

Full Members Meeting Monday 19th March 2018, 7.30pm Upstairs at the Kensington Arms

MINUTES (Excerpt)

6. Student Noise & Parties

Long and heated discussion about student noise and large parties.

Andrew Waller talked through large parties at 100 Hampton and 28 Collingwood and his leaflets to local residents. He explained his plans for a website for residents to log and communicate around the issue. Uni rules are parties must stop at 10pm midweek and midnight at weekends. There is complaints procedure but 100 Hampton reported in October and repeated in March and showed no sign of being bothered about sanctions.

Other residents added their stories of noisy parties.

Themes were large parties with bouncers, professional sound systems. Parties going on until morning. Bad behaviour - shouting, abusive, ignoring residents request, littering, smashing bottles, urinating in gardens/bins, tipping rubbish on cars, tipping rubbish in residents gardens, vomiting, etc. Families with children and teenagers trying to study for exams.

Andrew had no response from 101police. Although others had a response if gathering in the street. Sgt Smart did come round on following day for 90 mins to see Andrew.

Residents urged to react to advance warning notes by students. Engaging with students about Uni rules and complaints procedures/sanctions.

Joni explained that BCC Noise Pollution Team can do pre-emptive noise abatement order with £5k fine if ignored.

Fiona has attended University Liaison Meeting but reported Vice-Chancellor was not interested stating that students had rights as residents and it was their own responsibility to about how they behaved. Fiona requested that University security attend incidents. Joni explained they had no jurisdiction off estate. Andrew requested that they did not need to take action, only inform the students they were logging the incident and would report it for the complaints procedure. They could come back in 30 mins and if no change inform students they we would report escalation to the next level in the procedure.

Resident had written to local MP Thangham Debbonaire. She provided copy of the response to Di. Professionalisation of the parties was the biggest change recently. Bouncers, sound systems, hay bales for students to sit on in the street. Joni said they were trying to identify who was sponsoring/organising these events but with no success.

Andrew advised informing the landlords as in 28 Collingwood Road landlord was local and not happy. Cllr Negus said in his experience most landlords not interested. Simply kept deposits to cover costs of damage. Raised that licensing condition for landlord was good neighbourliness but noted was difficult to enforce by council.

Councillors Negus and Lake asked how councils could help. Cllr Negus feedback that it was authorities who needed to take action - police, noise pollution and universities. He had tried to contact Vice Chancellor for meeting but not been successful. Cllr Negus committed to get more time in the next University Community Liaison Meeting to discuss noise and parties and asked Joni to organise this. He also committed to contact VC again to ask for a public meeting with residents. Cllr Lake committed to write to the Vice Chancellor.

Raised about involving press and media to get more attention and action from UoB, Council or Police.

Joni explained the complaints procedure and sanctions which had been set up with the UoB legal team. Could fine each student in house £100. Then up to £800. With meeting with Vice Chancellor last resort with meeting recorded on students reference check. View from members present that UoB procedure sanctions were not sufficient deterrent. Joni explained that £100 was a lot to some students and fines had to be across board - there was no means testing.

Joni could not divulge sanction for specific incidents. Stephen asked in general terms how many sanctions had been given in last year. Joni confirmed 146 in first term. Stephen asked how many had gone to £100 fine level, how many to £800 level and how many to VC meeting. Joni could not remember but said stats could be seen on UoB website.

Di indicated that she kept a records of all the emails she received from members about student parties/noise. She asked all residents to let her know of any incidents to keep a full picture of the issue.

Joni explained data suggested first years from one hall seemed to most end up in Chandos area. She planned to focus campaign for good citizenship in that hall for next year.

Andrew expressed that there was a risk of duplication, lack of coordination between various neighbourhood groups. He hoped his website would support this. Di offered to mention the website in the CNA newsletter, website and noticeboard.

Di thanked Joni for her work on student liaison. Joni stated that not all students were a problem it was a small minority.

Stephen Lewis
Secretary
21st March 2018