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Runnymede Borough Council

Community Services Committee

Thursday, 14 March 2024 at 7.30 pm

Members of the	Councillors C Howorth (Chair), A Berardi, M Harnden, A King, C Mann,
Committee present:	J Mavi, M Smith, S Walsh and J Wilson (in place of S Lewis (Vice-Chair)).
Members of the	Councillor M Darby

Committee absent:

68 Notification of Changes to Committee Membership

To record that Councillor Jon Wilson substituted for Councillor Scott Lewis.

69 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 4 January 2024 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

70 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Max Darby.

71 **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Abby King declared an Other Registerable Interest in the item on awarding funding from the S106 Englefield Green Major Projects Fund to, amongst others, the Journey Church of which she was a member. Councillor King abstained from voting on the recommendation that concerned the Journey Church.

72 **Period Poverty**

The Committee noted an update on the project to tackle period poverty, initiated by Councillor Abby King and taken forward by Officers in Community Services, to whom thanks were extended by the Chair.

Officers confirmed that with the benefit of a waiver from the relevant contract standing orders, the Council was entering into a partnership with a social enterprise organisation called 'Hey Girls' to provide goods and services free to people facing period poverty. Hey Girls was considered to be the most suitable in terms of cost, experience of working with local government, maximising social value and environmental impact. Products and information would be available at 19 venues across the borough.

The Council's Communications Team would also be involved in promoting and raising the profile of the project which was aligned with the Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy as well as supporting sustainability and equalities as demonstrated by the full equalities impact assessment which was presented to the Committee.

The Committee noted that as agreed previously there was £24,000 available across the next three years. Officers in Community Services would be monitoring the project's success and building up an evidence base with the intention to secure future funding which Members agreed was an exciting and worthwhile project.

73 S106 Englefield Green Minor and Major Projects Fund

The Committee's approval was sought to award, ringfence and reject funding to a number of organisations that had applied to the Section 106 Englefield Green Minor and Major Project Funds.

Members recalled that sums derived in connection with the development of the Runnymede campus at Coopers Hill Lane in Englefield Green (planning ref: RU.17/1649) consisted of the following schemes and values:

Community Support Facilities	£400,000
Minor Projects Contribution	£85,253
Cycle Lane Link	£100,000
Real time Bus Information	£15,000
Yellow Bus Scheme	£79,905
Monitoring Fee	£10,000
Travel Plan Audit	£6,125
Travel Vouchers	£100 for each open market or affordable
	housing unit

The Committee had previously approved funding totalling £48,901 to 8 organisations leaving a remaining balance against the minor projects contribution of £36,352.

Members discussed the findings of the Councillor/Officer panels that had met to determine which projects should be supported and agreed that the application submitted by St Jude's Church for £3,500 for church lighting be approved. It was agreed that an application from Browns Community Services be rejected because the application lacked detail on project partners and previous successes. It was also agreed to ringfence an amount of £5,000 FOR Coopers Hill Tennis Club, pending some further project details being received.

Officers in Community Services confirmed that the funding allocated to a bike ramp at Kings Lane had been returned to the funding pot, making a total of £349,288 from which to award funding, and the remaining balance in the Major Projects Fund once recommended grants had been approved would be £51,487. Officers were keen to resume dialogue with the Egham Hollowegians Rugby Club and mindful of assistance that would be needed from colleagues in different business centres to come to a resolution on various matters.

In terms of Major Projects, the Committee noted that although they supported funding a replacement play area on Englefield Green in the sum of £35,899, this was subject to the approval of the Englefield Green Committee, both to determine whether to replace the play equipment and if so, how to fund it.

Members agreed with the Panel to reject the Council's application in respect of the Cherrywood playground and to ringfence funding for The Village Centre (£29,940), pending their submission of more information, including three quotes for the kitchen refurbishment and to delegate a decision on this to the Corporate Head of Community Services and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee.

In respect of the Journey Church it was also considered sensible to ringfence a sum up to a maximum of £200,000 for 18 months because this was a large financial commitment which required a further report to the Committee to determine whether the application should be supported. The Committee also agreed to ringfence a sum of £31,962 for the Council's Kings Lane Community Garden and to review this in 12 months' time. Officers assured the Committee that by ringfencing these three projects there was sufficient time to allocate funds before the expiry of the S106 pot which would only happen after 7 years from when the last unit was let.

Officers in Community Services were asked to liaise with colleagues in Planning concerning the input of the National Trust in progressing the Coopers Hill bicycle route. Members were keen that this was followed up given the speed of traffic in the area.

Resolved that -

- i) the recommended successful applications to the s106 Minor and Major Projects Fund be approved, noting that a replacement play area at The Green on Englefield Green and how that is funded is subject to the approval of the Englefield Green Committee;
- ii) Members agree to ringfence the requested amount relating to the Village Centre and Runnymede Borough Council applications, where further discussion or information is required, and that the decision to award a grant be delegated to the Corporate Head of Community Services, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of Community Services Committee; and
- iii) Members agree to ringfence the requested amount relating to the application by Journey Church, for a period of 18 months and final approval and award of any grant sum to Journey Church is subject to a further report to Members, where project detail, mirroring the requirements of Your Fund Surrey, is to be presented, to enable Members of Community Services Committee to make a final decision to make a grant award

74 Youth Development Fund Update

The Committee's approval was sought for a set of recommendations on funding applications to the Youth Development Fund for 2024/25 and reflecting on projects supported in 2023/24 totalling £215,000.

Members highlighted a number of projects from 2023/24, including the ACE Youth Project, self defence classes and Sportability.

A panel had met to discuss the applications and suggest which projects should be supported from the allocation of £168,000 in the 2024/25 budget. There were 15 projects it was agreed to fund plus a contingency fund. Some of these were a continuation of projects from 2023/24. However, there were some new projects including a Runnymede Sport Festival, Girls' Football, Nature Makers classes and Climate Change Awareness in schools. Officers in Community Services confirmed that a report would be submitted to the meeting of the Committee in March 2025 on the funded projects in 2024/25.

Approval was also given to delegate authority to the Corporate Head of Community Services in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee to award a ringfenced grant in the sum of £5,000 to Egham Cricket Club once some outstanding issues had been resolved.

Members were also keen to promote Mental Health Support for all ages and sought opportunities to do this with Health partners who could access a Mental Health Innovation fund. Some Members also expressed a wish to become more involved with youth mental health initiatives and Officers would explore this.

Thanks were extended to Officers across Community Services for their contribution.

Resolved that –

i) The proposed expenditure plan, as set out in paragraph 2.3 of the report,

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for the Youth Development budget in 2024/2025, be approved; and

ii) Members approve the delegated authority to award a grant to Egham Cricket Club, following ongoing discussion and as outlined, to the Corporate Head of Community Services, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of Community Services Committee.

75 Community Services Service Area Plan Update Quarter 3 2023/24

The Committee noted the Quarter 3 update on the Community Services Area Plan for 2023/24.

Members' attention was drawn to the report's appendix which provided a summary of all work priorities within the service area plan, and showed that of the 32 objectives listed, 18 had been completed so far with 14 continuing to be in progress with an update given on each.

Officers advised that all the objectives within the Service Area Plan were underway with a number of objectives that were marked as completed in Quarter 3. For example implementation of the new Armed Forces Covenant, moving the Council's Safeguarding Policy into new 'business as usual' and achieving full GDPR compliance to work with Surrey Heartlands and Alliance partners. The Runnymede Health and Wellbeing Partnership would be launched in March 2024.

The main part of the report gave an overview of progress against the outstanding objectives. Of the 14 objectives that remained to be completed, Members were advised that a number of items were always intended to roll into the next municipal year. These included Chertsey Museum Digitisation, the Better Care Fund demonstrator wet room, digitalisation of the telecare services, and the Egham Hythe Centre Community Hub – viability work, as well as improvements to the play areas, Runnymede Pleasure grounds and the Community Safety Strategy. Therefore, focus was on 9 objectives that were aspired to be completed in 2023/24.

Members observed that Community Services had been tasked with the addition of the Citizens Panel as an objective. Work on this objective had moved forward and an update would be provided in due course. Officers confirmed that populating the panel would focus on participants with an interest in the various subjects rather than being service area experts.

The Committee duly noted the report and looked forward to progress reports in due course.

76 Community Services Quarter 3 2023/24 KPI Report

The Committee reviewed the Service Area Plan progress report and key performance indicators up to the end of Quarter 3 2023/24.

Members noted that as with other plans, a RAG system had been applied to easily identify current performance against targets. Officers reminded the Committee that not all KPIs were set targets at the start of the financial year, and that these KPIs were recorded and reported to show breadth of activity within the business unit. For example, Community Safety and Safer Runnymede.

The Committee was advised that the following were areas of improvement from Quarter 2 to Quarter 3, where a concern had previously been identified. Officers highlighted positive moves at Chertsey Museum, Meals at Home and Social Prescribing.

[After the meeting it was confirmed that the lift at Chertsey Museum was fully functional

again]

Officers reported that Social Prescribing operated at full capacity, however, the ability to accept referrals was in part impacted by the increasing complexity of cases and therefore the time taken to provide support to residents. Officers were asked to facilitate a mechanism to include a representative from Social Prescribing in East Berkshire on the Homesafe+ platform to be more inclusive for residents in Englefield Green. Officers also stated that some well-being activation measures were being looked at for Social Prescribing.

With regard to Homesafe Plus specific referrals regarding RBC were positive and generating an uptake in both free at point of access and paid for services of approximately 60%. However, it was agreed that changes to arrangements relating to employment of staff involved, the positions of boroughs in delivering services could be a reason for the overall reduction.

With reference to the Home Improvement Agency referrals number, Officers confirmed that the difference against the target was 1 referral, which given the Christmas period alone, could account for this. However, Members were reassured that there were some positive outcomes being reached through grant applications that would be shared in a future information report to the Committee to include some interesting case studies.

Officers had agreed to monitor usage of the Eileen Tozer Day Centre and explore further initiatives for further promotional activity. The number of visitors was also being monitored to assess if there was any unmet need or if lower returning numbers was to be expected. Officers commented on the tireless efforts of the small team running this service.

In noting the report the museum at Egham were congratulated for a recent Lottery Fund award which would help augment their staffing arrangements with a new part time curator.

Thanks were extended to all staff in the Community Services Business Unit for their continued efforts, commitment and dedication to the services provided.

77 Community Services 2024/25 Service Area Plan and Service KPIs

The Committee's approval was sought for the Community Services Area Plan for 2024/25 and relevant key performance indicators.

In accordance with the corporate business planning process, Officers provided detail with regard to the objectives proposed for the 2024/25 Community Services Service Area Plan.

Members noted a summary of the process and the considerations given in writing the service area plan for the forthcoming year.

Officers advised that owing to the Council's financial position no budgetary growth had been requested for 2024/25. Instead, the objectives and direction of Community Services was to maximise existing budgets and resources, and create efficiencies where possible.

Officers asserted however, that the Council's challenges had not impaired the ambition of the team, who through the Service Area Plan, showed their commitment and aspiration to making improvements and enhancements in communities and to the lives of individual residents.

The Committee noted that on average, Service Area Plans in other business centres had approximately 25 objectives for the year. However, the Community Servies Plan had 54 objectives, including those carried forward from the current municipal year.

It was agreed that the number not only reflected the ambition, but also the breadth of

services under the Community Services umbrella. However, Officers were keen to stress that it might not be possible to complete all 54 objectives in the year ahead, when considering day to day activity and service need, resources available and further priorities coming forward throughout the year. Where there were further objectives or work strands, consideration would have to be given to the impact of this on the service area plan as drafted.

Members noted that in the event that any of the objectives required investment of funding to achieve them, this would have to be provided from within service budgets, if possible, given the no growth position adopted by the Council.

Officers advised that the plan was in essence a two-tier approach; split into primary and secondary objectives, with the primary objectives being the minimum expectation for the year ahead, of which there were 22. The primary objectives could be considered the "must do" objectives for the year ahead, against which departmental and individual performance would be monitored.

Officers intended that in progress report to future meetings, the primary objectives would be reported on, as well as any secondary objectives where work had commenced.

The proposed service KPIs that would be reported to Community Services Committee in 2024/25 were also outlined in some detail. These largely mirrored those used for 2023/24, and targets/baselines would be set following the completion of Quarter 4.

Members commended the plan and were confident the business centre could rise to the challenge accordingly.

Resolved that:

- i) the 2024/25 Service Area Plan for Community Services, be approved; and
- ii) the 2024/25 Service Area Key Performance Indicators, be approved

78 Cabrera Trust Management Committee Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Management Committee held on 4 January 2024 were received and noted.

79 Exclusion of Press and Public

Resolved that -

the press and public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of the following report under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the report in question would be likely to involve disclosure exempt information of the description specified in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

80 Runnymede Pleasure Ground (RPG) Development Programme 2024

The Committee received a confidential report on progress with improvements to Runnymede Pleasure Grounds. Approval was sought to draw down a sum from the reserves to facilitate this.

Officers updated the Committee on a suite of proposed improvements to the Pleasure Grounds. These were to the water play facility which it was advised would require a significant outlay, the play area being organised by the Open Space and Community Development team and park infrastructure (toilets and pavilion), being lead by the Council's

Assets and Regeneration team. There were also plans to install a CCTV camera on site to improve management of the car park, deter anti-social behaviour and improve security and it was also considered necessary to effect repairs to the grassed car park.

Officers in Community Services agreed to confirm when the paddling pool in RPG would be opened in 2024.

The Committee sitting as trustees of the Pleasure Grounds acknowledged that the sum being requested represented a significant part of the reserves. However, there was an ambition to make the Pleasure Grounds the best they could be to attract visitors to enjoy the facilities and the continued open and natural aspect of the site, positioned as it was beside The River Thames. If approved the Trust's reserves would stand at approximately £135,000 of which £52,000 was set aside. Officers in Financial Services were asked to provide a breakdown of the sum set aside between monies set aside for future flooding costs and insurance and maintenance of the statue of Queen Elizabeth II. Officers in Financial Services were also asked to confirm whether the outstanding payment from Magna Carta Legacy Limited had been received, and if not, what the most economical resolution was to the matter in liaison with colleagues in Legal.

It was anticipated that once the improvements had been made, more visitors would bring additional car parking income to offset the outlay. Officers in Community Services would bring a progress report on the tendering exercises to a future meeting of the Committee.

Officers in Community Services were asked to check whether S106 monies could be used to improve pedestrian access to RPG and discuss with colleagues in Economic Development whether there were opportunities to include this in discussions with the Egham Town Team, Surrey County Council and the National Trust.

Resolved that -

The RPG Development programme for the 2024 financial year, be approved, to include approval to utilise the sum as reported of the Trust's reserves for works identified in the report

Appendix A Cabrera Trust Management Committee Minutes 04.01.2024

(The meeting ended at 9.14 pm.)

Chair

Runnymede Borough Council

Cabrera Trust Management Committee

Thursday, 4 January 2024 at 2.30 pm

Members of the Councillors C Howorth (Chair), J Hulley (Vice-Chair), Dr P Beesley, P Grobien and M Owen.

Members of the Councillor D Coen. Committee absent:

9 Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting held on Thursday 13th July 2023 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

10 Apologies for Absence

Apologies of absence were received from Councillor D Coen.

11 Actions taken since the AGM

Prior to the discussion on the actions taken since the AGM. It was confirmed that the Friends of Cabrera Trust Woods were responsible for fundraising only. The volunteer group undertook the work on the site.

The Committee received a schedule of works recommended over a five year period. Officers would liaise with the Council's communication department to see what links could be made with local businesses in due course. The majority of the work could be undertaken by the volunteer group with the exception of 3 tasks which would need to be done by external contractors.

Officers confirmed that the play area in Cabrera Avenue also belonged to the Trust and therefore maintenance and any future replacement play equipment would need to be funded by the Trust. The Committee discussed the possibility of the Council purchasing the play area. Officers were asked to consult with legal/assets in this regard as it was felt that this was a drain on the trust's resources.

It was noted that more funding avenues would be available to the Trust for play area improvements than would be available to Council.

Officers highlighted to the Committee that due to the Council's own financial situation purchase of the play area by them may not be possible at this time.

Action: Paul French to in consultation with Legal/Assets Team review the Trust documentation and bring a report on the possibly of the Trust selling the playground to the Council to the next Committee meeting in July.

12 Actions taken since the last meeting in July 2023

Pond

Councillor Howorth confirmed that planning enforcement had advised him that their action relating to the pond had been concluded.

Incursions and depositing of Green Waste

A survey had been carried out and two properties were encroaching onto Trust land. Officers confirmed that due to a change in personal and a major reorganisation to the Green Spaces team no letters had been sent to the residents to date. The Committee asked Officers to expedite the sending of the letters, after consultation with legal officers to agree content. Officers to copy in all Wardens and Trustees for information.

The Committee requested that whilst not so urgent letters should also be sent to those depositing green waste and the potential incursions followed up in conjunction with the Wardens. Officers to copy in all Wardens and Trustees for information.

It was noted that boundary inspections should be carried out at least on a decadal basis. This would give the Committee time to enforce any encroachments before 10 years had lapsed.

Winter inspection of the river

As agreed at the last meeting a water inspection of the river had recently been carried out. 3 blockages in the river were noted.

The Committee discussed the option of removing the blockages, but also noted that leaving the current blockages would stop flooding further down the river. It was also noted that flooding was good for biodiversity.

It was agreed that Council Officers with specialisms in this area would meet and report back to the Committee the risks involved in both suggested actions.

Action: Helen Wilson to write to residents who are encroaching on Trust land as a matter of urgency after consulting with legal officers regarding the content of the letters.

Helen Wilson to write to residents depositing green waste on Trust land and the potential incursions followed up in conjunction with the Wardens.

Matthew Godfrey (Parks and Arboriculture Manager), Prince Frank (Principal Engineer) and Andy Roy (Biodiversity Officer) to meet to discuss current river blockages and report back to the Committee risks for both options

13 Draft Annual Estimates

The Committee was asked to approve the draft estimates 2024/25 as submitted.

The estimates included the estimated cost of between \pounds 4,000 and \pounds 4,500 for essential tree works. The following report would detail the works.

The day-to-day running costs of the site remained relatively static year on year. Based on current estimates an additional £12,860 would be required to be drawn down from the Trusts investment holdings in 2024/25 to offset the costs of running and managing the site. If this practice continued into the future the Charifund investment would only last

another 7 years. Fundraising was therefore vital.

The Committee queried the substantial rise in costs associated with Legal and Administrative Services. Officers advised the Committee this could be due to several factors; no increases had been applied in the last couple of years due to Covid and staffing issues, legal services may have undertaken additional work, some legal work was being undertaken outside of the Council due to the legal team also having staff shortages which could also increase costs.

The Committee felt this increase was not acceptable and Officers were asked to go back the Corporate Head of Law and Governance to seek clarification on this increase and report back to the next meeting.

The Committee was also concerned regarding the cost of maintenance and felt in future a more formal agreement on what work should be done would be beneficial.

Action: Paul French to discuss increase in legal and administrative services increase and report back to the next meeting.

To note: Investigation subsequent to the meeting highlighted that a figure had been double counted and the charge should have been £3,500 rather than the £5,200 shown in the budget. This will be updated in the figures presented to the next meeting.

RESOLVED THAT: The draft estimates for 2024/25 be approved

14 Essential Tree Works

The Committee was advised that as a result of an inspection on the north and west boundaries undertaken in the Summer of 2023 essential tree works needed to be carried out.

A total of seven trees had been found to require the services of a tree surgeon. Two of the trees were at risk of falling into Wellington Avenue, four were endangering the rear boundaries of properties on the northern boundary and one was in danger of damaging a building to the rear of Christ Church Hall.

The Committee was advised that Officers appreciated the funding implications to the Trust and Officers would endeavour to seek the best price possible.

Given the essential nature of the work required the Committee supported the Officers recommendation.

RESOLVED THAT: Proposed essential tree works at an estimated cost of £4,000 to £4,500 to be funded from Cabrera Trust reserves be approved.

15 Honorary Wardens

Officers reported that due to ill health Mrs H Lane had had to regretfully resign as Honorary Warden. Mrs Lane had been involved in the Cabrera Trust for many years and prior to

being a member of the Cabrera Trust Committee was a member of the former Riverside Walk Advisory Committee until it disbanded in 2010.

Throughout her time on the Committee Mrs Lane provided both knowledge and significant interest to the site and was delighted when the site received Local Nature Reserve Status in September 2009.

The Committee wished to pass their heartfelt thanks and recognition to Mrs Lane for her many years of service to the Committee and the locality in general.

Along with the resignation of Mr Ashby last year the Committee was asked if they wished to consider recruiting more Honorary Wardens.

Whilst the Committee felt that 3 Honorary Wardens may be enough another warden could add resilience. Officers were asked to review the Trust's constitution to see if they was a requirement for a certain number of wardens and advise the Committee accordingly.

Dr Beesley suggested he may have someone who would be interested in becoming Honorary Warden. Dr Beesley would speak to them and ask them to make contact with Mrs Holehouse if they were interested in the role.

At the last meeting of the Committee in July 2023 the Committee had asked if a member of The Friends of Cabrera Woods (FCTW) could be co-opted onto the Committee. This would enable them to vote on decisions affecting the group.

In order for this change to take place the Constitution of the Cabrera Trust Management Committee needed to be amended and agreed by the Council's Community Services Committee.

Officers had prepared a report for the Community Services Committee and the item was considered in November 2023. The Committee agreed the following;

the Constitution of the Cabrera Trust Management Committee be changed to allow the addition of one person identified by the Friends of Cabrera Trust Woods (FCTW) to become a member of the Committee and, in the event that person is unable to attend the meeting, a further person identified by the Friends of Cabrera Trust Woods be entitled to substitute for the person who cannot attend.

Additionally, the Committee requested clarification on the internal processes used by the FCTW for selecting and nominating named persons being co-opted onto the main representative and deputy member of the Committee.

The Committee were content with this arrangement and would revert back to Officers with the proposed process for selection in due course.

Action: Mrs Holehouse to consult the Trust's constitution to see if there is a requirement for a minimum or maximum number of wardens. (To note: Trust's constitution been checked and there is no specification within it regarding the number of wardens needed/required)

RESOLVED THAT: Dr P Beesley to notify Mrs Holehouse on the process of members of the Friends of Cabrera Woods being co-opted

onto the Committee; and

When clarification on process received Mrs Holehouse to prepare a report for the next available Community Services Committee to seek their approval on the process suggested by FCTW – (*To note: Subsequent to the meeting the Corporate Head of Law and Governance (CHLG) advised Officers that there was no need for the Community Services Committee to approve the process of co-opting onto the Committee, this could be approved by CHLG*).

16 Any other business

Prior to AOB being discussed. Dr Beesley wished to pass on this thanks to Matthew Godfrey for the exceptional support he gave to the Trust. Thanks were also given to Carol Holehouse regarding her swift responses to any queries raised.

Dr Beesley reported that the Friends of Cabrera Trust Woods (FCTW) was now up and running and had to date raised £3,200. The FCTW would like the first tranche of money to be used for a significant project as this would help encourage further donations.

The FCTW would like to meet with Officers of the Council to discuss the mechanism for allocating funds for the maintenance of the woods and Riverside walk. Agreement on how the first tranche of money should be used also needed to be discussed. It was vital this was agreed prior to the AGM. Dr Beesley would ask the secretary of the FCTW to contact Helen Wilson in this regard.

The AGM had been arranged for Friday 8th March at 7.30pm in the Virginia Water Community Centre. Councillors Howorth and Hulley were asked to attend and briefly address the meeting. Dr Beesley also asked Matthew Godfrey to attend.

The FCTW would like to look at 'donations' rather than sponsorship from local businesses. It was agreed that a draft letter would be prepared for approval by this Committee prior to being sent out.

It was noted that larger amounts from donations could be invested by the Council on behalf of the Trust once they have passed it over from the FCTW.

QR codes for the trial markers had been designed. Jeff Turner would contact Helen Wilson in this regards. Previous problems with signal on the site was noted.

17 Dates of future meetings

The dates of the future meetings were noted.

(The meeting ended at 4.37 pm.)

Chairman