

Licensing Board removes Iona Bar's off-sales licence

The Iona Bar in Leith has had its off-sales licence removed following reports of anti-social behaviour at the pub during the lockdown.

The decision to vary the licence in order to prevent public nuisance was made by the Licensing Board at a recent remote meeting.

Police Scotland submitted an application to review the Iona Bar's premise licence after receiving complaints from neighbours about customers loitering after purchases of off-sales alcohol, consuming it outside the pub and not adhering to physical distancing guidelines.

Following consideration by the Licensing Board, it was agreed that the licence would be varied to remove off-sales, meaning the pub will no longer be able to sell alcohol for people to take away.

The Iona Bar will retain its on premises licence, allowing customers to eat and drink inside the bar while following physical distancing guidelines and the Scottish Government guidance for hospitality businesses.

Licensing regulations have been relaxed to support businesses to operate in different ways during the Covid-19 lockdown, one of which has been to permit pubs and bars to operate off-sales, giving them the ability to sell bottles of beer, wine and other alcohol for consumption off the premises.

Cllr Norman Work, Licensing Board Convener, said: "There is no doubt that the lockdown has been difficult for hospitality businesses, however, we expect all licence holders to operate their premises responsibly. We will not tolerate anti-social behaviour within communities and we will take action against establishments seen to be abusing the licensing regulations."