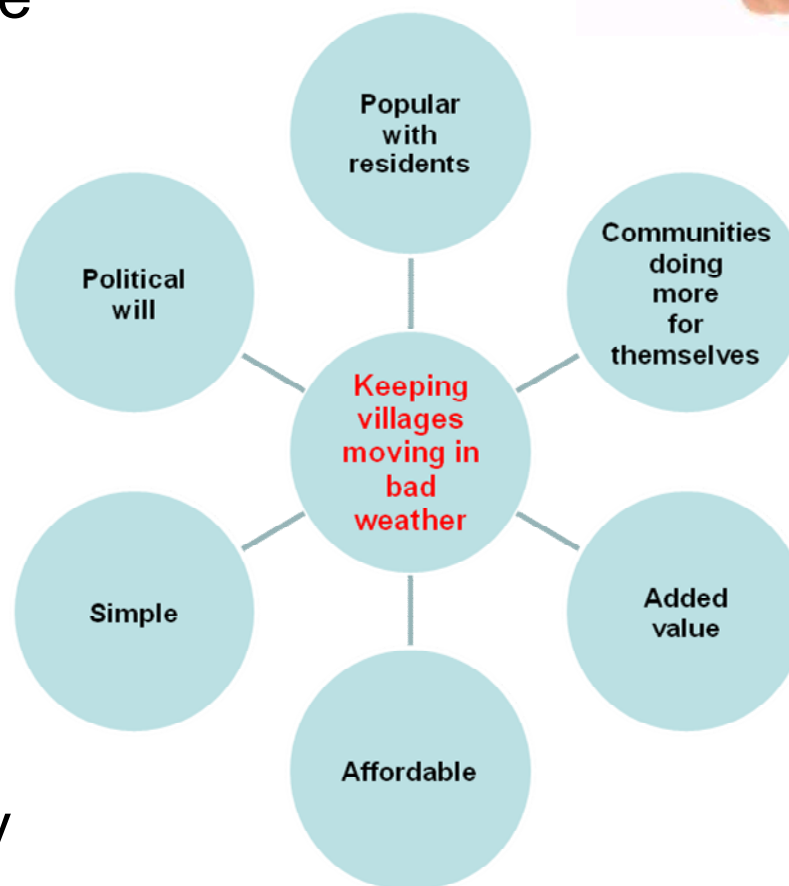
Community springs into action...!!

- People rallied together to help
- Community Care Scheme
- Gritting / shovelling snow
- Community Christmas Lunch
- Neighbourhood Plan
- CASE 4
- Legacy of social action



Parish Councils had an idea ...

Build on the local resilience
and social action

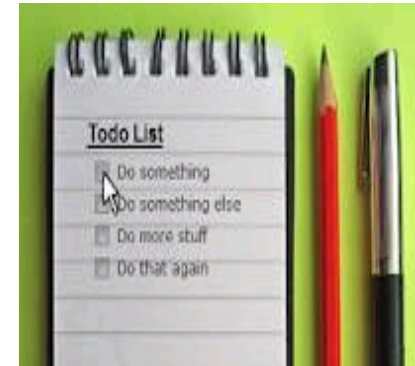


Can we and our community
do more for ourselves?

Getting Started?

To Do list ...

- Create the Action Zone to work together
- Talk to Highways
- Check insurance cover
- Consider Risks – avoiding legal action for not gritting every road every time it was icy
- Storage of bulk road salt to avoid run off



Getting started (cont...)

- Buy gritter and provide training for the gritter operators
- Community Support
- Do things differently and deliver **local** enhancements



Challenges / Solutions/ Outcomes

Challenge	Solution	Outcome
Risk and Liability	High level intervention	Bespoke insurance policy
Highways	Brokered dialogue and communication	Understanding roles Local agreement
Indemnity	Delegation agreement	Signed Dec 2011
Local expectation	Parish websites and newsletter	Roads open and passable

Distance Travelled

- Nurtured Social Action
- We overcome initial caution and hesitation
- Removed obstacles and made it happen
- Continued the dialogue and communication

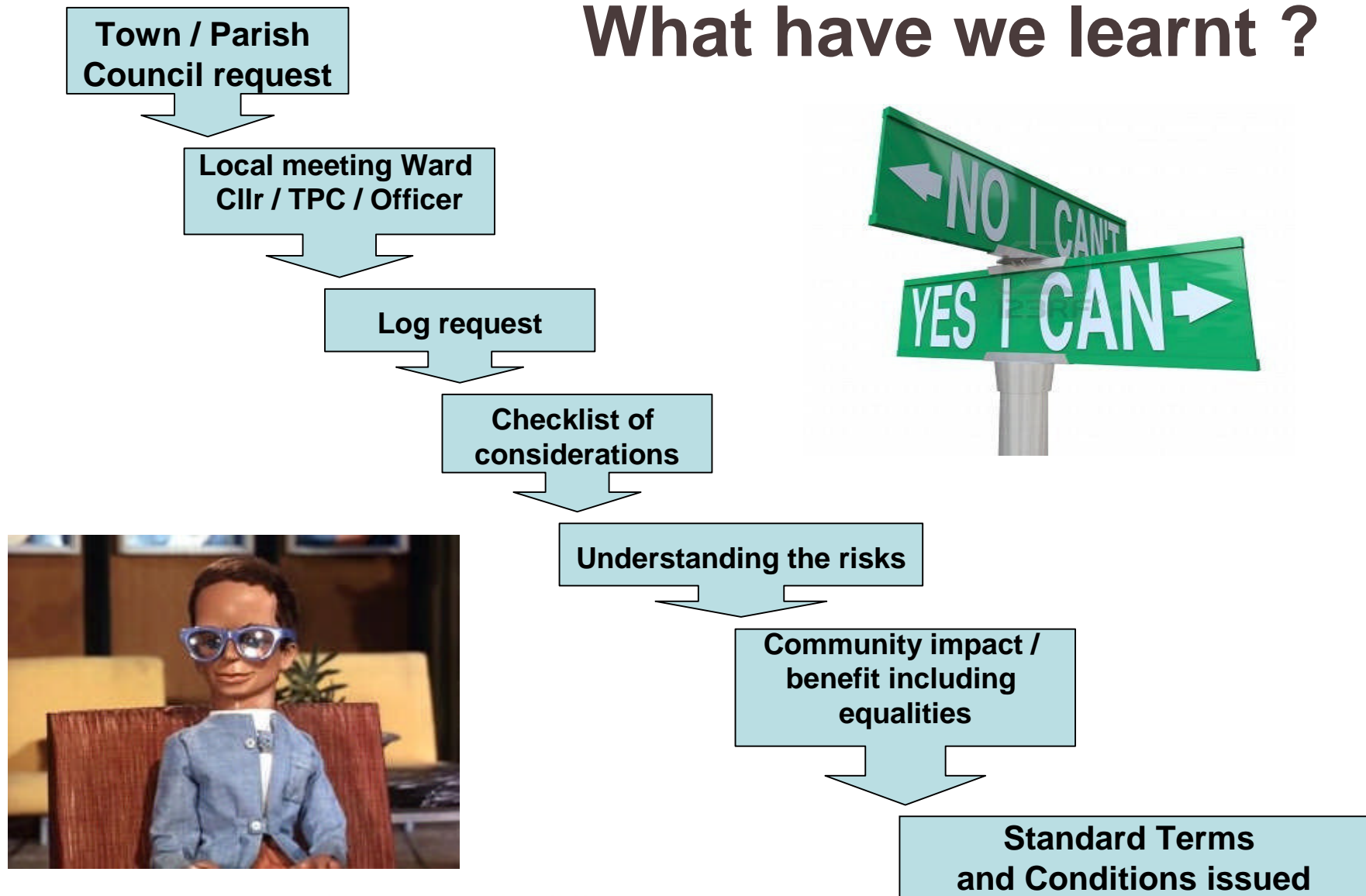


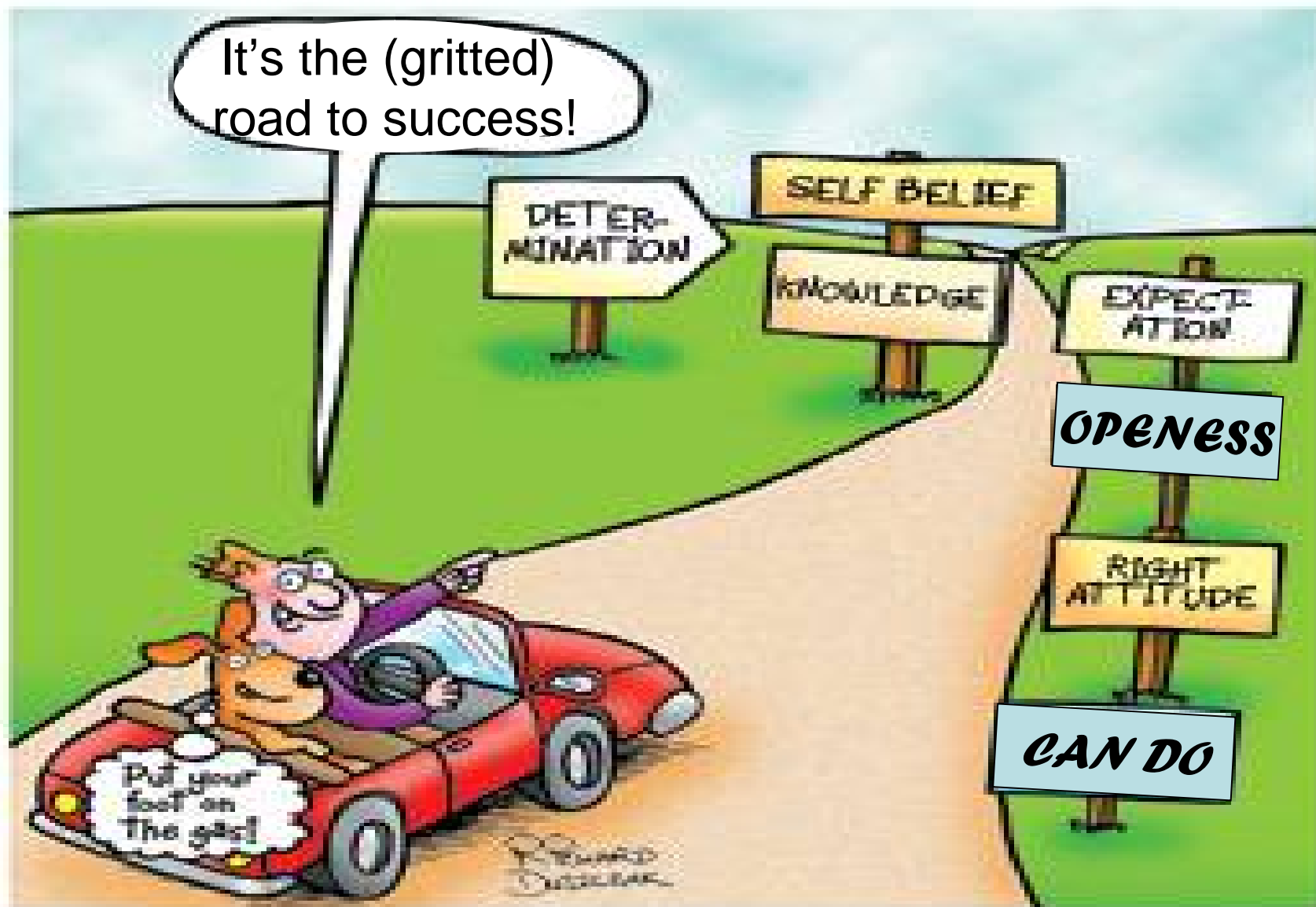
Achievements

- Met local expectations
- Helped each other
- Developed a model
- Celebrate it



What have we learnt ?





A new opportunity – a joint Neighbourhood Plan (NP)

- Caddington and Slip End are a 'front runner'
- Logical approach for a joint NP
- Shared issues / can cover needs in both parishes.



Already achieved:

- Steering Group set up smoothly with proportionate representatives from both parishes
- Working together across topic areas to build base evidence
- One-off precept in both parishes to cover the cost
- Supported by a wide range of Central Bedfordshire Council officers



Challenges

- Sourcing local expertise to support the project
- Awaiting the further detail of the Regulations
- Changing planning policy environment (NPPF)
- Lack of expertise in dealing with developers
- Need to maintain community support to ensure success at Referendum
- Cost



Engagement is vital...

- Reaching out to make it a plan for everyone
- Identifying groups such as mums with young children, users of the sports club, schools, older people, dog walkers.
- Using a range of methods appropriate to engage with those groups
- Making sure involvement is maintained throughout the process



Conclusions

- Previous success working together and in partnership with CBC means we have the right ingredients.
- Big responsibility for the individuals involved
- Whilst a NP can pull a community together, it could have the opposite effect
- Planning involves balancing different priorities and impacts



Conclusions

The Neighbourhood Plan document is the **means**, it is the **implementation** that is important for the good of the community.



Dunstable Town Council
TOWN AND PARISH COUNCIL
CONFERENCE

SHARING EXPERIENCES

Tuesday 1 May 2012
Priory House
Shefford



DUNSTABLE
TOWN COUNCIL

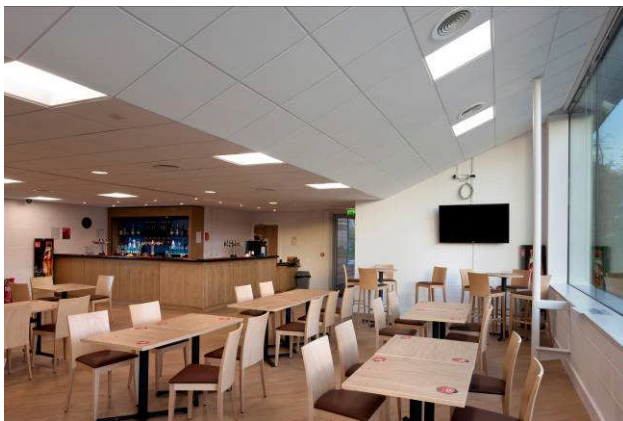
Experience 1

- **Management of Creasey Park Community Football Centre**
- **£3million joint scheme between CBC, DTC Brewers Hill Middle School and Football Foundation, supported by local clubs**



DUNSTABLE
TOWN COUNCIL

Experience 1



DUNSTABLE
TOWN COUNCIL

Experience 1

- Arrangement – DTC manages the whole facility on 5 year operating contract
- Challenge – New facility has to generate £270,000 of income per annum and operate at no direct cost to the council tax payer



DUNSTABLE
TOWN COUNCIL

Experience 1

- Solution – Employ good management structure, offer a well branded quality product, work with local partners
- Outcome – So far, so good – income streams developing facility being well used by local community



DUNSTABLE
TOWN COUNCIL

Experience 2

Management of Dunstable Market



DUNSTABLE
TOWN COUNCIL

Experience 2



DUNSTABLE
TOWN COUNCIL

Experience 2

- Arrangement - DTC commits £15,000 per annum to the Dunstable Joint Committee in return for the right to manage the market. DTC's management proposals include £40,000 investment in new stalls etc.
- Challenge – new service, no previous experience in market management, income target of nearly £60,000 pa.



DUNSTABLE
TOWN COUNCIL

Experience 2

- Solution – Train individual officers, learn from other markets, employ specialist staff consult with existing traders
- Outcome - ?



DUNSTABLE
TOWN COUNCIL

Why accept additional services?

- Because it is the right thing to do!
- To make it work build up trust and ultimately take a leap of faith!



DUNSTABLE
TOWN COUNCIL

Questions?



Ageing Well Programme

Charlie and Marie



Ageing Well Programme

Ayesha Janjua
Fellow,
OPM

The national Ageing Well Programme

- DWP funded programme aimed at enabling older people (50+) to Age Well
- 'Place based' projects - support to 19 LAs to develop 'bottom up', older person driven, community based improvements
- OPM, a not-for-profit consultancy providing support and advice to 10 of the LAs, including Central Beds

The spectrum of prevention

Ageing well

Maintaining
good health
and well-being

Preventing
avoidable
ill-health
and injury

Maintaining
the independence
of the already frail

What is an asset based approach?

“There are assets and gifts out there in communities, and our job as good servants and as good leaders ... [is] having the ability to recognise those gifts in others, and help them put those gifts into action.”

(First Lady Michelle Obama, 2009)

- In an asset based approach, the glass is half full rather than half empty. Fundamentally, the shift from using a deficit based approach to an asset based one requires a change in attitudes and values.

Where we are now – the deficit approach	Where an asset way of thinking takes us
Start with deficiencies and needs in the community	Start with the assets in the community
Respond to problems	Identify opportunities and strengths
Provide services to users	Invest in people as citizens
Emphasise the role of agencies	Emphasise the role of civil society
Focus on individuals	Focus on communities/ neighbourhoods and the common good
See people as clients and consumers receiving services	See people as citizens and co-producers with something to offer
Treat people as passive and done-to	Help people to take control of their lives
'Fix people'	Support people to develop their potential
Implement programmes as the answer	See people as the answer

Ageing Well in Central Bedfordshire – our approach

- An appreciative **asset based** approach – recognising older people as resourceful, community contributors and older age as an opportunity.
- A **whole system** approach – that complements the service improvement work already underway in targeted health and social care services by ensuring that both publicly funded and commercially provided universal services meet the needs of older people and that they are able to both draw on and contribute to community capacity.
- **Locality** focused – developing the whole systems approach by working with older people on their priority prevention issues in one locality within Central Bedfordshire.
- **Co-produced with older people** – building on the priorities identified by the Older People's Reference Group, involving older people in leading the work in the project teams and key events throughout the project.
- **Prevention** – especially enabling older people whose needs place them below the FACS eligibility threshold to continue to live full and active lives and have the opportunities they would wish to contribute to their local communities.
- The **improved use of resources** in a local community with recognition that there will be reduced resources of the next few years. Part of this is understanding and developing sustainable community development and building community capacity

The workshops

- Whole system event: key outcomes and asset mapping
 - Identified the issues that are important to older people in Ivel Valley: Transport, financial issues, social isolation, being involved in the community, information, advice and guidance, health
 - Carried out asset mapping of individual and community assets
 - Came up with ideas for making best use of the assets
- Two locality workshops: developing ideas and action plans
 - Focus on three ideas for using assets differently
 - Checked out whether anything like this already exists elsewhere
 - Developed actions to get the ideas up and running
- Final whole system event
 - Sharing the good ideas and the actions
 - Identifying the key factors for a successful local asset based approach
 - Identifying what the strategic level needs to do to support this

Benefits of the approach

The asset-based approach has proven successful at...

- Generating new and imaginative ideas
- Bringing key people together
- Engaging a wider group of people in ageing well
- Linking public sector agencies with the ideas and efforts of the voluntary and community sectors

Outcomes for Ivel Valley

Three key ideas developed and being taken forward:

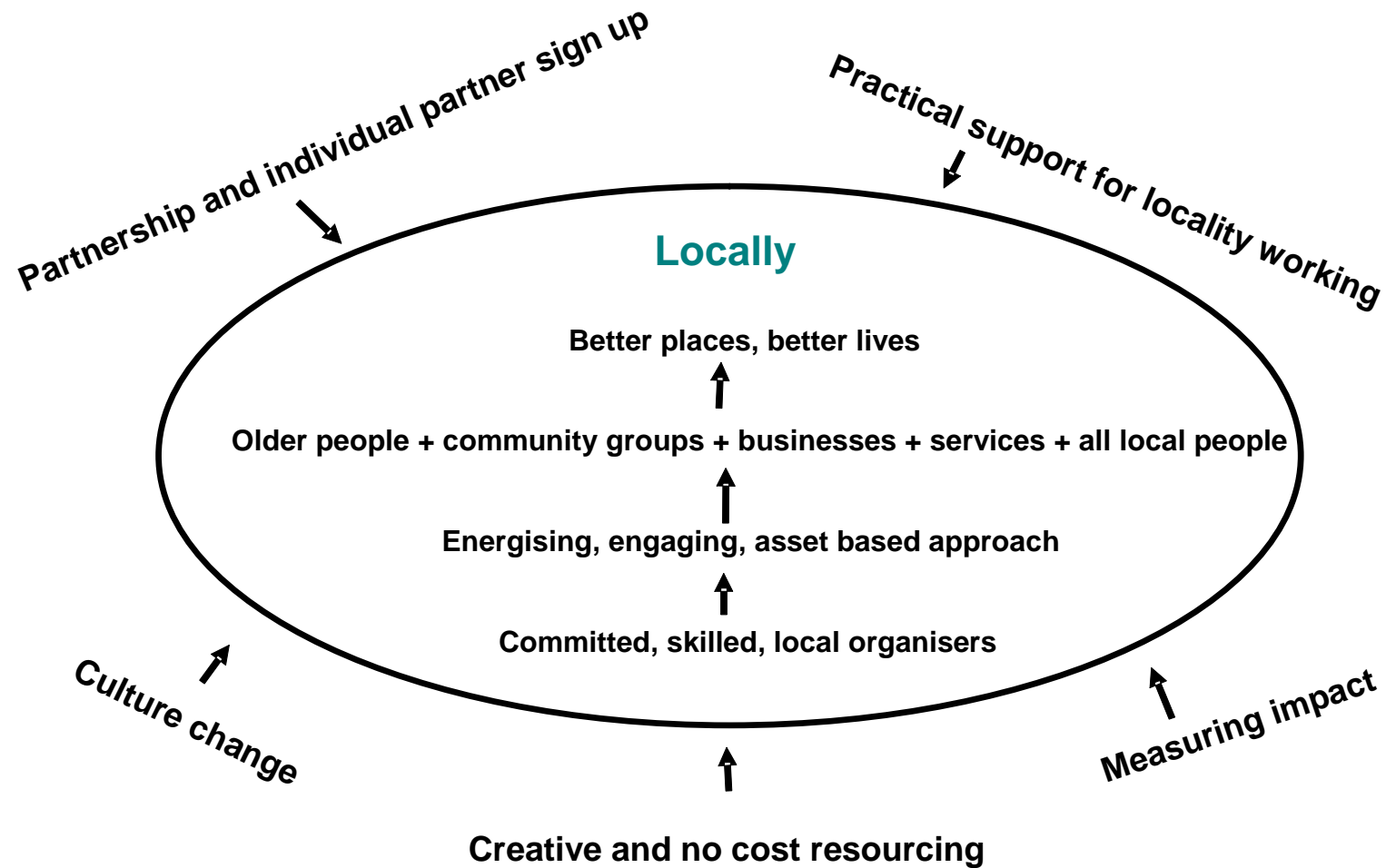
- Community/Village Agents
- Improving information, advice and guidance
- Timebanking

Progress made on each of these in identifying how to implement the idea and taking the first few key actions

Developing a model for Central Bedfordshire – at locality level

- Finding out what works and generating more of it
- Promoting what it is we are trying to achieve rather than concentrating on problems
- Cherishing the assets – as soon as people are talking to each other they are working on solutions
- Actively building capacity and confidence among communities and staff
- Involving the ‘whole system’ from the beginning
- Designing in what is needed to achieve the desired future
- Designing out the obstacles
- Ensuring the long term sustainability of solutions

Making Ageing Well work across Central Beds



Recommendations for strategic partners

1. **Ageing Well to be a golden thread** - running through all of the work of the Council, the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Healthier Communities and Older People's Partnership Board and strategic partners.
2. **Prioritise Ageing Well in key strategic documents** - to ensure action is achieved, as opposed to just a 'talking shop'.
3. **Support the asset based approach** – is a key role for strategic partners, both supporting its use in local communities and enabling the implementation of the good ideas that are produced.
4. **Support staff at all levels, members and local people to understand and implement the asset based approach** – to enable Ageing Well to become embedded in everyday community and service delivery practice.

Opportunities for councillors

Localism is about supporting local communities to take a greater role in 'deciding' and 'doing' and being able to 'do more for themselves'.

Key role for councillors as leaders – Community Based Leadership. This means councillors working with communities to:

- Increase the legitimacy of what is done and not done
- Increase capacity to achieve desired outcomes
- Help them make good choices about priorities – which will contribute to public value/economic and social wellbeing

(All of which are increasingly important given reduced spending)

Aspects of councillors' roles in asset based approaches

- **Councillor as mobiliser**

Being able to enthuse, motivate, build confidence of others; being honest and clear on how much you can do; ability to make the case to Council, partner agencies and community

- **Councillor as convenor and facilitator**

Understanding who has a stake (and interest) in what; skills in facilitating meetings (as opposed to putting a point of view)

- **Councillor as broker**

Diplomacy, sensitivity & tact; persistence; being a good *active* listener; knowledge of what support can be drawn on from council and other agencies

- **Councillor as signpost**

Being honest and clear on how much you can do; knowledge of what support can be drawn on from council and other agencies

Implications for support to councillors

- Peer support, support from council and other strategic partners, training to:
 - understand the new community based leadership role
 - and how to use tools such as asset mapping to support your local communities
- Councillors need access to officers with specialist skills and sufficient seniority to give advice and sometimes make things happen
- Similarly, access to senior *members* who can bust log jams can be essential

Questions?



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