

Officer, Amarjit Basi, who is behind the proposed changes. The students lined the entire pavement in front of the building and waved banners proclaiming "No Change Needed", "College not business", "We aren't ca\$h cows!" and "Excellence, Employability, Entrepreneurship. Where's Education?"

Principal, Amarjit Basi, came out to speak to the protesters soon after 9am but looked very uncomfortable as anger about his alleged lack of engagement with students was voiced. "You've totally ignored us, you've gone behind our back, and you've left it till the last minute to let anyone know", a student challenging him to loud applause, "I do not want to be at a college that doesn't listen to me." Students claimed that staff had been threatened with disciplinary procedures if they supported the protests. One student told Basi "You've blackmailed them because they can't support us."

Apparently, many students who rely on the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) had had to cross the picket line otherwise their payments for the week would have been voided. Otherwise the picket might have been much bigger.

Staff gave applause to the students (and were applauded in turn) and brought out solidarity drinks and food for the students including several pizzas, a tray of flapjacks and packets of ice lollies! Lots of cars and vans going down Chaucer Street gave honks of support.

At one point a passing police car pulled over and an officer came over to see what was going on, had a bit of a chat with some of the senior managers and obviously decided it didn't merit any further attention so headed off.

I spoke with one of the students about the protest and he told me that "We tried to put our point of view across [about the changes] but we haven't been listened to whatsoever. So what we're trying to do today is prove our point, to show that we aren't just people who are going to take whatever they throw at us. We're going to stand up for what we believe in and we've got a very good point of view and we should be listened to. That's what we're trying to do today, to get our voice heard and to get involved in the decision making process".

He mentioned that the Principal has infrequently come in to speak to vocal students

individually, in small rooms, in what he saw as an attempt to silence dissent. "If you try and communicate with him he just cuts you up and carries on". They have attempted dialogue in the form of a letter to the Principal as well but felt that it was ignored.

"We have made it very clear to [the management] that we are prepared to take further action if we aren't listened to", he continued, "and if in the future we aren't involved in the decision making process. We want to rectify a fundamentally flawed system and get involved." The College's communication had "not been open and honest" and had been limited to meetings announced only an hour or so before they were due to begin. He speculated that next time they take action they could have the support of a whole new year's intake of students who have not been told about the changes that will be in place by the time they start.

~ The ~ FOREST FIELDS FIRE

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Workfare Ain't Fair

Bowing to public pressure, Holland and Barratt have pulled out of the government's workfare scheme, and now seem only able to afford to offer apprenticeships that pay £2.60 per hour. What they forgot to mention was that whilst using 1,000 unpaid jobseekers over the last year throughout its 250 stores, Holland and Barrett unexpectedly made a pre-tax profit surge of 19.4% to £60m.

Poundland, who are still in the scheme, have recently announced that profits are up 27% this year. The question is, with a potential workfare workforce of 2.6 million unemployed rising, and tens of thousands of people already sent to work without pay, how many millions of pounds are all the other organisations profiting from workfare making?

Other companies still in-

involved include Barclays Bank, The AA, The Big Bargain company, RSPCA, Travis Perkins, Butlins, Harvester, Grosvenor Casinos, Wetherspoons, Age Concern, Age UK, Argos, Asda, Barnardos, B&Q, British Heart Foundation, Cancer Research, Holidayjust 5 Inn, Greggs the Bakers, Hilton Hotels, Marriot Hotels, McDonald's, PDSA, Pizza Hut, Poundland, Poundstretcher, Primark, The Range, RSPCA, Salvation Army, Shoe Zone, Sue Ryder, Superdrug, Tesco, WHSmith, Wilkinsons, The Works.

The Arcadia Group is also involved. It includes Burton, Dorothy Perkins, Evans, Topman, Topshop, Wallis.

Here are some new statistics that show how badly the Workfare programme works, 25% of the people placed on workfare no longer sign on, this doesn't mean that they have work they may have found another way to financially survive, they may have become so frustrated with the scheme that they've given up, they may have found

work elsewhere. Even if they have found work through workfare compare that 25% to the 28% of people who have found work despite not being sent on any work programme. Also, A4e one of the administrators and beneficiaries of workfare have a target of getting 5% of people who they put into workfare actual jobs, a target of just 5% and what have they achieved a mere 3%. A4e get paid by the government by claiming for each person who signs up with them, but 10% of these have been rejected for fraud. If you couple this with the fact that last year the chair of A4e was paid 8.6 million pounds, and it's pretty clear who the real winners of workfare are.

Racist Stop And Searches

Nottinghamshire police have been accused of "blatant racism" over their use of stop and search powers. A new report shows that, while the number of searches has

almost halved, black people are still nine times more likely to be stopped than white people.

The force called this "unacceptable" and said officers would get more training but denied they were racist. Anti-crime campaigner Hyacinth Francis said current rules on recording searches were not being followed.

Report author, Det Ch Supt Ian Waterfield, said that of 2,500 stop and searches in 2011/12, 480 were conducted on black people and 259 on Asians. As black people are a far smaller percentage of the population, this means individually they are far more likely to be affected. Det Ch Supt Waterfield said: "We identified that disproportionality rates in Nottinghamshire are unacceptably high and have been stubbornly high for some time."

Arrest rates after stop and search have risen from 9.7% in 2009/10 to 12.3% in 2011/12 but Mr Waterfield admitted they were "nowhere near where we would want them to be."

Mrs Francis, founder of an organisation called Mothers Against Crime, said searches were not conducted fairly or

recorded properly. She added: "It is blatant racism, they are just being targeted. There is no relationship between the police and the young black kids and you can see why." (Black youths) think 'If they see us they are going to stop us'. If they go to the local shop and see the police, they turn around, which gets them stopped."

Unemployed Workers Club

For those of us who are currently unemployed to come and meet to share experiences and advice of dealing with the Job Centre, Work Programme Providers and Job Agencies. Come to 245 Gladstone street between 6pm and 9pm on the 24th and 31st of July, 14th and 21st of August and the 4th and 18th September to meet others in a similar situation.

Kids Street Play

Autonomous Nottingham's Cedar Road street play sessions start again on the 19th of July, it's starts at 5pm and finishes at 7pm. Everyone is welcome to come along, we'll be playing games, doing arts and craft and generally hav-

ing a bit of fun.

Sex offences by Police Officers

The Guardian newspaper recently published an article highlighting the extent of sexual abuse committed by police officers and PC-SOs. Recent research suggests that the problem "more widespread than previously believed" and that the police are using their position of authority and access to records to target victims of crime to commit rape and sexual assault. The report highlights a number of cases within Nottinghamshire.

According to the article: "Police officers have been convicted or disciplined for a range of offences from rape and sexual assault to misconduct in public office relating to inappropriate sexual behaviour with vulnerable women they have met on duty. Others are awaiting trial for alleged offences, though many are never charged with a criminal offence and are dealt with via internal disciplinary procedures."

It seems that abuse of power for sex is rife within the police force and that the per-

petrators are protected by a culture of silence and lenient "internal disciplinary procedures" rather than criminal prosecution and expulsion from the force.

It is predominantly women who are targeted by these rapists, but also children of both sexes and in particular, vulnerable victims of crime.

Interestingly the report found evidence of "A tendency for women who complain they have been sexually attacked by a policeman not to be believed" and "A pervasive culture of sexism within the police service, which some claim allows abusive behaviour to go unchecked." In other words, the police have a tendency to see things from the perpetrator's viewpoint rather than the survivor's. Claire Phillipson of Wearside Women in Need goes further:

"What you have here is the untouched tip of an iceberg in terms of sexually questionable behaviour and attitudes. The police service, in my experience, has an incredibly macho culture and women are seen as sexual objects."

In "one of the worst cases in the past four years", Detective Sergeant Trevor Gray

of Nottinghamshire Police broke into the house of a woman and raped her whilst her child slept in the house. He was jailed for 8 years last month. Some of you may also remember Inspector Russell Dew, who was jailed for 6 years in December 2011 for sexually touching a 13 year old girl. PC Darren Lawson, who was found guilty of sexually assaulting children, was also a Nottinghamshire copper. These are just the cases that made it to court. It seems highly likely, given the lack of accountability and the culture of patriarchy and silence within the police force that many other offenders have got away with it.

Nottinghamshire, in particular, seems to have lax disciplinary procedures, to the extent that Police Federation spokesman, Steve Evans has said "I know which forces I'd rather be in if I was in trouble. What is gross misconduct, and therefore a sacking offence in Derby might be simple misconduct in Nottingham."

The fact of the matter is that no kind of reform will stop this disgusting behaviour. The police have been given a huge amount of power over members of the public, especially the vulnerable, and

will always be tempted to use it for their own ends. They will always be hugely loyal to their own and seek to use their own privilege to protect one another. Whilst this hierarchy of a highly armed and legally empowered police force lording it over the rest of us continues, sexual and other kinds of abuse are bound to continue, largely uncovered.

New College Students Strike

Over 100 students refused to go to lessons and staged a protest outside the New College Nottingham High Pavement campus this morning. Students are angry about plans to concentrate students at the campus and radically alter student timetables next academic year, as well as claiming that they have been excluded from the decision making process.

The protest started before 9am and was enthusiastically supported by staff, who were unable to strike but made their appreciation clear. Students were vocal with chants of "Give staff a voice!" and "No more Amarjit!" in reference to the college's Principal and Chief Executive