

Public Question by Mr Antony Carpen – presented to the Assets & Procurement Committee, 28/11/23

Re my public question under the previous administration of 17 October 2017

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tetzbaAH84>) please could I urge the council to pause any existing actions until after the next general election, when a new government may wish to take a very different view on the finances of local government across England, and also may wish to take a different view on heritage assets from the current incumbents in Whitehall.

As the video shows, the then Cllr Raynes promised that my suggestion regarding the use of part of the site for an expanded Museum of Cambridge would be considered. Yet there is *nothing* in the meeting papers that demonstrates that such a consideration was made by either the current or the previous administration. Please could ask the Council to request that Officers go back and undertake an assessment of a potential heritage attraction, involving a comprehensive consultation with the extensive local history communities, young people, and potential corporate and personal philanthropists who may be willing to support such a project as part of the re-use.

Furthermore, you should have received notice from the Chief Executive of Cambridge City Council of the motion passed at their full council on Thurs 19 Oct 2023 (See printed minutes at <https://democracy.cambridge.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=116&Mid=4259>)

"Council renews its call on asks the Leader and Chief Executive to participate in initiate discussions with other Authorities in the region and then central Government to identify options for a less fragmented and more cohesive model of Government for Cambridge, that best serves the needs of its residents. These discussions should involve and engage with the people of the city in a meaningful way, thereby recognising the need for our governance structures to reflect the wishes of the people we serve."

Again I urge the County Council to pause on any further negotiations until there is greater clarity for any moves towards a Unitary Council set up for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, should a future Cambridgeshire Unitary Council wish to base itself back at the old Shire Hall.