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11 November 2010

**Tom Silvani**  
Democratic Support Officer  
Lancaster City Council  
Town Hall  
Dalton Square  
Lancaster  
LA1 1PJ

Dear Tom,

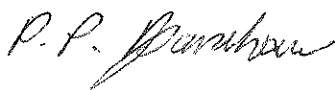
**RE: Lancaster City Council Universities Cabinet Liaison Group**

Thank you for your letter of 28 October 2010 re: the above.

My view is that while it was a good idea to establish the group at the time, it has not in practice had a clear role and purpose. The fact that it has not met for a year tends to support this view.

Since its establishment we have formed other links with the council and are involved in other groups such as the community leaders' forum. Given this, while Cumbria of course would be willing to contribute if that is the prevailing view, we would not advocate continuation of this group.

Yours sincerely



**Neil Harris**  
Registrar and University Secretary  
University of Cumbria

SEC/2010/2/1267

LANCASTER  
UNIVERSITY

Secretary of the University



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Mr T Silvani  
Democratic Support Officer  
Lancaster City Council  
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LANCASTER  
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Dear Mr Silvani

Lancaster City Council Universities Cabinet Liaison Group

Thank you for your letter of 28 October 2010 about the future of this Group. While there was a need for the Group a few years ago, I do not believe that need still exists and the value of the Group is therefore limited. Both the universities have good officer to officer relations with the City Council and with each other, and I believe it is a more effective use of time and effort to maintain and develop those, rather than spend time in committee. (This is a principle that Lancaster University has adopted internally, and has seen a modest reduction in the number of committees.) In addition, the City Council has kindly invited us to join bodies where you feel we can add value.

If there are particular issues which need to be addressed, it may be better to establish specific, and tightly defined, project groups to resolve issues, which are laid down on completion of their tasks.

I hope that this is helpful, and look forward to hearing the outcome.

Yours sincerely

Universities CLG

Phone call from Peter Elliot, Lancaster Student Union

The group has met so infrequently that it has lost its purpose. Either it needs to meet more with a clearer purpose or it shouldn't bother. It hasn't worked well for around 3 years. When it worked well it was chaired by Ian Barker, The Leader of the Council, who prioritised the group. To work well it needs to be prioritised by senior people at both the Universities and the Council. If the University and Council leadership both think there is a clear purpose for the group then please continue it otherwise it should be put out of its misery! There are big issues to be discussed – the Universities are major employers in the district. However the big issues are not discussed at the CLG meetings. They talk about Carnage if there has been one recently but they don't touch the big issues (housing, for example) because there aren't the senior people from both the Council and the University to discuss those issues.

The Student Union has links with people in Planning, Licensing, Housing, and ward councillors, so they do have contacts with people at the City Council. For example in a conversation with Planning, they discussed the policies for student housing, which seem out of date. So there does need to be a conversation between the University and the City, on issues such as housing for example, but it needs to be between the right (senior) people.