

# Winchelsea in breakaway bid for own parish council

**WINCHELSEA is fighting for independence from the parish council in a break-away bid.**

The historic town, which has its own mayor and jurats, is currently controlled by Icklesham Parish Council, which also covers Rye Harbour and Winchelsea Beach.

Winchelsea residents were angered when the parish council failed to back a recent traffic calming scheme in the town. The parish council subsequently made a U-turn following a stormy meeting.

Icklesham parish council has been dogged by in-fighting in recent years and

By Andy Hemsley

was in danger of collapsing completely when five parish councillors and the parish clerk resigned en-masse.

A review is currently underway to look at the possibility of Winchelsea forming its own council and feelings are sure to run high when the matter is discussed at the Annual Parish Meeting on Tuesday.

If Rother District Council decides to recommend the creation of a new parish, the final decision will rest with the Secretary of

State who may refer it to the Electoral Commission.

Rother Council officer Joy Cooper said: "The impetus for a new parish council has come from a number of Winchelsea residents who believe the parish of Icklesham has become too large and diverse for it to adequately represent the interests of all four wards, and that Winchelsea in particular is losing out because it is the smallest ward.

"They take the view that Winchelsea meets the criteria for a parish in its own right, reflecting as it does a small, distinctive and recognisable community with its own

sense of identity. Given the scale of support in the town, and the number of households requesting a referendum, I believe it appropriate for a review to be conducted and to test the support throughout the parish."

Winchelsea councillor Richard Comotto said: "The parish is too big and what is good for Icklesham or Rye Harbour may not be good for Winchelsea. All four wards have different issues and focus. Ours is traffic and the protection of our ancient monuments."

The Annual Parish Meeting is on Tuesday at 7pm at Icklesham Memorial Hall.

## ICKLESHAM PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Next Tuesday 2nd May

Icklesham Memorial Hall starting at 7pm

All residents of Rye Harbour, Winchelsea Beach, Winchelsea and Icklesham are warmly invited to attend and participate

Chairman's annual report and guest speakers on a proposal for a separate parish council for Winchelsea. See village Parish notice boards for details.