

Head of Safer Communities,
2nd Floor Bartholomew House,
Bartholomew Square,
Brighton BN1 1JP

Re: Regulation 38 Notice, Paris House, 21 Western Road, Hove, BN3 1AE

I wish to make representation for the review of the license of the Paris House

My address: Hove Town Hall, Norton Road, BN3 3BQ

I SAY as follows

I am writing this representation at the request of residents within my ward who for a number of years have had their lives impacted by both persistent issues with noise emanating from inside and outside of Paris House, as well as some anti-social behaviour from a small handful of patrons, and have thus far, found their efforts to tackle the issue unsuccessful.

It is important to note that the Paris House is a part of the community, and as a number of the representations will attest, is valued by local residents for its safe and enjoyable environment for people to socialise and enjoy music. As one resident stated, it is 'a positive asset to the community'. Indeed, the complainants themselves have said they understand the value of the venue to its customers and appreciate that they live in a city with an active night-time economy. They had no complaints about the former license holder The Juggler's Arms and indeed, in the early days of Paris House, they had no issues then either. However, in recent years it is clear that their lives have been greatly impacted by the premises.

From my conversations with the complainants and other local residents there are three main concerns that I have, both as the local councillor but also as a fellow member of the licensing committee. I will outline these below.

Change to a Live Music Venue:

There has been an apparent change in purpose of the venue from a café-bar to one of a live music venue with little to no regard for neighbours within the immediate vicinity. Their offering includes DJ performances over the weekend running to 2am, which I believe are promoted as 'Club Nights,' effectively turning the would-be pub into a nightclub. It is notable that the majority of the complainants and other local residents I have discussed the issue with, who have endured issues with the noise are located predominantly on [REDACTED] which would logically be more impacted by the noise emanating from the venue than properties elsewhere. Especially if the building has not been appropriately modified to accommodate its function as a club/live music venue.

The audio and video recordings captured by the complainants clearly show that the music is not just audible but is distinctively loud from their residences. This is of course a greater issue later in the evening as they seek to settle down before sleep. I myself have sought to attend the local area on a number of occasions when live music was scheduled in recent months and have found that the music can be heard from a considerable distance down from the venue. This is in contrast to a number of other premises located within my ward which also have live music, but seemingly are better able to contain the noise within their premises. It is also worth noting that despite being Councillor for a ward with multiple license holders, to date this is the only venue which I believe I have received complaints for regarding persistence issues with noise.

I would have expected efforts to be made to better soundproof the venue if it were to be used as a live music venue, so as to reduce the impact the noise would have on local residents.

Failure to monitor patron behaviour

It appears that too little is being done by staff to combat the nuisance that a number of patrons have caused in the surrounding area. Speaking to local residents, I have been informed of loud congregations outside the venue late into the evening, with loud talking and shouting keeping them awake and more disappointingly a number of reports of the use of local residents' properties as urinals. These aren't problems that Paris House's neighbours should have to contend with. Having worked in similar venues in the past and well aware of the challenges that arise, I am reluctant to blame the staff themselves but rather think it may be an issue with the change to a live music venue, without proper consideration for the wider challenges that arise from operating such a business. Having enquired with our local PCSO, whether she had encountered any issues with Paris House, she informed me that she had made a report in September of last year to the Sussex Police Licensing team. Her concerns were in regards to how many patrons there were in relation to the size of the venue, which seemingly was having a persistent issue with overspill out on the pavement. This isn't assisted by the fact that music performances are set up next to the door, and the pavement in the immediate area thus appears to be viewed wrongly as an extension of the venue from which patrons can stand outside to watch the acts. This overspill was a particular cause for concern for the PCSO given the inability of staff to monitor their behaviour.

With this in mind, it is little wonder that some patrons have unfortunately felt it suitable to behave in a way that I'm sure the license holder wouldn't permit. Greater effort clearly needs to be taken to ensure that patron behaviour is being monitored while they're attending the venue. Having a sign up requesting patrons respect the local neighbours while outside the venue is worthless, if efforts are not being made to ensure they do so.

License Holders Response to date

You will see from their detailed submission that the complainants have on numerous occasions over the years sought to rectify the problem through the appropriate channels open to them but have to date found it inadequate in resolving their concerns. In the interest of impartiality, I am hesitant to comment on matters that I myself was not party to, but I believe the complainants have found the license holder very reluctant to act in good faith in previous efforts to resolve these differences. What I will comment on however, having seen it myself and raised my own concerns about it to members of staff within the licensing team is the intimidatory letter which was sent to local residents who had sought to raise their understandable frustrations by the owners of Paris House, Rowbell Leisure Ltd. The attempt to put off local residents from coming forward has unfortunately had the desired effect and I have spoken to residents who expressed their desire to explain their experience of Paris House but made clear their wish to remain anonymous owing to concerns about the implication it would have. These people have a real fear that in pursuing a better outcome for themselves, they would be putting themselves at risk of devaluing their properties and amidst a belief that they cannot continue to live in the local area given the disruption to their lives, may ultimately seek to sell.

It is little wonder that the complainants felt they were left with little choice but to pursue a license review if this is the type of behaviour, they can expect to receive from the license holder. I personally would've hoped that the venue would have sought to work with their neighbours to ensure that a suitable outcome for both parties could be arrived at.

The persistent problem of loud music, alongside minor Anti-Social Behaviour has undoubtedly had a negative impact on the lives of some of the local residents. They have struggled to find peace and quiet in their own homes, which is a right that should be afforded to all of us. The complainants have been reluctant to have friends and family over to stay on the weekends given the expected disruption to their guests sleep as a consequence. Things have gotten so difficult that two separate residents, independent from one another expressed that when the

