

Pub ordered to keep noise down after residents complain about karaoke nights

An pub has been ordered to keep the noise down after neighbours complained its karaoke nights were too raucous.

Managers of Restalrig's Logan's Rest were hauled before the council's licensing board this week, just over a year after it re-opened, following a "catalogue" of incidents councillors were told often disturbed residents.

After getting an initial warning to turn the music down earlier this year complaints have persisted, despite efforts to reduce the impact on those living next door, the meeting heard.

Now they have been told to install a noise limiter on any sound system being used in a bid to ease tensions.

One neighbour, Thomachan Dominic, told the Local Democracy Reporting Service he was preparing to move flat as he's bothered by "loud voices and loud music" coming from the pub on most days.

"I'm living on the second floor but I can hear it," he said. "I'm relocating this weekend, because my wife is carrying and it is very difficult, I am a little bit afraid. We are working daytime, after work we need to sleep and during the night time if we hear loud music how can we sleep?"

Manager Jane Scally said after being served with a compliance notice she had a sound check carried out professionally to ensure music and karaoke did not reach excessive levels. She said she also moved the pub's speakers and ensured only staff members could control the volume in a further attempt to reduce any disturbance.

"I don't want to disturb the neighbours," she told the licensing board in a previous hearing held in February. "I want to run a local pub and be part of the community. So I'm hoping for a good solution. I want to help and I do want to get it sorted. I still want music to be a big part of it but I do want to get it to a level that is acceptable."

She added the place would be "completely empty" on the weekends if there was no entertainment on.

Licensing officers said there had been "complaints from 12 residential properties" and that one resident estimated there had been "at least" 57 occasions in the last year when the noise condition attached to the pub's licence had been breached.

However they added: "Although licensing standards officers cannot substantiate these claims due to not being called out to witness all these outbreaks, the board may wish to consider what has been reported by residents.

"I do appreciate that there was a quiet period between March and June when we didn't receive anything."

Use of a microphone for karaoke and live music was "judged to be the main source of disturbance," they said, telling the board they "may wish to consider if the premises is a suitable venue for amplified music and vocals".

But a lawyer representing Logan's Rest questioned the validity of the figures quoted by officials.

Alistair Macdonald said: "There's been allegations by neighbours of noise complaints and they may well be well founded, by they were not made at the time and therefore my client was not really able to deal with these at the time.

"Sometimes there's been concerns expressed that people on the other side of the bar can hear, so now the speakers have been spread so everybody should be able to hear without the music being turned up to the higher level."

He said the events were "important to the bar," adding: "The operation couldn't really exist without it.

"I don't think background music is an issue, it is live music and DJs and karaoke. It is felt these can be controlled."

Ms Scally said she also wrote to all 12 neighbouring residents but "never got one reply".

Councillor Pauline Flannery said: "When you look at the catalogue, and it does read like a catalogue, it isn't just around one resident or a handful – it's a persistent problem."

Councillor David Key said he could "feel it in my bones" pub staff were "trying to resolve this the best they can".

Licensing board chair Louise Young said: "I can see that they are trying. I think there has been perhaps a history of not enough proactivity to resolve it. But I do see efforts being made here.

"I do think we need something that limits the sound in the premises, that gives the licence holder and manager the reassurance of knowing that bar is there."

Logan's Rest on Restalrig Road South – formerly called Bunch O Roses – was sold in 2022 and closed for a year for a refurbishment. It re-opened last August under the new management of Ms Scally, who wanted to ensure the community still had a meeting point.

Speaking to Edinburgh Live last year as it opened its doors again, she said: "Obviously, these are tricky times but I'm really excited about this new adventure. I want to attract everyone, I don't want this place to just be an old man's pub.

"I think it can be somewhere the girls come for a drink in the afternoon. Somewhere that youngsters can come for a few before they head into the town. I want it to be at the heart of the community."

By Donald Turvill Local Democracy Reporter