

Drugs, a rape, a murder threat and a reveller trespassing onto airport runway... but 'rave hotel' looks set to keep licence



The Skylark Hotel

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A HOTEL looks set to hold on to its licence despite reports of drugs, a rape, a murder threat and a reveller climbing the fence to [Southend Airport](#).

Police called for a review of the licence of the Skylark Hotel, in Aviation Way, near Southend Airport, after a catalogue of incidents at raves and underage parties held there.

But owner Andreas Stavrinides and the force's licensing officer thrashed out a new set of licensing conditions during five hours of talks on Wednesday.

[Rochford](#) District Council, whose authority the venue comes under, will decide whether the hotel can keep the licence on Wednesday, October 29.

Mr Stavrinides, 64, who also owns four care homes in the area, said: "We are pleased we have come to an agreement with the police, who are the applicant for the review.

“No one from environmental health or residents raised concerns.

“We believe we have now addressed, through discussion, any matters arising and look forward to the council’s approval, so we can promote the licensing objectives.”

The council refused to reveal details of the conditions the two parties had agreed behind closed doors, despite the licensing hearing being held in public.

But the Echo understands the licence will be replaced by four separate licences for the hotel, its function rooms, its nightclub, Zero 6, and events held in marquees on the site.

They will also offer a “drugs safe”, where confiscated narcotics and weapons can be kept.

Police applied for a licensing review for the third time since January 2013.

Licensing officer Steven Greener reported a number of teenagers were arrested or taken to hospital, after drinking at a private party there in February.

But he said the final straw came during a rave called “Siesta” in July when police had to escort one of the DJs out, after receiving reports he would be shot dead over a debt.

During the night, a girl, believed to be in her twenties, was reportedly raped on stage, while a reveller tried to climb the perimeter fence of nearby Southend Airport and lights from the event disrupted flights.

Insp Jeff Appleby, of Rochford police, said: “I’m happy it has been resolved, subject to agreement.

“They have fulfilled the things I need as a police inspector for public safety.

“I’m happy if they are applied.”