

REPORT TO: LICENSING COMMITTEE - 28 JANUARY 2005

REPORT BY: LICENSING MANAGER

REPORT AUTHOR: MRS NICKII HUMPHREYS

**Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982
Application for the renewal of a Public Entertainment Licence – The Union
Students Centre Cambridge Road Portsmouth**

1. Premises Details

Name: The Union
Address: Students Centre
Cambridge Road
Portsmouth
PO1 2EF
Licence Type: Public Entertainment
Licence



2. Purpose of Report and Licensing Manager's Recommendation

The purpose of this report is for the Committee to consider an application for the renewal of the public entertainment licence in respect of the above premises.

Whilst there have been no objections from the police, fire or other Council officers, the application has been referred to the Licensing Committee for determination at the request of Councillor Frank Worley.

RECOMMENDED: That the application to renew the public entertainment licence in respect of The Union, Students Centre, Cambridge Road, Portsmouth be approved subject to existing standard and special conditions.

Reasons:

- a) No objections have been submitted by the statutory authorities and Council officers;***
- b) No representations have been received by the licensing section from residents living in the vicinity of the premises;***
- c) No evidence available for consideration by the Licensing Committee to suggest that the premises have been operated other than in accordance with the terms and conditions of the public entertainment licence.***

3. Background Information

These premises have benefited from a public entertainment licence since it was first opened in 2002. The total occupant capacity for the licensed areas is 2600 persons and the hours of opening and closing are as follows:

Area	Days	From	To
Ground Floor	Mon – Sat	08:00	02:30
First Floor Club	Mon – Sat	08:00	03:00
The Embassy/Coffee Shop	Mon – Sat	08:00	02:00

In respect of Sundays, the whole premises are licensed from 12:00 noon until 00:30 hours.

A copy of the current public entertainment licence and special conditions is attached as Appendix A

Members' attention is drawn to special conditions 9 and 10, which are especially unique to these particular premises.

4. Comments of police, fire and other council officers

No objections have been received from the police, fire, building control and planning services. Environmental Health has submitted comments in relation to two complaints they received in October 2004.

On 7 October 2004, a complaint was made against The Union concerning noise made by students using the HSBC cash point machine on Kings Road, near the junction with Hampshire Terrace in the early hours of the morning. Environmental Health does not have the powers to deal with noise in the street of this kind so they have been unable to take the complaint further. The complainant explained that he believed the users of the cash point were students, as the noise did not start to become a problem until the new academic year started. The environmental health officer has commented that it is likely that only some of the noise from this location can be attributed to students.

The officer concerned raised, with Dave Livingstone the Assistant Bars Manager of the premises concerned, the issue of noise from students leaving the Union premises and generating noise. He advised that the Union have instigated a number of initiatives to combat this sort of problem. Among other methods, they have a responsible drinking campaign, lecturing students on their responsibilities in the community and handing out lollipops at the end of the evening – a policy that has proved successful in other towns and cities for reducing noise from patrons going home.

The only other complaint received by environmental health was with regard to one particular event held in a marquee by the Student Union building on 11 October 2004. The complaint was received at 22:00 hours. An officer visited and decided that the volume of the PA in use was loud enough to warrant a request to reduce the volume significantly. Within 5 minutes of the officer's arrival, the PA was switched off all together. A few days after this event he

received a call from one of the licensees, Miss Janet Hillier who apologised for the incident and advised that the marquee was never intended for use with any kind of amplified music or PA and that it would not happen again.

The officer concludes his comments by stating that in view of the nature of the complaints received and the response he experienced from staff of the Union, he does not wish to object to the renewal of the public entertainment licence.

5. Comments of Ward Councillor and Member of Parliament

Councillor Frank Worley formally contacted the licensing office and requested that because of late night disturbance suffered in Hampshire and Landport Terraces, Kings Road, St Paul's Road and other parts of Southsea by young people making their way home at closing time, he asked that the renewal application in respect of these premises be considered by the Licensing Committee; particularly the extent of the provision to be reasonably expected by neighbours in respect of special conditions 9 and 10 attached to the Licence.

He further states that the University of Portsmouth have always sought, and are continuing to seek, to improve perceptions of student activity in Portsmouth and it is his hope that they will present a really good case in which they will demonstrate to the Committee the security arrangements that they presently employ and will continue to employ in this next year.

In addition, Ward Councillor Paula Riches forwarded to the licensing section, copies of various correspondence from Councillor Mike Hancock CBE MP to the crime and disorder officer of Portsmouth City Council, police, Vice Chancellor of Portsmouth University and a Mr Julian Davis of 9 Landport Terrace. These are attached as Appendix B.

6. Conclusion

The statutory authorities and council officers have made no objections to the renewal of the public entertainment licence.

Councillor Frank Worley has also offered no objections to the renewal of the licence and residents living in the vicinity of the premises have made no representations concerning the renewal of the licence to your reporting officer.

The correspondence from Councillor Mike Hancock CBE MP relates to nuisance being caused to residents living in Landport Terrace and Kings Terrace during the academic year and suggests that such anti-social behaviour is being directly caused by students leaving the Union premises. Councillor Hancock requested that liaison commences between the Union staff and residents in the vicinity and sought reassurances about what they can do about the particular problems relating to student behaviour.

Subsequent to this correspondence, the Union organised an open forum with the local residents and residents' associations to discuss the issues raised by residents.

No evidence has been submitted for consideration by the Licensing Committee that problems relating to anti-social behaviour in this area is directly being caused by students and that they are specifically leaving the Union premises rather than other licensed premises situated in the surrounding proximity.

The public entertainment licence imposes various responsibilities upon the management of the Union to ensure that the premises are properly supervised and this is highlighted by special conditions 9 and 10.

It would appear that the management of the Union take these responsibilities very seriously and have taken reasonable steps to prevent and continue to prevent nuisance from occurring so far as they can effectively manage and control.

Having regard to the lack of complaints and available evidence to suggest that the Union are acting other than in accordance with the conditions of their licence, it is recommended that the Licensing Committee renew the public entertainment licence subject to existing standard and special conditions.

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Licensing Manager
For Head of Legal and Democratic Services