

Personal Statement

In relation to the Expedited Review under Section 53a of the licensing act
at the Venue known as Isis Noir Chesterfield
17/12/13
Jason Hill
Director

As the business owner of the premises known as Isis Noir I am totally devastated to find that following the recent undercover operations and the subsequent arrest of 2 of my employees and another individual, weaknesses in some of the premises systems and controls have been highlighted.

The alleged offences undertaken by these individuals were unknown to myself and furthermore are activities I do not condone; I actively discourage illegal activities of any nature. I consider myself to be an involved and upstanding business person within the local community. As such it is without doubt that I will assist the authorities with their investigations and welcome advice on this situation.

It is now apparent that the recruitment process failed to highlight the unsuitability of some subsequently employed members of staff. This process was not as robust as I would have expected. The recruitment process has previously been delegated to the management team. The immediate action that has been taken is the suspension of the employees concerned with an imminent and thorough review of all staff members including management, with consideration being given to an entirely new workforce if appropriate. Further immediate action that is being considered is the increased regulation of patrons entering the venue, to include an increased frequency of searches of individuals and extra vigilance during operational hours. The overall door policy is to be reviewed and changed to encompass any strategies that can be implemented to ensure the safe and legal running of the venue.

As the owner of Isis Noir and Chair of the Corporation street group I have worked tirelessly to help create a good customer demographic in the area to include a varied customer offer. As part of this initiative I have introduced an award winning bistro The Andalusian situated above Isis Noir whose valuable custom I have committed to serving over the festive period. The negative impact of a closure of the premises at this critical time off year would have a devastating effect on the loyal customer many of whom are employees of local businesses and are expecting their Christmas parties at Isis and the Andalusian. I am also concerned about the effect on the decent employees, for example the restaurant and kitchen staff and subsequently their families and that this would jeopardise their livelihoods.

The business has suffered from recessionary forces over the years and like many sectors this is an extremely important trading time, overall, a closure at this time of year would undoubtedly irreversibly damage the business and its future and seriously affect the suppliers of the business by devastating the Christmas trade.

I fully appreciate the gravity and seriousness of the situation, however with the above information in mind I respectfully ask that the licensing committee considers as per the Section 53A Licensing Act 2003 that the *interim step* to be taken is that of *modification of the conditions of the premises licence* pending the determination of the review. The full implementation of any requirements to allow the safe continuation of operation would be guaranteed and documented to ensure open communication and monitoring of the situation prior to the result of the review.

Jason Hill.