

13.0 Prevention of public nuisance

13.1 The most obvious aspect of public nuisance is noise. The primary source of noise is amplified music, either uncontained outdoors or emanating from premises, which do not have sufficient measures in place to contain the sound. Late at night or in the early hours of the morning, individuals shouting in the street or groups of people talking in an animated fashion generate a substantial level of noise and in some cases this is aggravated by offensive language.

13.2 As customers leave licensed premises, the sound of their conversation can disturb residents. Potentially greater problems arise when customers congregate or accumulate outside the licensed premises. However, it is clear that the person in control of the premises has a responsibility to ensure that disturbance to residents and businesses is kept to a minimum.

13.3 In considering licence applications where relevant representations are received, the Licensing Authority will consider the adequacy of measures proposed to deal with the potential for nuisance and disorder having regard to all the circumstances of the application. When addressing public nuisance, the applicant should identify any particular issues which are likely to adversely affect the promotion of the objective to prevent public nuisance, taking account of the location, size and likely clientele of the premises, and the type of entertainment (if any) to be provided. Such steps as are required to deal with these issues should be included within the applicant's operating schedule, and may include:

- The steps the applicant has taken or proposes to prevent noise and vibration escaping from the premises, including music, noise from ventilation equipment and human voices. Such measures may include the installation of soundproofing, air conditioning, noise limitation devices and keeping windows closed during specified hours.
- The steps taken to ensure that all staff involved in the management of the premises have the capability, responsibility and training to supervise other staff and to ensure that the premises are operated in such a manner as to prevent public nuisance
- The steps the applicant has taken or proposes to prevent disturbance by patrons arriving at or leaving the premises, for example warning signs at exits, and warning announcements within the premises, and the use of door supervisors to pass on the message
- The steps the applicant has taken or proposes to prevent queuing, or if queuing is inevitable, to divert queues away from neighbouring premises, or otherwise manage and monitor the queue to prevent disturbance of obstruction, and to prevent patrons congregating outside the premises.
- The implementation of a last admission time, and how the last admission time relates to the closing time of the premises
- The steps the applicant has taken or proposes to take to manage queues so that patrons who will not gain admission before any last admission time are advised accordingly
- The steps the applicant has taken to reduce queuing outside the premises and to minimise the length of time people have to queue at the premises
- The steps the applicant has taken to advise patrons that they will not be admitted if they are causing a disturbance, and the steps taken to implement a procedure for banning patrons who continually leave or arrive at the premises in a manner which causes a public nuisance or disturbance.

- The arrangements made or proposed for parking by patrons and the effect of parking on local residents.
- The arrangements the applicant has made or proposes to make for security lighting at the premises, and the steps the applicant has taken or proposes to take to ensure that lighting will not cause a nuisance to residents.
- Whether there is sufficient provision for public transport for patrons, for example the provision of a free phone taxi service or other arrangements with taxi companies, and whether information is provided to patrons about the most appropriate routes to the nearest transport facilities.
- Whether taxis and private hire vehicles serving the premises or traffic flow from the premises are likely to disturb local residents.
- Whether routes to and from the premises pass residential premises.
- Whether other appropriate measures to prevent nuisance have been taken, such as the use of CCTV or the employment of an adequate number of licensed door supervisors.
- The measures proposed to prevent the consumption or supply of illegal drugs, including any search and disposal procedures.
- The procedures in place for ensuring that no customer leaves with bottles or glasses
- If the applicant has previously held a licence within the area of the Council, the history of any enforcement action arising from those premises.
- Whether the premises would result in increased refuse storage or disposal problems, or additional litter in the vicinity of the premises.
- The steps the applicant has taken or proposes to take in order to ensure that standards of public decency are maintained in any entertainment provided at the premises.
- If appropriate, whether music is played at a lower level towards the end of the evening in a “wind down period”.
- The applicant’s proposals for the length of time between the last sales of alcohol, and the closing of the premises
- The steps the applicant has taken to prevent noise and other public nuisance from occurring in any open air parts of the premises, beer gardens, smoking shelters or areas that are used on an ad-hoc basis by patrons with the management consent for smoking e.g. a street or pavement adjacent to the premise The above list is not intended to be exhaustive, and the applicant should consider all aspects of the operation that may affect public nuisance.

13.4 Since the introduction of the Health Act 2006 the requirement for patrons to go outside a premises to smoke has caused an increase in the number of noise and anti-social behaviour complaints received by this and other Councils. It is therefore expected by the Licensing Authority that the management of licensed premises will ensure that adequate provision is made to supervise those patrons who leave the premises for a short time to smoke, having regard to the health and safety of their staff. In certain cases some form of regular engagement between businesses and residents can lead to better understanding of the needs of each party and inspire a degree of trust.

13.5 The cumulative effects of litter around premises carrying on licensable activities can amount to public nuisance. The Licensing Authority requires that any premises that can cause litter, be it from a take away food establishment or cigarette debris left by its customers, must remove it at regular intervals. At the end of trading, management of the premises should arrange for a final check of the area immediately outside the premises, to ensure that no litter, spilled food or cigarette debris is left. In some cases it may be appropriate to impose conditions on licences for take away premises which require litter bins to be provided or for litter dropped around of the premises to be collected and removed at regular intervals at the licence holder's expense including washing away to the gutter any spilled food.