

From: [REDACTED] **On Behalf Of**
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Sent: Thursday, November 05, 2015 4:19 PM
To: Newman, Sarah; Prickett, Mark; Franklin, David; Ashenden, Kristie
Subject: Isabella Street Action and Feedback

Good Afternoon

Apologies if this email is not relevant to some of you but I had numerous contacts in both the environmental and licensing teams at Southwark and wasn't sure who to address this to.

I am emailing today to provide some feedback about the last year at Jacks. After a tumultuous summer in 2014; it was a huge priority for us to address the noise complaints and crowd control at Jacks and we subsequently spent a lot of time and effort putting systems and plans into place to try and alleviate the problem. We believe our contact with Southwark council regarding these issues should not just be defensive reactionary occasional emails but rather proactive conscientious conversations. Sadly the last two emails I sent with information to the council were not replied to.

Let me first update you on all we have done at Jacks specifically.

1. We have upgraded our sound limiters to a more sensitive system as the acoustics in the arch made it difficult to hear the quality and volume at busy periods.
2. We moved our speakers around within the interior of the site with the help of an acoustic technician to make sure the sound waves were heading inward rather than outward.
3. Our staff training now involves a written question about how each individual can help to keep an eye on the noise levels with reference to the residents across the road thus making sure all staff members at all times are aware of the issue.
4. We initiated and implemented the Action plan from 2014, with some slight changes and tweaks to reflect what we learned last year (e.g. timings of stewards, smoking crowd control). We then presented this to EV and Thai Silk and suggested the same guidelines should be followed over the warmer months of 2015 when our problems seemed to be exacerbated. This was invoked for all three sites after a member of Southwark Council visited the street on 31st July 2015 and was also outlined in an email response to you on 7th August 2015.
5. We have refrained from applying for any TEN applications this year at Jacks to instead focus on our current opening hours and controlling the noise adequately within those parameters.

Whilst our results have not been perfect they have demonstrated a significant decrease in noise complaints being communicated to us from your offices, council staff having to attend Isabella Street and consequently, I would hope, a degree of satisfaction from residents that we are doing our best to keep them in mind.

Last year in both the meetings we had with representatives from Southwark on Isabella Street and the TEN application meeting that was attended by myself in the Southwark offices it was made clear to us that it was our (Jacks, EV and Thai Silk) responsibility to work together to maintain and solve the issue of noise complaints in the area. We were told that

we would be collectively punished if one of us was not adhering to these rules and were subsequently threatened with license changes, sanctions etc... should this be the case. As you can see from the paragraph above Jacks has taken these meetings on board and taken them very seriously. It is important that you are aware however that we have faced considerable difficulties in uniting with EV and Thai Silk in the same aims.

It is fair to say that we have spear headed, organised and implemented the initiatives and to a certain extent policed them even though we only occupy half the space that both EV and Thai Silk do on the street. We have communicated by email, face to face and tried to organise meetings but these have been ignored or only responded to with one line emails either agreeing or disagreeing with the proposals. With these responses in mind; it certainly seems like neither EV nor Thai Silk care too much about this or are simply happy to let us take the reins. We are by no means trying to place blame on anybody else; the results of our work negate this but we do feel it is important that these issues are pointed out to you. As the only "bar" on the street it is easy for the finger to be pointed at us and historically it has been. However there have been numerous incidents this year where our management have attempted to enforce the rules of the action plan and suggestions of Southwark Council to be ignored or even ridiculed by both businesses. Only last Friday our manager had to attend Thai Silk to ask them to turn their base and music down; he was greeted by a member of staff who did nothing about it even after the second visit. We are now in a situation where EV are refusing to pay for the stewards in full even though the noise was clearly significantly reduced by their presence.

I point these things out not for pity's sake but to highlight the ongoing challenges we are facing trying to handle both ourselves, EV and Thai Silk for fear of collective repercussions from the council that could irrevocably damage our business or even close it all together. Sadly we do not receive the same concern or collective responsibility from EV and Thai Silk; we are met with reluctance, aggression or ignorance.

Whilst we are trying our best to cope with the strain of this responsibility it would be great if we could have help from the council regarding this. Replies to emails (especially the action plan) so that we can back up the things we are proposing with council approval would be very helpful, occasional meetings to discuss how things are going (once or twice a year) or communication via email/letters to at least back up our work. Without this presence, next year I fear both EV and Thai Silk will not agree to the action plan and we will all be back where we started.

Aside from this, we are struggling to control late night drinkers with cans (presumably purchased from Tesco or Sainsbury's) who are loitering around the back of the underground shaft opposite our site. This was mentioned in our meetings last year but as far as we can see nothing has been done about it. Last week we had an incident where we had to call the police to remove a drunk man from our premises who had entered and was verbally abusing our customers. He had been drinking for several hours and lying on the back benches of the shaft. We feel it is important to highlight that this is a real problem for us.

Finally, in a meeting last year we were made aware of a residents meeting in March. I had some communication with Sarah Newman about this as we were keen to attend obviously, but was consequently told that it had been cancelled. During the TEN meeting last year the

residents had claimed that we never replied to emails/letters about attending these meetings. Let me say with absolute clarity that we have never been invited by email or by letter (our address is clearly visible on the website and they know our situation) and I have had to chase up rumours of meetings over the past 12 months only to be constantly faced with changes or cancellations. What's more when I asked the council for a contact from the residents so that I could pursue this myself, my email was ignored. I find it difficult to believe there hasn't been a residents meeting since last year but worry our absence only extends these strained lines of communication further. If you do have a contact for the residents nearby could I have it so that I can take the opportunity to reach out for feedback from them directly?

As I have said before Isabella Street is a fantastic part of Southwark; a gem and hopefully we can continue to work together to keep it a pleasant place to live and a thriving area of business.

Kind Regards

Victoria

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