

WITNESS STATEMENT

Criminal Procedure Rules, r 27. 2; Criminal Justice Act 1967, s. 9; Magistrates' Courts Act 1980, s.5B

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Statement of: James Clarke

Age if under 18: over 18 (if over 18 insert 'over 18') Occupation: Police Officer

This statement (consisting of 2 page(s) each signed by me) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it anything which I know to be false, or do not believe to be true.

Witness Signature: James Clarke.....Date: 14/07/2022

This statement is written about the Vybz club at 1 Craven Park in Kilburn and the issues the Licensing police have found with this venue over the last few years.

I am a Police Sergeant and have been in the Metropolitan Police for 19 years. Since January 2021 I have been posted to the Licensing team in the North West Basic Command Unit. My role is to supervise the three licensing teams of which is one of them.

Recently I have been made aware of issues at this premises and that Brent Council were applying for a review. As a result I checked through police indices and have found 36 reports where Vybz is mentioned over the period of the last two years. Our system that records calls does not allow me to look through in detail these records prior to October 2020, there are 12 that I found. Some reports were not substantiated or not directly linked and I have not included these. The following crime reports and incidents of note and I have included a brief description:

- 1XXX/04jul22: Report of the venue being open when call came in at 0518 hours. Smell of drugs in area and cars revving in street.
191XXX/22: On 25/06/2022 report was made of an assault where two persons who had been in the venue had fought in the street where the victim was knocked unconscious. Victim was reported as drunk after being to the club.
191XXX/22: 28/05/2022 Person stabbed in the street following an argument that was suspected to have started in Vybz
0XXX/28may22: Call regarding noise coming from the club at 0315 hours
191XXX/22: 30/04/2022 victim assaulted by having glass thrown at them
1XXX/02apr22 and 1908663/22: Report of victim being assaulted by security staff at venue. Appears to have been the result of lawful ejection from the premises
190XXX/22 05/02/2022: Report of theft at the venue.
1XXX/29jan2022: Report of noise from the Vybz at 0434 hours
1XXX/23jan22: 0556 hours report of an argument between persons at the venue. No criminal allegations made.
0XXX/08jan22: call at 0305 hours that a customer had been ejected from the venue.
0XXX/02jan22: report at 0301 hours of noise and cannabis smell.
1XXX/02jan22: Reports from noise from area referred to as the 'lounge' area of Vybz.
193XXX/21: 19/11/2021 report of a burglary at the venue where there was no assistance given to officers in handing over CCTV.
192XXX/20: 30/08/2020 group loitering outside venue, one report for possession of cannabis.
192XXX/20: 15/08/2022 reports of a crime unrelated to the venue but does mention that it is open at 0400 hours.

As part of our role we follow a stepped approach to dealing with venues. At first we will look to intervene and contact the venue if there is an issue and there is an expectation that we will have a meaningful conversation with the owners or managers in order to deal with them.

Following some of the incidents above a member of our team, PC Gary Norton emailed the venue using the email address vybzbardon@gmail.com. From what I have seen the venue were replying to emails back in

Witness Signature: James Clarke PS 354NW.....

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2020 but has not done so since. One notable incident was when Vybz were emailed regarding an event on the 25<sup>th</sup> September 2021 where they a promoted event was suspected of taking place outside their licensed hours. They were asked to reply and for the CCTV to be supplied but never responded.

Another issue of concern is the lack of assistance given to officers investigating crime in and around Vybz nightclub:

- 193XXX/21: Burglary report. The victim has provided CCTV but cancelled the visit by officers looking for forensic evidence. The officers has then left voicemails and written a letter to the venue, all with no response.
- 190XXX/22: Two messages left by the investigating officer on voicemail regarding CCTV for a theft allegation. No response from anyone at Vybz.
- 191XXX/22: Message left by officer regarding CCTV. No response from the venue is recorded.

From the information I have found it appears that the venue is operating outside of it licensable hours and needs to be managed in a more responsible manner. The venues staff do not appear to respond to emails or phone calls recently and there appears to be no effort made to have a good relationship with police. After all the calls and emails, these appear to be missed opportunities to work with us. If so we could offer advice and even training that would help them be a safer place for customers and staff. I would still be willing to do so and would encourage the owners and staff to make contact in order to work together in future.

I would also like to give notice that I may submit further supplementary information before the date of the hearing.

Witness Signature: ....James Clarke PS 354NW.....

Signature Witnessed by Signature:.....