1) How much is it likely to cost to put life-size statues of the first two women mayors of Cambridge, Eva Hartree and Florence Ada Keynes on the two empty plinths outside The Guildhall?

The Executive Councillor for Streets and Open Spaces confirmed the following:

Thank you for your question. There are lots of factors to take into consideration when designing and commissioning a statue. It is therefore not possible to give a precise figure at this point.

Firstly, it would depend on the scope of the project. A scoping exercise would be needed to decide design constraints and implications for the budget set. There are large numbers of variables, not least the materials chosen. For example, a statue cast in aluminium would have a very different cost to once cast in bronze. If bronze was chosen, research would be needed into the current market price for this material, which changes frequently. An artist who had the skill and experience in this specialist area would also need to be found, and we would undoubtedly need to pay a significant amount for someone to work on such a visible and specialist project.

It should also be noted that when we say a sculpture should be life-size, this generally means the work should actually be scaled at one and a half times the actual scale of the person, for the human eye and brain to recognise it as life size.

Officers estimate that the recent sculpture of Millicent Garrett Fawcett in Parliament Square would have cost at least £300,000 for the artwork delivery alone, excluding the plinth design and other landscaping.

However, the plinths are actually not empty but already have sculptures on them. These were part of the original Guildhall design and are integral to it. The Guildhall, including these plinths and sculptures, are listed. Whilst I would not wish to pre-empt the independent decisions made during the planning process, getting permission for the removal of these sculptures, or for an additional statue on top, would be very challenging.

2) Have any further estimates been made on the cost of repairing the old organ in the Large Hall of the Guildhall?

The Executive Councillor for Finance and Resources confirmed the following:

The Council hasn't obtained any recent quotations to repair the organ in the Large Hall but it was suggested in 2015 that the cost of refurbishment could be as much as £500,000, based on the cost at that time of a refurbishment of an organ in Colchester.

3) Did staff manage to locate the original painting of John Belcher's design of a new guildhall front for Sir Horace Darwin when he was Mayor in 1896/97.

The Executive Councillor for Streets and Open Spaces confirmed the following:

The relevant officer and the Building Management Team have searched the Guildhall and have been unable to locate the painting.