**ADVANTAGES of Local Government:-**  
• The local self government solves the problems of the people at the grass-root level. The various needs such as construction and maintenance of roads, availability of water, construction of schools etc. are taken care of by the local self-government.  
  
• The local people gets more decision making opportunities for their own problems in local self government.  
  
• The local people have best ideas on how and where to spend money for their development.  
  
• Any problem or issue in a particular area can be best attended by the local government.  
  
DISADVANTAGES :-  
  
• One of the main problems of local self government is the scarcity of funds.  
  
• Critics comment that the local leaders neglect to value the state or national issues.  
  
• The Panchayat or the Municipality is not always able to cope up with the people's demand.  
  
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The Advantages   
  
1. Local authorities are able to adapt to local needs and react more quickly to local problems than central government. Councillors and officers have an understanding of the local area and can tailor policies to that area.  
  
2. It is likely to be more efficient to run services locally than manage them from the centre. Local councils can also play an important role in coordination by bringing together the private sector, voluntary organisations and other public bodies to make sure that things happen.  
  
3. Different local authorities have been able to innovate and produce new ideas which can be copied by others.  The idea of using a private firm for refuse collection at lower cost instead of the council’s own workforce was pioneered by the Conservative council in Southend and then adopted by the Thatcher Government. The Labour council in Lambeth is involving people with mental health issues in redesigning the services that they use.  
  
4. Local government is closer to the public and allows them to have a more direct voice in the running of services.  People can vote according to how well the council is run and councils can carry out local referenda and consultations to allow local people to express their views. Councillors live nearby and so it is easier for voters to see them.  
  
5. Local government allows people from the political parties to gain experience in politics and gain knowledge of issues such as transport, education and social care.  As well as becoming experienced local politicians they may become MPs and take their experience to Westminster.  This provides an alternative to the path into national politics which involves working for an MP or political party and, it could be argued, produces people with more understanding of real world issues.  
  
The Disadvantages   
  
1. If different councils run services to different standards then there may be what has been called a ‘postcode lottery’ so that, for example, it may be easier to get an entertainment licence or be housed in social housing in one area than another.  This can happened with central government services as well though, for example, it may be easier to get a certain type of operation in one Health Authority than another.  
  
2. It could be argued that party politics is not relevant at the local level.  Decisions over local services should be made in terms of what is best overall.  Political parties may have fixed views or may be captured by particular local interests such as small shopkeepers or tenants’ associations.  
  
3. It is difficult to recruit capable people as Councillors at the local level.  Although Cabinet members and Mayors receive a full-time payment other Councillors do not.  Many Councillors are therefore older retired people.  
  
4. The funding of local government from local resources has always been controversial.  The poorest areas are likely to require higher levels of spending on many services but the tax revenue from these areas is less than in wealthier areas and so central government has always had to redistribute resources.  This means that there is little local accountability over spending as central government largely decides what is available.  
  
5. People mostly relate to the neighbourhoods and small towns and villages where they live. Although it may be cheaper to organise many services over a larger geographical area, it could be argued that local government can stifle local initiatives for the provision of services by local voluntary groups.