

# Electoral review of Slough Borough Council Colnbrook with Poyle Parish Council

20/09/2011

## Introductions

- Richard Otterway – Review Officer
- Sarah Murphy - Review Officer
- Nicholas Dunkeyson – Review Assistant

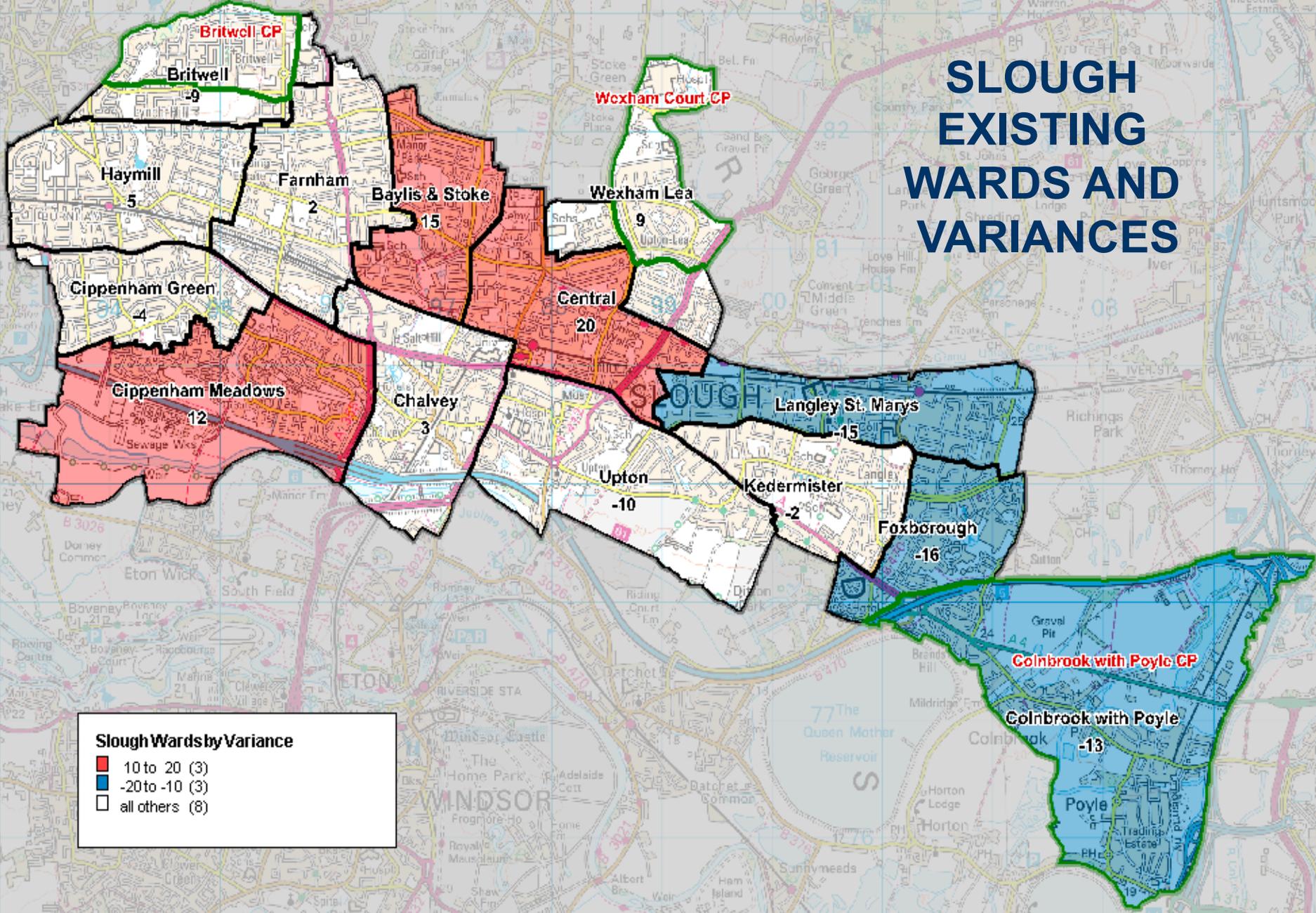
## About us

- An independent body set up by Parliament in April 2010 by the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009
- We are independent of Government and political parties, and directly accountable to Parliament through the Speaker's Committee
- We are responsible for reviewing local authority electoral arrangements, administrative boundaries and structure
- Our recommendations will be implemented by Parliament

## Why has Slough been selected for an electoral review?

- Our aim is to try to ensure that each councillor represents approximately the same number of electors
- Our criteria for starting an electoral review is where:
  - 30% of wards have an electoral variance of more than 10% from the average and / or
  - one ward has an electoral variance more than 30% from the average
- In Slough, the levels of electoral representation have changed since the last review, completed in 2002
- According to the latest figures for Slough, 42% of the wards now have a variance over 10%

# SLOUGH EXISTING WARDS AND VARIANCES



Red	10 to 20 (3)
Blue	-20 to -10 (3)
White	all others (8)

## Scope of review

- Review covers the entire borough – not just wards where there are levels of electoral inequality.
- As the council elects by thirds, there is a presumption (stated within the LDEDC Act 2009) that there will be a uniform pattern of three-member wards
- Total number of councillors (council size)
- Number of wards
- Names of wards

## What we consider: statutory criteria

- Electoral equality

- optimum number of electors per councillor
- Five year forecast
- In time for next election

### Community identity

- parishes as building blocks
- strong boundaries

- Effective and convenient local government

- coherent wards with good internal transport links

## What we can't consider

- Parliamentary constituency boundaries, which are drawn by the Boundary Commission for England
- Current district wards
- Local political implications of recommendations
- School catchment areas
- Postcodes or addresses
- Polling districts

## Rules relating to parishes

- We cannot create or abolish parishes, or amend their boundaries
- If we divide a parish between borough wards, we must create parish wards
- We can change parish electoral arrangements only as a direct consequence of our borough ward proposals

- Review process • Preliminary stage: 6 – 8 weeks
- council size discussion
    - Does Slough have the right council size?
    - What are the demands of time on elected members? Could the council operate more effectively with a different number?
    - Opportunity for council to consider political management and governance
    - Consideration of members representative role
    - Effective representation of constituents

## Review process

- Further information gathering (10 weeks)
  - Invite warding patterns from council, public, parish councils, everybody who takes an interest
  - Welcome proposals for whole district or just a small area
  - Commission tours area
- Commission publishes draft recommendations
  - Posters provided to parish councils to publicise review
- Open consultation on draft recommendations (8 weeks)
- Commission publishes final recommendations
- Final recommendations will be implemented by order in the Houses of Parliament

## Parish Councils' input

- Tell us what you think
  - Explain how the proposed ward pattern reflects community identity
  - Consider ward names and patterns
  - give evidence of how recommendations would impact your communities
  - we don't expect a borough-wide scheme but remember there may be knock-on effects to proposals
- Talk to residents and publicise the review
  - We will provide all parishes with posters
- Consider the review timetable in scheduling meetings

## What characterises a good review

- Detailed rationale for council size.
- Accurate electorate figures and robust methodology when forecasting expected growth
- Scheme coming forward which gives good electoral equality while balancing other statutory criteria, has cross-party support, has been consulted on locally
- Highly important to involve as many groups/individuals as possible at as early a stage as possible
- Where cannot secure consensus across a scheme, tell us where there is agreement
- Representations based on evidence, not just assertion

<b>Timetable</b>			
<b>Stage</b>	<b>Date start</b>	<b>Date finished</b>	<b>Duration</b>
Information gathering for warding arrangements	4 July 2011	4 October 2011	13 weeks
LGBCE analysis and deliberation	5 October	20 December	11 weeks
Draft recommendations published	20 December		8 weeks
Draft recommendations consultation	20 December 2011	13 February 2012	
LGBCE analysis and deliberation	14 February 2012	8 May 2012	13 weeks
Final recommendations published	8 May 2012		

# Any questions?

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