

Mr. Leighton Andrews
Minister for Education and Skills
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

15 October 2012

Dear Mr Andrews,

I am writing to you in response to a radio interview given to BBC Wales on 11 October by the Chair of Governors of Cardiff Metropolitan University. In it, she claimed that Owen Evans and I threatened CMU with suffering "a thousand cuts", during a meeting with her and the Vice-Chancellor of CMU.

I would like to make it absolutely clear that at no point in that meeting did Owen Evans or I threaten CMU in any way: we certainly did not threaten them with a thousand cuts. The meeting, which lasted for an hour and a half, was spent scoping out the options for CMU, in the context of the proposal for a three-way merger between CMU, Newport and Glamorgan. The meeting discussed a range of options, and, at a couple of points, I felt that CMU might well accept such a merger: indeed, Owen Evans and I left the meeting for 15 minutes while the Chair and VC considered our proposal for a three-way merger. Of course, they did not accept that proposal but I hope that indicates that this was a meeting that discussed a range of options in a mutually respectful and considered way.

I hope this clarifies the situation. I am afraid that the Chair's comments are simply wrong. It was not that kind of meeting and no such threat was made or implied.

Yours sincerely,

Steve Smith

Professor Sir Steve Smith
Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive