

Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council Electoral review briefing

1 December 2011

Introductions

- Joan D'souza – Review Manager

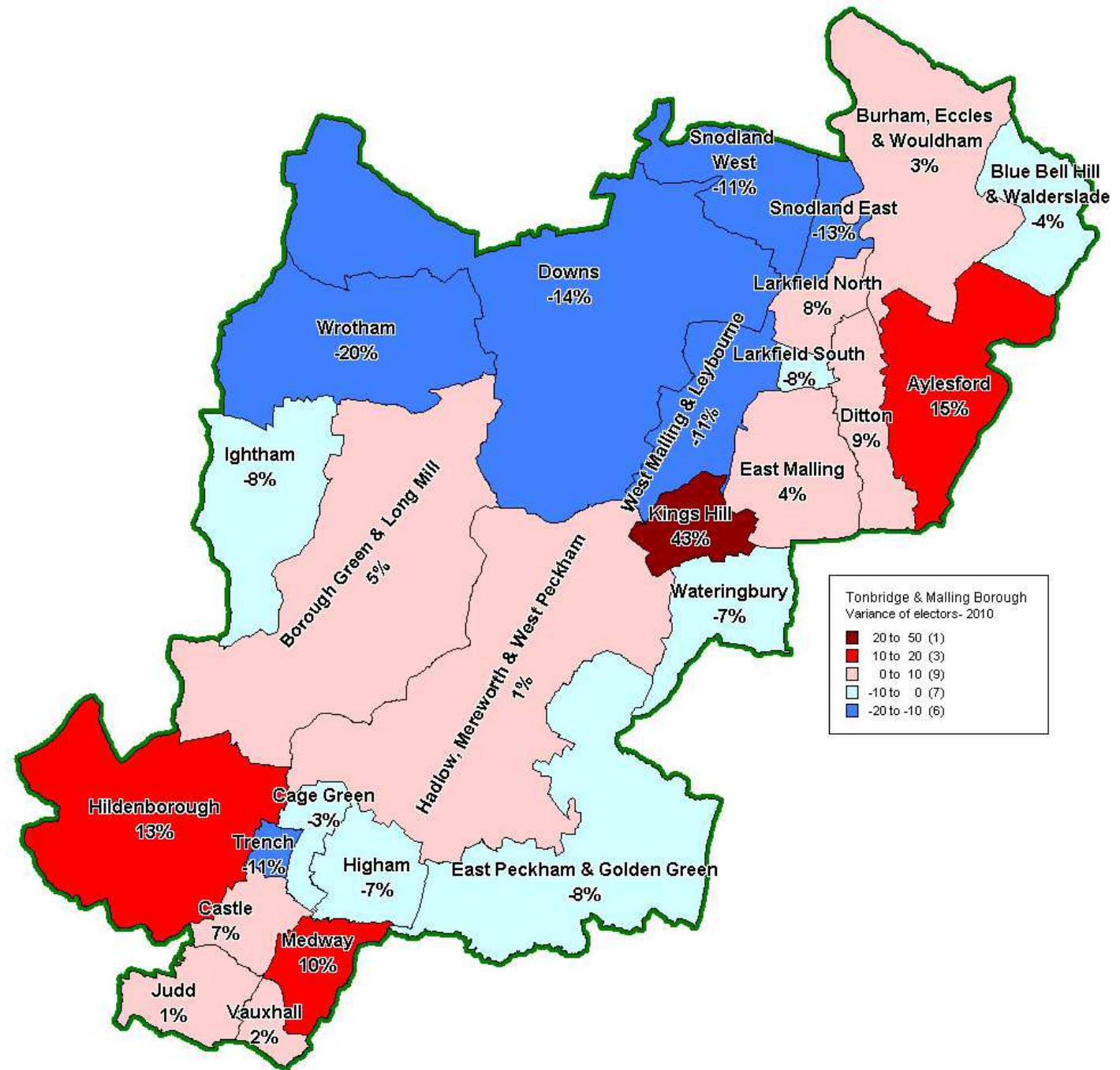
About us

- 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 for this review will be implemented by Parliament

Why are we conducting an electoral review of Tonbridge & Malling?

- 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 Tonbridge & Malling one ward has an electoral variance of more than 30% from the average – Kings Hill (43%) and 38% or wards have an electoral variance of more than 10% from the average

Map of wards and electoral variances in Tonbridge & Malling



Scope of the review

- Review will decide the pattern of wards for the entire borough – not just wards where there are levels of electoral inequality
- We will decide:
 - Total number of councillors (council size)
 - Number of wards
 - Names of wards
 - Boundaries of all wards

Statutory Criteria

- Commission will take decisions on the basis of statutory criteria:
 - To deliver electoral equality for voters
 - To provide boundaries that reflect natural communities
 - To promote effective and convenient local government

What we cannot 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

Review process

Pre- Review Stage

**Preliminary stage: 6 – 8 weeks (starts
November 2011)**

Issues to be determined during this stage:

- View taken on council size
- Determination of review ‘type’

Council size: The Commission's approach

- No view on whether there should be an increase, reduction or no change
- Commission needs a good rationale for what is proposed particularly in those areas where a substantial change is proposed
- Commission will test rationale and underpinning assumptions

Types of Review

Depending on outcomes of preliminary stage, Commission will then determine type of review for Tonbridge and Malling:

- No expectation of change in council size: Typical length: 26-30 weeks
- Expectation that any change in council size will be small: Typical length: 42-50 weeks
- Expectation that a change in council size could be substantial: Typical length: 52-62 weeks

Review process

The
Local Government
Boundary Commission
for England

- Six week consultation on council size if preliminary stage proposes significant change.
- Further information gathering (10 weeks)
 - Invite warding patterns from council, public, resident associations, everybody who takes an interest
 - Welcome proposals for whole borough or a certain area
 - Commission tours area
- Commission publishes draft recommendations
 - Posters provided to council to publicise review
- Open consultation on draft recommendations (10 – 12 weeks)
- Commission publishes final recommendations
- Final recommendations will be implemented by order in the Houses of Parliament

Contact details

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