

1443 Police in Union House Passed 21 November 2013

Proposer: Bintu Foday (Community & Student Rights Officer)

Union Notes:

- 1) That this is already a policy and that the below is an update to the emergency motion passed on 24/11/2011.
- 2) That on the afternoon of 5th November 2013, a security guard, bringing with him two uniformed police officers, entered Union House to quiz students, part time officers and Sabbatical officers about their involvement in a peaceful protest that took place on campus earlier that day;
- 3) That the two police officers stood in front of the Student Officer Centre, which a number of students said they found intimidating and off-putting;
- 4) That the police officers and security guard did not ask the permission of Sabbatical officers or the Chief Executive before entering the building; 5) That such issues of consent before entering, alongside quizzing of students on campus and at home, have occurred in the past few years with regularity; 6) That according to licensing laws, the police may enter any licensed premises where they suspect a crime may have taken place;
- 7) Other student unions (including many London campuses) have policy which states that the police can only enter union premises via appointment or explicit invitation;
- 8) That the Union of UEA students collects the details of students which it takes on protests;
- 9) That the police may request this information after protests, even if students have broken no law.

Union Believes:

- 1) That the union is an autonomous organisation of students for students;
- 2) That any queries the police have with regards to union policy or events should go formally go through either the Chief Executive or the Sabbatical officers; 3) That is unacceptable for the police to turn up at student's homes and question them about union policy or events;
- 4) That the union protects the right of each and every individual student to engage in peaceful protest activity free from fear of victimisation and harassment; 5) That students should be able to go on protests without fear that their personal information will be given to the police.

Union Resolves:

- 1) To refuse police officers access to union house if they do not have the explicit agreement or invitation of the Sabbatical officers. Entry to licensed premises should be permitted as subject to the requirements of the law, pending permission from the acting duty manager in each specific instance.
- 2) To write a formal letter to the Norfolk Constabulary to ask that in future requests for information are dealt with through the union as outlined above, as opposed to visiting specific students at home or on campus, and that police officers wait for the consent of Sabbatical officers before entering Union House, unless they suspect a crime is or has been taking place.

3) To refuse to give student information to the police where doing so may result in prosecution of a student unless legally required.