

# **Council say they did not revoke bar's music licence**

**Claims that a popular Edinburgh bar's live music licence was "revoked" following noise complaints have been disputed by council officers.**

City officials said the Central Bar was ordered to lower the volume of bands and artists rather than stop hosting live acts altogether, following several reported breaches of licence conditions including one involving a "loud" six piece band.

A notice appeared in the Leith Walk pub's window over the weekend which said all bands and karaoke were "cancelled" due to "persistent complaints from a resident".

A petition which has already gathered more than 2,500 signatures said the boozier's music licence "has been revoked" and is calling on the council to reinstate it for the community and "local musicians who rely on these venues for exposure and income".

However in an email to councillors, licensing standards officers said the premises was served with a notice reminding owners to ensure all amplified music was "inaudible in neighbouring residential premises".

They denied the bar was being forced to axe all live music and karaoke and said this was "a voluntary decision taken by either the premises or the licence holder following our visit," adding: "It was not a request or even a suggestion."

The email read: "I have hopped online after seeing the many social media posts alleging that Licensing Standards 'revoked Central Bar's music licence'."

It said the Central Bar was served with a compliance notice on Wednesday, 8 November "following a number of complaints from a local resident".

The email said seven recent noise level breaches were witnessed and documented by council officers, with the most recent at the start of this month when the venue "had a six piece band performing". It said a pub staff supervisor "acknowledged that she knew the band were loud and had asked them three times to lower the volume; however, hadn't followed through with this".

It added: "As with all visits the premises noise condition was clarified and on this occasion the premises were warned they may receive a compliance notice."

The notice said if owners failed to turn music down to a level that was "inaudible" to neighbours then a review of the premises licence could be held, which could result in the bar being told to cease all live music.

Edinburgh City Council and the Central Bar have been contacted for comment.

Leith Walk councillor Susan Rae, said she was "very concerned" to hear of the bar's decision to stop putting on live music but added it was essential residents "are able to get a decent night's sleep".

She said: "There are very few live music venues in Edinburgh, and they're a vital part of the city's cultural scene.

"We need to get the balance right between a thriving music scene on the one hand, and folk being able to get peace and quiet in their own home on the other. I've raised this issue

with my colleagues on Licensing Board to see what can be done here.”

by Donald Turvill Local Democracy Reporter

