

Subject:	Petitions		
Date of Meeting:	18 September 2014		
Report of:	Head of Legal & Democratic Services		
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Ward Affected	Moulsecoomb & Bevendean		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 To receive any petitions presented at Council, any petitions submitted directly to Democratic Services or any e-Petition submitted via the council's website.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.2 That the Committee responds to the petition either by noting it or writing to the petition organiser setting out the Council's views, or where it is considered more appropriate, calls for an officer report on the matter which may give consideration to a range of options, including the following:

- § taking the action requested in the petition
- § considering the petition at a council meeting
- § holding an inquiry into the matter
- § undertaking research into the matter
- § holding a public meeting
- § holding a consultation
- § holding a meeting with petitioners
- § referring the petition for consideration by the council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- § calling a referendum

3. PETITIONS

(i) Homes in Multiple Occupancy, 69 and 75 Ewhurst Road BN2 4AL

Referred from the meeting of Council held on 17 July 2014.

- 3.1 "We have grave concerns regarding the ever increasing multiply occupied homes on this street.

Some residents have been in contact on a regular basis with Brighton and Hove employees over the past 12 months plus, to try and limit the number of HMO's in this street. We believe we have 40/50% of the total properties multiply occupied, which is destroying the community. Indeed, you were sent a Planning Enforcement Complaint Form re 69 in the spring of last year and a

Planning Contravention Notice was served last autumn, but no action appears to have been taken.

We had been hopeful that the article 4 direction would protect us, but that seems not to be the case. Whilst we are pleased that the licensing requirements should improve properties for tenants, we are surprised that the licensing does not limit the number of such properties when they are above the recommended percentage. It seems illogical to grant a licence to a new HMO when no planning permission has been granted or possibly even applied for.

69 was a two bed home previously occupied by one man and his dog. That property was extensively renovated and converted to a six bed property. One or two students moved in with some of their possessions in August but no one lived at 69 until September 2013. That property was not habitable in April/May 2013 and was advertised as being available to rent in July (but was still not finished then). It appears the property has been granted a licence but should not be given planning permission.

75 was a dilapidated, basic 3 bed property rented and occupied by an older man. Following his death, the landlord/letting agent refurbished the property and it was initially let in September 2012 to two brothers for 6 months. It was then let to a family from May 2013 for 6 months and is now occupied by 3 students who took up residence in January 2014. We believe that this property has neither a licence or planning permission and should not be granted either

We feel very let down by the Council and it appears that, either

- a) The new article 4 direction is useless, or
- b) the local authority is not applying it and
- c) the local authority is not taking action against those landlords who are flouting the direction.

Excessive noise and rubbish on street are now commonplace. Recycle boxes are the worst offenders. They are left on the pavement continuously and the boxes, or sometimes just the re-cycling, are blown down the street. Residents have noted that the open re-cycle boxes are often used for general rubbish by passers by, which means City Clean will not empty them. Residents have, with a representative from City Clean knocked on doors to advise tenants that boxes should not be left on pavements but improvements have been short lived. If we didn't have the huge number of HMO's this would be less of a problem. Wheely bins are frequently over full with additional black bags left along side. This is heaven for seagulls and foxes.

There are still a number of young families and older residents living here. We all want our street to be part of a community, which would include a limited number of students. We do not want to feel dominated and overwhelmed by the number of students in the street. Therefore we ask the local authority to implement the article 4 direction in our street and return some properties to family use.”

(27 signatures)