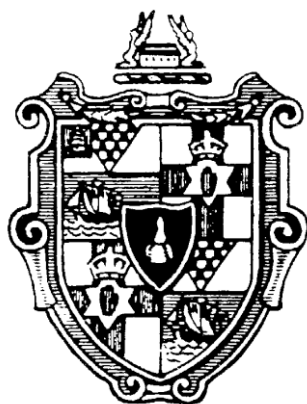


# **PROVINCIAL GRAND LODGE OF ANTRIM**



Constituted 1868

## **BYE-LAWS**

**2020**

**Approved by Grand Lodge**

**1<sup>st</sup> June 2021**

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## **Section A. The Provincial Grand Lodge**

### **1. Constitution**

The Provincial Grand Lodge of Antrim shall consist of the following Brethren, who shall rank in this order: -

- 1.1** R.W. the Provincial Grand Master
- R.W. the Provincial Deputy Grand Master
- R.W. the Provincial Assistant Grand Masters
- V.W. the Provincial Senior Grand Warden
- V.W. the Provincial Junior Grand Warden
- V.W. the Provincial Grand Treasurer
- V.W. the Provincial Grand Registrar
- V.W. the Provincial Grand Secretary
- V.W. the Provincial Grand Directors of Ceremonies
- V.W. the Provincial Grand Chaplains
- W. the Provincial Senior Grand Deacon
- W. the Provincial Junior Grand Deacon
- W. the Provincial Grand Superintendent of Works
- W. the Provincial Assistant Grand Treasurer
- W. the Provincial Assistant Grand Secretary
- W. the Provincial Grand Inspectors
- W. the Provincial Grand Stewards
- W. the Provincial Grand Sword Bearers
- W. the Provincial Grand Stewards of Charities
- W. the Provincial Grand Almoners
- W. the Provincial Grand Organists
- W. the Provincial Grand Lodge Standard Bearers
- W. the Provincial Grand Master's Standard Bearer
- W. the Provincial Grand Inner Guard
- W. the Provincial Grand Physicians
- W. the Provincial Grand Librarian
- W. the Provincial Assistant Grand Librarian

**1.2** The Past Provincial Grand Officers and Honorary Past Provincial Grand Officers, who shall rank according to seniority after the Actual Provincial Grand Officers of the same rank.

**1.3** The Worshipful Master. Past Masters and Master Masons who are subscribing members of a Lodge within the Province.

### **2. Communications**

The Stated Communications of the Provincial Grand Lodge shall be four each year. They shall be held as follows: -

In February, April, September, and November or December in such venues as the Provincial Grand Master may decide. The meeting in April will be held in the North Antrim area and in September the South Antrim area, subject to the power of the Provincial Grand Master or his Deputy to alter these arrangements. Occasional or Emergency Communications may also be held within the Province when deemed expedient by the Provincial Grand Master or his Deputy.

Notice, by Circular, of each Communication shall be sent to each Provincial Grand Lodge Officer, and to the Secretary of each Lodge in the Province, for immediate transmission to the Worshipful Master and Wardens thereof, at least seven days before the day appointed for each Stated Communication, and for Occasional or Emergency Communications as long as prior to the date of the meeting as practicable.

### **3. Presiding Officer in the Provincial Grand Lodge**

At each Communication the Provincial Grand Lodge shall be opened and ruled by the Provincial Grand Master; in his absence by the Provincial Deputy Grand Master; in the absence of both these Officers, by the senior Provincial Assistant Grand Master present; in the absence of all these Officers, by the Officer of the Provincial Grand Lodge then present, who shall be the next in order of precedence.

4. The Provincial Grand Secretary or in his absence the Provincial Assistant Grand Secretary shall act as convenor of the Provincial Grand Lodge and each of its Committees. All communications relating to the business of the Provincial Grand Lodge and its Committees shall be addressed to the Provincial Grand Secretary.

### **5. Attendance at the Provincial Grand Lodge**

5.1 Any Lodge neglecting to send a Representative (one of its three principal officers i.e. Worshipful Master, Senior Warden, or Junior Warden) to at least two Stated Communications of the Provincial Grand Lodge in each year shall be fined as set out in the Provincial Grand Lodge Schedule of Fees and Fines

5.2 Each member attending any communication of Provincial Grand Lodge shall, before entering, sign his name legibly on an attendance sheet provided for that purpose, which signature shall be taken as sole proof of attendance.

### **6. Clothing and Jewels to be worn at the Provincial Grand Lodge**

Each Brother attending the Provincial Grand Lodge shall wear the appropriate full-dress apron and the collar and jewel of his rank; but no member of the Provincial Grand Lodge or visitor thereto shall be permitted to wear any jewel, medal, or device belonging to any order or degree beyond that of regular Craft Masonry.

The Officers of the Provincial Grand Lodge shall wear clothing with sky blue trimmings and gold ornaments. The Jewels of Office shall be provided by, and shall remain the property of, the Provincial Grand Lodge.

The Representatives of Foreign Grand Lodges may wear the insignia of those Masonic bodies which they represent.

The Jewels of the Past Provincial Grand Officers are to be worn suspended from a plain sky-blue ribbon round the neck or from a gold bar and similar ribbon on the left breast. The prescribed apron with collar and gauntlets may be worn by all the Past Provincial Grand Officers.

## **7. Order of Business**

At all Stated Communications the Order of Business shall be as follows after the opening ceremony: -

1. Notice convening the meeting.
2. The minutes of the last Stated Communication, and of such Occasional or Emergency Communications, if any, as may have been held in the interim, shall be read and, when confirmed, shall be duly signed.
3. The business arising out of the minutes.
4. Consideration of reports from the Board of General Purposes or other Committees.
5. Consideration of motions of which notice has been given.
6. P.G.M.'s Business.

No business shall be entered upon at any Occasional or Emergency Communications except that stated in the circular convening such Communication.

## **8. Voting**

All Business submitted to Provincial Grand Lodge shall be determined by a majority of votes cast by the members present, the Presiding Officer included; and if on a division the numbers be equal, the Presiding Officer shall have a casting vote.

## **9. Discussions – Order**

A Brother who is not a Member of the Provincial Grand Lodge, as defined in Bye-Law 1 shall not be allowed to address the Chair unless by permission of the Presiding Officer, nor shall he in any case vote.

Each Brother shall when speaking, stand and address the Presiding Officer; and he shall not be interrupted while so doing, except on a question of order.

No Brother shall be permitted to speak more than once on the same subject, except in explanation, or reply, or unless he be called upon to do so by the Presiding Officer; always providing that the proposer of a resolution, or of an amendment to a resolution shall, after due discussion of the same, have the right to reply before such resolution or amendment be submitted to the vote.

## **10. Postponement of Motions**

If the proposer of a motion does not attend to move it, or authorise some other member of the Provincial Grand Lodge so to do then, unless the Provincial Grand Lodge shall consent to a postponement, it shall be competent for any other member of the Provincial Grand Lodge to move it, as if he had originally given notice thereof.

## **11. Motions Decided Upon**

A motion or question, the substance of which the Provincial Grand Lodge has already considered and decided upon, shall not again be brought forward or discussed until a period of six months shall have elapsed from the date of such decision, except by order of the Grand Lodge.

## **12. Rejection of Motions**

A discretionary power is vested in the Presiding Officer of rejecting, at the time of its being handed in or at any time before it had been moved, any motion if such be deemed by him improper, unlawful or inconsistent with the Ancient Landmarks.

## **13. Notice of Business**

All business to be brought before the Provincial Grand Lodge by a subordinate Lodge or individual Brother must be notified to the Provincial Grand Secretary in writing at least 21 days before the Provincial Grand Lodge meeting

## **14. Accounts**

The Provincial Grand Treasurer shall keep a proper account of the Income and Expenditure of the Provincial Grand Lodge and shall, at the Stated Communication in April each year (or at any other time if called upon to do so by the Provincial Grand Master or his Deputy), produce the same duly made up to the 31<sup>st</sup> December preceding, and audited by Auditors appointed for that purpose by the Provincial Grand Lodge. in accordance with Bye-Law 34.2.2 and a certified copy of the audited accounts forwarded to Grand Lodge by 30<sup>th</sup> June

## **15. Minutes**

Correct minutes of the proceedings of the Provincial Grand Lodge, the Board of General Purposes, and the Executive Committee shall be kept by the Provincial Grand Secretary or in his absence by the Provincial Assistant Grand Secretary. These minutes shall be produced to the Grand Lodge or the Provincial Grand Lodge whenever required.

## **16. Processions and Wearing of Masonic Clothing**

**16.1** All Masonic Processions, unless previously sanctioned by the Grand Lodge, the Grand Master, his Deputy, or his Assistant; the Provincial Grand Lodge, the Provincial Grand Master or his Deputy, are strictly prohibited under the pain of forfeiture of the Warrant of any Lodge so offending and the suspension of any Brother taking part in such demonstrations.

**16.2** All permitted processions shall be under the control of the Provincial Grand Directors of Ceremonies or, if none of them be able to attend, then under the control of a Brother to be appointed or approved by the Provincial Grand Master or his Deputy. The Officer or Brother having control shall see that such a procession is carried out in accordance with the Laws, Regulations and Usages of the Grand Lodge, the Bye-Laws of the Provincial Grand Lodge and the terms and conditions on which permission has been granted to hold the procession.

**16.3** Masonic Clothing or Jewels shall not be worn at the funeral of any Masonic Brother.

## **17. Permission to Publish**

**17.1** The transactions or proceedings, or any portion thereof, of any meeting of the Provincial Grand Lodge, of any subordinate Lodge, of any Masonic Committee or of a meeting purporting to be of a Masonic character, or of any comment thereon or reference thereto shall not be printed or published, distributed, posted electronically or communicated in any other manner whatever or caused to be printed or published, distributed, posted electronically or communicated in any other manner whatever without the written permission of the Provincial Grand Master or his Deputy.

**17.2** Written permission from the Provincial Grand Master or his Deputy is also necessary prior to the publication of any notices or communications of whatever nature in the press or elsewhere, obituary and death notices excluded.

## **18. Dues, Fees and Fines.**

Every Lodge in the Province shall pay Dues, Fees and Fines as provided in the schedule contained at Section H of these Bye-Laws.

## **19. Alteration of Bye-Laws:**

A motion for the enactment of a new Bye-Law, or for the alteration or repeal of any existing Bye-Laws, shall not be considered unless notice thereof, in writing, be given at a Stated Communication of Provincial Grand Lodge, which notice shall be printed on the circular summoning the next Stated Communication of the Provincial Grand Lodge.



## **Section B - Officers of the Provincial Grand Lodge**

### **20. Tenure**

**20.1** The Provincial Grand Master is appointed by Letters Patent from the Most Worshipful the Grand Master of Ireland.

**20.2** The Provincial Deputy Grand Master and the Provincial Assistant Grand Masters shall be appointed by the Provincial Grand Master.

**20.3** The Provincial Grand Master, with the concurrence of Provincial Grand Lodge, shall appoint the Provincial Grand Directors of Ceremonies, the Provincial Grand Chaplains, the Provincial Grand Stewards of Charities, the Provincial Grand Almoners, the Provincial Grand Organists, the Provincial Grand Inspectors and the Provincial Grand Physician(s).

**20.4** The Provincial Grand Master shall appoint annually the Provincial Grand Master's Standard Bearer and, at his discretion, not more than three additional Stewards.

**20.5** The Provincial Grand Master is empowered to confer Honorary Past Provincial Grand Rank as prescribed by Grand Lodge.

**20.6** The Provincial Instructors are appointed by the V.W. the Grand Lodge of Instruction.

**20.7.1** The Provincial Grand Treasurer, the Provincial Grand Registrar, the Provincial Grand Secretary, the Provincial Grand Superintendent of Works, the Provincial Assistant Grand Treasurer, the Provincial Assistant Grand Secretary, the Provincial Grand Librarian, and the Provincial Assistant Grand Librarian, shall be nominated by the Provincial Grand Lodge Executive Committee to discharge the duties of such office. Such nomination shall constitute the recommendation of the Board of General Purposes to the Provincial Grand Lodge.

**20.7.2** None of the offices mentioned in 20.7.1 shall be annual offices, but any of the said officers may at any time be nominated for removal from office by the Provincial Grand Lodge Executive Committee for any cause which it may deem sufficient. Such nomination shall constitute the recommendation of the Board of General Purposes to Provincial Grand Lodge.

**20.8** All other offices in the Provincial Grand Lodge shall be annual, and open to nomination as in Bye-Law 22.

## **21. Qualification**

**21.1** A Brother cannot be elected to any office in the Provincial Grand Lodge unless he is:-

**21.1.1** A Past Master of at least three years standing from the date of Installation as Worshipful Master.

**21.1.2** A fully subscribing member of a Lodge in the Province in accordance with Bye-Law 22.2.

## **22. Nominations**

**22.1** Each subordinate Lodge of the Provincial Grand Lodge may nominate any properly qualified Brother as per Bye-Law 21 for annual office or position in the Provincial Grand Lodge subject to Bye-Law 23, subsections 23.1 and 23.2. Such nominations shall be made on forms, provided for that purpose, to be obtained from the Provincial Grand Secretary and to be returned to him on or before 30<sup>th</sup> April in each year. Such nominations must be signed by the Worshipful Master and the Secretary and have the Lodge Seal affixed thereto.

**22.2** A Lodge may not propose a Country or an Honorary Member for any of the offices in the Provincial Grand Lodge.

**22.3** A Lodge may propose only one of its duly qualified members for office in the Provincial Grand Lodge in any one year.

**22.4** A Brother may not be proposed for more than one office in the Provincial Grand Lodge in any one year.

**22.5** A nomination shall not be accepted from any Lodge in arrears of dues, fees or fines due to the Provincial Grand Lodge, or which has not sent forward the Annual Returns and Statement of audited Receipts & Payments Accounts as required by Bye-Law 60, 61 and 62.

**22.6** If, by the date specified in Paragraph 22.1, a nomination has not been received for a particular office, the Lodges in that area will be so advised and may submit a nomination for that office, subject to Bye-Law 22.3 by the 15<sup>th</sup> June in the relevant year.

**22.7** The nominations shall be submitted to a meeting of the Board of General Purposes held in accordance with 23.4 to elect Officers for Provincial Grand Lodge.

**22.8** The Board of General Purposes as defined in 23.4 may, if it considers it advisable, recommend any eligible Brother for any annual office in the Provincial

Grand Lodge irrespective of his not being nominated as above, subject to Bye-Law 23, Subsections 23.1 and 23.2.

**22.9**

Where more than two candidates are nominated for any office, the Candidate receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared as being the recommendation of the Board.

**22.10** In the event of a tie for any Provincial Grand Lodge Office, a second ballot shall be taken of the tied candidates. Should this also result in a tie, the candidate to be recommended shall be decided by the drawing of lots.

**22.11** The Provincial Grand Secretary shall at once communicate to the various Brethren the fact of their having been recommended for the several offices. Should any Brother decline to be a candidate for the office for which he has been recommended, the Brother who secured the next highest number of votes shall be substituted for him.

Notice of such refusal to accept must be given to the Provincial Grand Secretary within one month of being advised by him of the recommendation of the Board of General Purposes.

**22.12** In the event of an incorrect declaration on the nomination form the candidate's name shall be withdrawn. In the event that the incorrect information comes to light after the election has taken place, the Brother elected to the office shall be disqualified with the office being offered to the Brother with the next highest number of votes.

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**23. Allocation of Nominations**

**23.1** Nomination to the Annual office in the Provincial Grand Lodge shall be allocated as follows:

<b>Group</b>	<b>Hall</b>	<b>Officers</b>	<b>Voting Venue</b>
A	Arthur Square	1	Arthur Square
	Crumlin Road		
	Ligoniel		
B	Whiteabbey	1	Whiteabbey
	Carrickfergus		
C	Lisburn	1	Lisburn
	Derriaghy		
	Broomhedge		
	Ballinderry		
D	Antrim	1	Antrim
	Crumlin		
	Randalstown		
	Parkgate		
	Doagh		
	Cogry		
	Straid		
E	Larne	1	Larne
	Island Magee		
	Ballycarry		
	Cairncastle		
	Carnlough		
F	Ballymena	1	Ballymena
	Broughshane		
	Bucknaw		
	Clough		
	Cullybackey		
	Portglenone		
G	Ballymoney	1	Ballymoney
	Portrush		
	Bushmills		
	Ballintoy		
	Ballycastle		
	Carareagh		
	Chatham Hall		
	Moyarget		
	Vowferry		

**Please note: Each district shall elect one Steward annually.**

**23.2** The right to nominate Candidates for Office to the Provincial Grand Lodge will be as specified below.

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>	<b>2028</b>	<b>2029</b>
Senior Warden	D	E	F	G	A	B	C
Junior Warden	C	D	E	F	G	A	B
Senior Deacon	B	C	D	E	F	G	A
Junior Deacon	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Inner Guard	G	A	B	C	D	E	F
PGL Sword Bearer	F	G	A	B	C	D	E
PGL Standard Bearer	E	F	G	A	B	C	D
Steward	A - G	A - G	A - G	A - G	A - G	A - G	A - G

**23.3** In the event of an actual Provincial Grand Officer being nominated for the office of Provincial Senior Grand Warden or Provincial Junior Grand Warden, he must resign his Provincial Office at the time of his nomination.

**23.4** The nominations made by Lodges in each of the specified districts shall be submitted to the Representatives to the Board of General Purposes, in that particular district, who shall have the right to determine the recommendations (in accordance with Bye-Law 22.9) which shall be submitted to the Provincial Grand Lodge at its Stated Communication in November or December for election.

**23.5** At any meeting of the Board of General Purposes to determine the recommendation of Officers, the elected representative of a Lodge, or his regularly appointed proxy which has submitted a nomination must be present or the nomination will be deemed to have been withdrawn. (Only Lodge representatives or their proxies shall be entitled to vote.)

**23.6** At any meeting held for the recommendation of officers as above, the elected Representative of a Lodge, who is unable to attend, may appoint as Proxy the Worshipful Master or a Past Master who is a subscribing member of the same Lodge. Such appointment shall be valid for one meeting only and such Proxy to have one vote only. It shall not take effect unless notified, in writing, to the Provincial Grand Secretary before the meeting at which the proxy is to act.

## **24. Election**

**24.1** The Circular convening the November or December Stated Communication of the Provincial Grand Lodge shall state the names of the Brethren recommended by the Board for the several offices and positions, except in cases when the nominations have been voided or withdrawn.

**24.2** In the election to each office the recommendation of the Board of General Purposes shall be the motion before the Provincial Grand Lodge.

**25. Canvassing for Office**

Personal canvassing for any of the Provincial Grand Offices is strictly forbidden, and any Brother proved to have been personally engaged therein shall thereupon be deemed ineligible for election to such Provincial Grand Office.

**26. Qualification of the Past Provincial Grand Officers**

No Brother shall be entitled to rank as a Past Provincial Grand Officer unless he shall have been duly installed or invested and shall have attended at least two Stated Communications during each year of his term of office, always provided that the Provincial Grand Master or his Deputy may, at their discretion, reduce the required number of attendances on satisfactory reasons being submitted.

**27. Past Provincial Grand Officers' Certificates**

Every qualified Brother (as per Bye-Law 26) shall be entitled to receive by way of presentation at the February communication of Provincial Grand Lodge a Certificate indicating his name, rank and term of office, signed by the Provincial Grand Master or his Deputy, countersigned by the Provincial Grand Secretary and sealed with the Seal of the Provincial Grand Lodge.

**28. Installation**

The Installation and Investiture of the Provincial Grand Officers shall take place annually at the Stated Communication in February.

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## **Section C – Grievance Procedures**

**29** Allegations of Unmasonic Conduct shall be managed in accordance with the provisions set out in the Procedures for Unmasonic Conduct. Section I Page 32 (and also available from the Provincial Grand Lodge Office)

**30** Grievances between members/Lodges/Provincial Grand Lodge shall be managed in accordance with the provisions set out in the Procedures for Grievance. Section J Page 42 (and also available from the Provincial Grand Lodge Office)

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## **Section D - Board of General Purposes**

### **31. Constitution**

**31.1** The Board of General Purposes shall consist of:

**31.1.1** The Provincial Grand Lodge Officers listed in Bye-Law 1.1; and

**31.1.2** One representative elected by each subordinate Lodge in the Province.

**31.2** Lodge representatives or their proxies (appointed in accordance with Bye-Law 31.6) are entitled to vote on all matters.

### **31.3**

Only the following Provincial Grand Lodge Officers listed below shall have a vote on all matters except the Election of Officers.

Provincial Grand Master

Provincial Deputy Grand Master

Provincial Assistant Grand Master (4)

Provincial Senior Grand Warden

Provincial Junior Grand Warden

Provincial Grand Treasurer

Provincial Grand Registrar

Provincial Grand Secretary

Provincial Grand Superintendent of Works

Provincial Assistant Grand Treasurer

Provincial Assistant Grand Secretary

**31.4** The Representative from each subordinate Lodge in the Province must be a currently subscribing Past Master of the Lodge he has been elected to represent, but not a Country member. The Representative shall be elected at the same time as the ordinary Officers of the Lodge, and his details shall be notified on the annual Lodge returns. Any Lodge failing to make such return shall lose its representation for that year. A Representative cannot represent more than one Lodge. Where the Representative resigns from subscribing membership of the Lodge he represents he shall immediately cease to be that Lodge's Representative to the PGLA Board of General Purposes.

**31.5** Should a vacancy arise during the year through the death, resignation or suspension of the Brother representing any Lodge, such vacancy may be filled at the next ensuing meeting of the Lodge, and the name of the Brother then elected forwarded to the Provincial Grand Secretary, with an explanation of the



circumstances necessitating the change being made. (Lodge records must also be updated at Grand Lodge.) A newly constituted Lodge may, at its first meeting, elect a Brother on its roll to represent the Lodge during the remainder of the current year, as defined by Bye-Law 31.4

**31.6** Should any Representative of a Lodge be unable to attend, he may appoint as his proxy a qualified subscribing member, but not a Country member of the Lodge, as defined in Bye-law 31.4 If the Representative is unavailable for any reason, the Worshipful Master or the Secretary may appoint a proxy. The appointment to be valid for one meeting only The proxy's appointment shall not take effect unless notified, in writing, to the Provincial Grand Secretary before the meeting at which the proxy is to act.

### **32. Meetings**

The Provincial Grand Lodge Board of General Purposes shall meet at venues and on dates and times as determined by the Provincial Grand Master or his Deputy. Twenty Lodge Representatives shall constitute a quorum of the Board

Twenty-one days notice should be given for any meeting of the Board of General Purposes, but emergency meetings may be held at such other times as the Provincial Grand Master or his Deputy may deem necessary. A minimum of seven days notice must be given in such cases.

### **33. Presiding Officer**

The Provincial Grand Master or, in his absence, the Provincial Deputy Grand Master or, in their absence, the senior Provincial Assistant Grand Master present shall preside at all meetings of the Board. Should none of the aforementioned officers be present, the next senior Officer of the Provincial Grand Lodge present shall act as chairman of the meeting.

All questions shall be decided by a majority of votes cast. The presiding officer shall, in addition to his vote as a member of the Board, have a casting vote.

### **34. Duties**

**34.1** To examine all such business as requested by Provincial Grand Lodge, the Provincial Grand Lodge Executive Committee and/or the Provincial Grand Master or his Deputy, and, when necessary make recommendations for the consideration of the Provincial Grand Lodge.

Charges of Unmasonic Conduct and Grievances forwarded to the Provincial Grand Secretary shall be determined by the Hearing Committee (Appropriate Body) as per Section I and J of these Bye-Laws

**34.2** The Provincial Grand Lodge Board of General Purposes at the October meeting shall determine the recommendation to the Provincial Grand Lodge for the ensuing year of:

**34.2.1** Four Representatives to the Grand Lodge of Instruction.

**34.2.2** Auditors of the Provincial Grand Lodge Accounts.

**34.2.3** Seven Lodge Representatives to the Executive Committee every third year as notified by the Provincial Grand Secretary. Bye-Law 39.3

**35** All business to be brought before a meeting of Provincial Grand Lodge Board of General Purposes by a Subordinate Lodge must be notified in writing to the Provincial Grand Secretary at least 14 days before such meeting.

**36** Each Brother shall when speaking, stand and address the Presiding Officer; and he shall not be interrupted while so doing, except on a point of order.

No Brother shall be permitted to speak more than once on the same subject, except in explanation, or reply, or unless he be called upon to do so by the Presiding Officer; always providing that the proposer of a resolution, or of an amendment to a resolution shall, after due discussion of the same, have the right to reply before such resolution or amendment be submitted to the vote.

**37** The Board shall have power to appoint Committees, with or without Board powers, to examine and report or otherwise deal with any matters which the Board may remit to them.

**38** In cases which the Provincial Grand Master, or his Deputy, deems to be emergencies, he shall have the power to remit such cases to the Provincial Grand Lodge Executive Committee without first bringing them before the Board.

## **Section E - The Executive Committee**

**39.1** The Provincial Grand Lodge Executive Committee shall concern itself with all the business of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Antrim, monitoring, advising and guiding the Provincial Grand Lodge of Antrim and all its component bodies as it considers appropriate taking into account any strategic objectives being pursued by the Provincial Grand Lodge of Antrim and the Grand Lodge.

**39.2** The Provincial Grand Lodge Executive Committee shall consist of:-

Provincial Grand Master

Provincial Deputy Grand Master

Provincial Assistant Grand Masters (4)

Provincial Senior Grand Warden (Present)

Provincial Senior Grand Warden (Immediate Past)

Provincial Junior Grand Warden (Present)

Provincial Junior Grand Warden (Immediate Past)

Provincial Grand Treasurer

Provincial Grand Registrar

Provincial Grand Secretary

Provincial Grand Superintendent of Works

Provincial Assistant Grand Treasurer

Provincial Assistant Grand Secretary

One elected member from the Board of General Purposes from each district as specified in Bye-Law 23.1

Two Brethren nominated by the Provincial Grand Master.

### **39.3 Elected Members**

Every third year (as notified by the Provincial Grand Secretary) at the meeting of the Board of General Purposes for each district, as specified in Bye-Law 23.1 to determine the recommendation of a Provincial Grand Lodge Officer, the representatives shall at that meeting also elect a Representative to serve on the Executive Committee.

Each member shall serve for a period of three calendar years, a calendar year is defined as the 12 month period running from 1st January - 31st December. Only Lodge Representatives to the P.G.L. Board of General Purposes are eligible to be elected as, and continue as, a member of the P.G.L. Executive Committee.

### **39.4 Appointed Members**

The two members appointed by the Provincial Grand Master shall serve for a period of three calendar years (as defined in Bye-Law 39.3), but may be reappointed by the Provincial Grand Master.

### **39.5 Presiding Officer**

The Provincial Grand Master or, in his absence, the Provincial Deputy Grand Master or, in their absence, the senior Provincial Assistant Grand Master present shall

preside at all meetings of the P.G.L. Executive Committee. Should none of the aforementioned officers be present, the next senior Officer of the Provincial Grand Lodge present shall act as chairman for the meeting.

**39.6** The Provincial Grand Master, with the concurrence of the Executive Committee, may set up regular or ad hoc working groups or panels to address particular matters or provide advice. Such working groups or panels will have no powers to make decisions to bind Provincial Grand Lodge but may report their findings or recommendations to the Executive Committee for determination.

**39.7** The Executive Committee may set up regular or ad hoc working groups or panels to deal with any of the duties set out in Bye-Law 40 below or other matters which it may wish to address and may co-opt Brethren who are not members of the Executive Committee or Board of General Purposes to be members of such working groups or panels. Such working groups or panels will have no powers to make decisions to bind Provincial Grand Lodge and will report their findings or recommendations to the Executive Committee for determination.

### **39.8 Meetings**

The Provincial Grand Lodge Executive Committee shall meet at venues and on dates and times as determined by the Provincial Grand Master or his Deputy.

The Presiding Officer must ensure that there is a quorum of at least six members of the P.G.L. Executive Committee in Attendance at any meeting

### **39.9 Voting**

All business of Provincial Grand Lodge Executive Committee shall be determined by a majority of votes cast by the members present, the Presiding Officer included; and if on a division the numbers be equal, the Presiding Officer shall have a casting vote.

## **40 Duties of the Executive Committee**

**40.1** To report to the Board of General Purposes.

**40.2** To take into consideration all matters relating to the finances of the Province

**40.3** To appoint all salaried staff and from time to time determine or alter their duties and remuneration. This role may be delegated to a sub-committee appointed by the Executive Committee.

**40.4** To take into its care the management of any accommodation occupied/owned/leased by Provincial Grand Lodge.

**40.5** To nominate certain Officers in accordance with Bye-Law 20.7.1

**40.6** Such other duties of a financial nature as may, from time to time, be remitted to it by the Provincial Grand Lodge or the Provincial Grand Lodge Board of General Purposes or (in the case of emergency) by the Provincial Grand Master or his Deputy.

**40.7** The Chairman of the Executive Committee or a member of the Committee authorised by him or any member of the Executive Committee authorised by the Provincial Grand Master shall report on the business transacted at the Executive Committee to the Board of General Purposes.

**40.8** The Executive Committee shall examine and report upon, or otherwise deal with, any matters remitted to it by the Provincial Grand Lodge or the Board of General Purposes, or (in cases deemed to be of emergency) by the Provincial Grand Master or his Deputy.

**40.9** To examine all plans and estimates sent in for approval pursuant to Bye-law 41.

**40.10** To consider and make reports and recommendations upon all applications for assistance for the provision and maintenance and improvement of Masonic accommodation within the Province.

**40.11** To consider and make reports and recommendations in respect of all matters referred to it pursuant to Bye-Law 44.

**40.12** To supervise and monitor the activities of the Constituent Masonic Bodies.

## **41 Buildings**

**41.1** New buildings, or any re-construction, extension, alteration, improvements or maintenance of existing buildings exceeding £20,000, or such figures as the Provincial Grand Lodge Executive Committee may decide from time to time, must not be commenced until plans and/or specifications with estimates and an indication of the proposed expenditure and income, and other relevant information, shall have been submitted by a Masonic Limited Company or Board of Trustees to the Provincial Grand Lodge Executive Committee and approved by them.

The requirements to be met under the above paragraph are to allow the Provincial Grand Lodge to monitor spending in relation to Masonic premises and also to ensure that proper Masonic criteria are catered for. Once approved, a proposal shall not be materially altered without the consent of the Provincial Grand Lodge or the Provincial Grand Lodge Executive Committee.

### **41.2 Building Committee**

For the purposes of carrying out any construction of new buildings, any reconstruction, extension, alteration, improvements or maintenance of existing

buildings in excess of expenditure of £20,000, it is required that a Building Committee shall be set up by the Masonic Limited Company or Board of Trustees for the hall in question to oversee all of the elements of the building project and to make and submit periodic reports, which should be not less than quarterly, to the Provincial Grand Lodge Executive Committee. With the proviso that the Building Committee as referred to above, shall carry all legal and financial responsibility to see that the project is completed and that all reasonable and proper elements have been satisfied, including all statutory requirements which may affect same, to the intent that no responsibility or legal liability shall fall upon the Provincial Grand Lodge or any of the Officers of the Provincial Grand Lodge for the time being.

## **42 Annual Reports**

Any Masonic Limited Company, Board of Trustees and/or Hall Management Committee which is responsible for the administration of a Masonic Building, or any part thereof must produce and distribute an Annual Report and audited Statement of Receipts & Payments Accounts on or before 31<sup>st</sup> March each year to all Lodges and Masonic bodies using the building and also to Provincial Grand Lodge.

## **43 Trusts and Trustees**

**43.1** No new Masonic building will be dedicated to Masonry by the Provincial Grand Lodge unless a Declaration of Trust for Masonic purposes in such form and containing such Clauses as are approved by the Provincial Grand Lodge Board of General Purposes shall have been duly executed. All such Declarations of Trust shall, from time to time, be brought up to date by the appointment of new trustees in accordance with the terms of such Declarations of Trust and with and subject to the approval of the Provincial Grand Lodge Board of General Purposes.

**43.2** Before new trustees are appointed, their names should be submitted to Provincial Grand Lodge for approval; by the Lodge, Hall Management Committee or other Masonic body which wishes to appoint such trustees with verification from each proposed trustee's Lodge that he is in good Masonic standing.

**43.3** All trustees must be full subscribing or Emeritus members in good Masonic standing of Lodges in the Province of Antrim and must remain so unless stated otherwise in the Declaration of Trust or other deed by which the particular trustee was appointed.

## **44 Penalties for Non-observance**

**44.1** Any violation of these Bye-Laws by any Brother, group of Brethren or any other Masonic body will be referred to the Executive Committee.

**44.2** Any continued violation or re-offence shall be deemed to be unmasonic conduct and dealt with accordingly.

## **Section F - Committees of Inspection**

At all Committees of Inspection, it is a breach of Masonic Duty on the part of any Brother present at any meeting of the Committee of Inspection, to disclose outside such Committee the name of any member in connection with any observations made at such meeting.

### **45 District Committees**

There shall be two District Committees of Inspection.

Subject to the power of the Provincial Grand Master or his Deputy to vary the place, date, or time of meetings the Committees of Inspection shall meet as follows:-

South Antrim Committee of Inspection shall meet in Whiteabbey Masonic Centre on the fourth Wednesday in January, February, March, April, May, June, September, October and November, and the second Wednesday in December each year, and shall have jurisdiction over candidates from all Lodges meeting in that portion of the City of Belfast within the Masonic Province of Antrim, also from all Lodges in the Lisburn, Derriaghy, Carrickfergus, Ballyclare and Larne Inspectoral Districts excepting Lodge 216 Carnlough.

The North Antrim Committee of Inspection shall meet in the Ballymena Masonic Centre on the third Friday in January, February, March, April, May, June, August, October, November, and December each year and shall have jurisdiction over candidates from all Lodges in the Ballymena, Ballymoney and Portrush Inspectoral Districts and including Lodge 216 Carnlough.

Any new Lodges which may hereafter be constituted, in the Province of Antrim shall be placed in such Group as the Provincial Grand Master or his Deputy may decide.

### **46 Membership of Committees**

The District Committees of Inspection shall consist of the Provincial Grand Officers, as defined in Bye-Law 1.1, and of one representative from each Lodge in the District and who must be, and remain a subscribing Past Master of the lodge, but not a Country Member. Such Representative shall be elected annually by each Lodge at its ordinary Election of Officers. Should the representative of a Lodge be unable to attend he may appoint a Past Master, who is a subscribing Member but not a Country Member of the same Lodge, as his Proxy. If the Representative is incapacitated for any reason the Worshipful Master or Secretary may appoint a Proxy. Such appointment shall be valid for one meeting only and such Proxy to have one vote only. The appointment of a Proxy shall not take effect unless notified, in writing to the Secretary before the meeting at which the Proxy is to act. Only Lodge representatives or their proxies shall be entitled to vote.

**46.1** Should a vacancy arise during the year through the death, resignation or suspension of the W. Brother representing any Lodge, such vacancy may be filled at the next ensuing meeting of the Lodge, and the name of the W. Brother then elected forwarded to the Provincial Grand Secretary, with an explanation of the circumstances necessitating the change being made. A newly constituted Lodge may, at its first meeting, elect a Worshipful Brother on its roll to represent the Lodge during the remainder of the current year, as defined by Bye-Law 31.4

## **47 Fees Fines and Arrears**

**47.1** The fees payable to the Provincial Grand Lodge for Committee of Inspection applications shall be those set out in the Schedule of Dues, Fees, and Fines appended to these Bye-Laws and as amended from time to time.

**47.2** A Lodge which is in arrears of Dues, Fees or Fines or has neglected to make its return of Officers to Grand Lodge and its return of audited Receipts and Payments to Provincial Grand Lodge by the due date shall not be entitled to submit names of Candidates to its District Committee of Inspection nor shall its Representative act as a Member of the District Committee in whose area his Lodge is situated.

**47.3** Where the Representative or the nominated Proxy of a Lodge, which has a Candidate for consideration by the appropriate District Committee of Inspection, fails to attend on two successive meetings, the name of the Candidate shall be removed from the Committee's list and will only be reinstated on the payment of a further appropriate fee, the fee already paid being forfeited.

## **48 Quorum of Committees**

Seven Members shall constitute a quorum of the South Antrim District Committee and five Members a quorum of the North Antrim District Committee.

## **49 Presiding Officer**

**49.1** Each Committee shall have power to elect, in the month of January in each year, a Chairman to act during the ensuing year. In the absence of the elected Chairman the Brethren present shall elect a Chairman for that meeting. All proposals shall be decided by a majority of votes and the presiding Officer shall have an additional or casting vote.

**49.2** See also Committee of Inspection Guidelines as updated from time to time. (copies available from the Provincial Grand Lodge Office)

## **50 Secretary**

Normally, the Provincial Grand Secretary shall act as Secretary to both the North Antrim District Committee and the South Antrim District Committee. However, the Provincial Grand Master or his Deputy may appoint a suitable Past Master as



Secretary to either Committee for the time being. It shall be the duty of the Secretary to keep a correct record of the Proceedings and to enter same in the Minute Book, to keep a strict account of all receipts and to pay over to the Provincial Grand Treasurer all monies received.

All accounts for expenditure authorised by either Committee shall be forwarded to the Provincial Grand Treasurer, who shall have authority to pay same out of the Provincial Grand Lodge funds, if approved by the Executive Committee.

## **51 Confirmation of Minutes**

At each regular meeting of the Committees the minutes of the preceding meeting shall be read, and when confirmed, shall be signed by the Chairman and countersigned by the Secretary.

## **52 Duties of Committees**

It shall be the duty of the Committees to decide on the eligibility of all Candidates for initiation, re-joining or affiliation from another Constitution who have been previously balloted for and duly elected in any Lodge in the Provincial Grand Lodge of Antrim, in accordance with such Regulations as shall be approved by Grand Lodge.

## **53 Candidates**

### **53.1 Candidates for Initiation**

A candidate shall not be initiated in any Lodge in the Province of Antrim until the fact of his having duly passed the appropriate District Committee shall have been officially notified to the Lodge, and paid to the Lodge the appropriate initiation fee.

In the event of the name of any candidate being withdrawn or rejected by either District Committee, it shall not be again submitted to either District Committee for at least six months.

## **54 Non-Resident Candidates and Enquiries before Ballot**

**54.1** Should the Candidates place of residence not be under the jurisdiction of the same District Committee of Inspection as the Lodge into which he seeks admission, an enquiry prior to ballot shall be sent to the District Committee having jurisdiction in the case, which Committee shall report, in due course, to the Lodge making the enquiry.

**54.2** A Candidate for initiation who has not continually resided within the geographical boundary of the Province of Antrim for at least twelve months, immediately preceding the proposal, shall not be balloted for in any Lodge in the said Province until after due enquiry shall have been made and a satisfactory reply received from the District Committee of Inspection (if any), or from the Lodge or Lodges nearest to his last place of residence.

**54.3** A candidate for initiation who has not resided in Ireland for at least one year immediately prior to date of proposal in the Lodge shall not be balloted for until an enquiry has been made and a favourable reply received from the Grand Lodge having jurisdiction in the area where he previously resided. Such enquiry shall be made through the Grand Secretary, Grand Lodge of Ireland.

**54.4** In all cases the reply to any enquiry shall be read in Open Lodge before ballot and a copy thereof furnished to the Committee of Inspection when submitting the name of the Candidate for approval.

**55 Candidates for Affiliation and Rejoining G.L. Law 137 – (*Must be strictly adhered to*)**

**55.1** If a Brother seeking to be affiliated be still a subscribing member of another Lodge, he shall not be balloted for until due enquiry shall have been made and a satisfactory reply received from such Lodges, which shall be read in open Lodge before ballot. Any Lodge knowingly affiliating a Brother who is in arrears of dues in another Lodge shall be held liable for such arrears. He shall also produce his Grand Lodge Certificate. It shall not be necessary for this affiliation to be considered by the relevant Committee of Inspection except if the Brother is affiliating from outside the Irish Constitution.

A candidate for affiliation from another constitution shall not be balloted for until an enquiry has been made and a favourable reply received from the Grand Lodge having jurisdiction over the Lodge he wishes to affiliate from. Such enquiry shall be made through the Grand Secretary, Grand Lodge of Ireland.

**55.2** Any Brother whose name has been returned to the Grand Lodge for non-payment of dues, etc., and who has been subsequently struck off, shall not resume membership of any Lodge in the Province of Antrim until a statement has been received from the Grand Lodge to the effect that he has been returned to good Masonic Standing and also produced his Grand Lodge Certificate before being duly balloted for by the Lodge and approved by the Committee of Inspection in the same manner as if he were a candidate for initiation.

Any Brother who has been suspended by Grand Lodge shall not resume membership of his Lodge until a statement has been received from Grand Lodge that his suspension has been lifted.

**55.3** Where a Brother who has been granted a demit and seeks to rejoin then he must produce the demit and his Grand Lodge Certificate to the Lodge prior to being duly balloted for by the Lodge and approved by the Committee of Inspection in the same manner as if he were a candidate for initiation.

**55.4** The above provisions are supplemental and additional to Grand Lodge Laws.

## **56 Penalties**

Any Lodge within the Province of Antrim which shall initiate a candidate, admit to rejoin, or affiliate from another constitution without the previous approval of the Committee of Inspection shall be liable to be fined or to have its Warrant suspended or cancelled as Grand Lodge shall determine

## **57 Length of Notice**

A statement of the name, residence, profession or occupation and place thereof (if any) of each candidate, signed by the Secretary of the Lodge in which he has been elected, must be lodged with the Secretary of the appropriate District Committee at least twenty-one clear days prior to the meeting of the Committee at which the eligibility of the candidate is to be considered. Notices containing such particulars shall be sent to each Lodge representative on the District Committee at least fourteen days prior to each meeting of the District Committee.

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## **Section G – Subordinate Lodges**

### **58 Summons**

Each Subordinate Lodge in the Province, which is under the supervision of a Provincial Grand Inspector, shall, at the time of issue, transmit to such Inspector a copy of every summons for a Stated or Emergency Communication and of every other circular or general communication issued to its members.

### **59 Bye-Laws**

Two copies of any proposed new Bye-Law or Bye-Laws or of any proposed amendment or additions to existing Bye-laws shall be sent to the Provincial Grand Secretary for approval by both the Provincial Grand Lodge and the Grand Lodge.

After any new Bye-Laws or Bye-Law amendments have been approved by the Grand Lodge, two copies shall be forwarded at once to the Provincial Grand Lodge.

### **60 Accounts**

Every Subordinate Lodge shall cause a Financial Statement for the year, from 1st January to 31st December, to be drawn up as soon as possible after the close of such year and duly audited by two Auditors elected at the previous October Communication. If possible, Auditors shall be subscribing Past Masters, who do not hold any other office in the Lodge, or other members who are accountants by profession, but not Country members.

The audited statement shall be as set out on the form, and in the manner, prescribed by the Provincial Grand Lodge. A copy must be sent to each member and to the Provincial Grand Inspector, and must be submitted to the Lodge for approval not later than the 31st March in each year. One copy shall be forwarded to the Provincial Grand Secretary not later than 31<sup>st</sup> March.

Failure to comply with this Bye-Law makes the Lodge liable to a fine as set out in the Schedule of Fines annexed. See also Bye-Law 22.5, 47.1, and 47.2.

### **61 Annual Returns**

Every Lodge in the Province shall, on or before 30<sup>th</sup> November in each year, ensure that all Lodge records (including return of Officers) are up-to-date on Grand Lodge Client Relationship Management System.

See also Bye-Law 22.5, 31.4, and 47.2.

**61.1** A Brother shall not be elected to one of the three principal offices or the office of Secretary in more than one Lodge without the approval of Grand Lodge.

## **62 Penalty for Non-Payment of All Monies due to the Provincial Grand Lodge**

Any Lodge failing or refusing to pay to the Provincial Grand Lodge all monies due within sixty days of having received notice to do so shall be fined as set out in the annexed Schedule and, in the case of continued failure or refusal, after being summoned, shall be reported to the Grand Lodge for suspension. Where any Lodge is in arrears to Provincial Grand Lodge, Grand Lodge shall be requested to withhold authority to install until arrears are cleared in full. See also Bye-Law 43.1 and 43.2 22.5, 31.4, 47.1 and 47.2

## **63 Correspondence**

**63.1** All correspondence to Provincial Grand Lodge from Subordinate Lodges or Brethren must be sent to the Provincial Grand Secretary.

**63.2** Copies of any correspondence to the Grand Lodge must be sent to the Provincial Grand Secretary at the same time as the original is sent to the Grand Lodge.

## **64 Raising Funds for Masonic Purposes**

No transactions, or proceedings of any kind, for the raising or collecting of money for any Masonic purpose shall be undertaken by any Subordinate Lodge, or individual member of the same (save the usual Lodge Collections or Subscriptions for the established Masonic Charities) without the Lodge or member having obtained, in the first instance, the sanction of the Provincial Grand Master or his Deputy. A Subordinate Lodge or Member thereof, shall not issue any circular of any description with regards to any appeal for funds outside of its own Members, unless it has received written permission to do so from the Provincial Grand Master or his Deputy.

## **65 The Internet & Social Media**

**65.1** Any Masonic Lodge, Masonic Club, or other Masonic Body under the jurisdiction of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Antrim wishing to establish a web site/social media page must, in the first instance, have the permission of Provincial Grand Lodge.

**65.2** The presentation and content of a web site/social media must comply with the advice currently offered by Provincial Grand Lodge and must in all aspects reflect the dignity and tenets of Freemasonry.

**65.3** Web sites/social media will be monitored by Provincial Grand Lodge. Lodges, Clubs, or other Masonic Bodies are required to amend content and/or presentation when requested to do so in order that the highest standards of communication may be maintained.

**65.4** Use of Social Media pages should operate as per Guidelines from Grand Lodge.

**66** Audio and or visual recording or transmission of any part of a Lodge meeting is prohibited, without the specific sanction of the Grand Secretary's Office. Electronic devices and other similar recording and transmitting equipment may not be used during Lodge meetings, except the Lodge Secretary who may use an electronic device for taking notes of the meeting. Mobile phones should be turned off, however at the very least they should be turned to silent so as not to disrupt the proceedings of the meeting.

Any breach of this ruling will be subject to disciplinary procedures.

## Section H – Dues, Fees and Fines

Dues, Fees, and Fines to be determined by the Provincial Grand Lodge Board of General Purposes on a yearly basis.

<u>Dues</u>	
Capitation fees - £12.00 per subscribing member	
<u>Fees</u>	
For each candidate or rejoining Brother submitted to the Committee of Inspection	£8.00
For Affiliation from outside Irish Constitution	£8.00
Enquiry from a Lodge outside the Province of Antrim	£8.00
<u>Fines</u>	
Non-attendance at PGL as set out in Bye-Law 5 £30.00	
Non-payment of dues etc as set out in Bye-Law 18 and 62 £50.00	
For Breach of Bye-Law 60 (Statement of Accounts) all Lodges £50.00	
For Breach of Bylaw 61 (Annual Returns) all Lodges	£50.00

## **Section I Procedure for dealing with Unmasonic Conduct**

### **1 Introduction**

It is the duty of all Masons to uphold the concepts of Peace, Love and Harmony and to do all in their power to both defend and spread these principles upon which the Order is founded. A Freemason is required to live his life according to the highest moral standards and to respect his fellow man in all his dealings and conduct.

However, it is accepted that from time to time difficulties or disagreements may arise within lodges or amongst brethren or between Masonic families. In the first instance, such issues should be resolved at lodge level, with the assistance and guidance of senior members of the lodge. In the event that a matter cannot be resolved at lodge level, then it should be referred to Provincial Grand Lodge through communication with the Provincial Grand Secretary.

This section sets out the procedure for dealing with allegations of unmasonic conduct. For the purposes of all Laws, unmasonic conduct or misconduct means any actions or words which, by virtue of their incivility, discourtesy, dishonesty, violence or tendency to cause damage or offence to others, are inconsistent with masonic values, objectives and principles and would tend to bring Masonry in general or the Grand Lodge, any Provincial Grand Lodge, Subordinate Lodge or any Masonic entity, in particular, into disrepute.

For the purposes of this section an Appropriate Body / Adjudicating Committee will be referred to as the 'Hearing Committee'

Where it is found necessary to invoke this procedure a Provincial Grand Lodge of Antrim (P.G.L.A.) Hearing Committee (Appropriate Body/Adjudicating Committee) (see Appendix 2) will be set up to exercise all the powers and functions of the Provincial Grand Lodge or the Provincial Grand Lodge Board of General Purposes under G.L Law 30 and any Grand Lodge Policy and Procedures in respect of Charges of Unmasonic Conduct in force from time to time.

### **2 Initiating a Charge of Unmasonic Conduct**

**2.1** A Charge of Unmasonic Conduct (hereinafter called the Charge) must be formally registered with P.G.L.A. using the form provided for that purpose (See Appendix 1).

**2.2** The Charge may arise (but not exclusively) from one of these sources:

- (a) A formal complaint about a Brother from a Brother Freemason, other Brethren, his Lodge, or some other Masonic body



(b) A formal complaint from a Lodge or other Masonic body about a Brother or Brethren or another Masonic body

**2.3** The Charge must be registered within three months of the alleged unmasonic conduct taking place or becoming known. However, these time limits shall not apply to conduct subject to civil or criminal proceedings.

### **3 Action by P.G.L.A. on receipt of the Charge**

**3.1** The Provincial Grand Secretary (hereinafter referred as the Secretary) will immediately acknowledge receipt of the Charge and will also advise the Brother / Brethren / Lodge / other Masonic body who is / are the subject of the Charge (hereinafter referred to as the Accused Party).

**3.2** The Secretary will convene a Hearing Committee in accordance with the provisions of Appendix 2, and at a suitable venue.

**3.3** The Secretary will request the party submitting the form (hereinafter referred to as the Aggrieved Party) to make available all relevant documentation and the names of any material witnesses.

**3.4** The Secretary will make available for the members of the Committee copies of the form registering the Charge (hereinafter referred to as the Form) and any other supporting information which may be available at that time.

### **4 Hearing Committee - Pre-Hearing Assessment**

**4.1** Where the evidence is clear and obvious (e.g. the verdict of a court of law) a Pre-Hearing assessment will not be necessary and a Formal Hearing will be arranged.

**4.2** Where further consideration is necessary, the Hearing Committee shall review the available evidence and shall determine a course of action to either:

**4.2.1** Dismiss the charge and recommend exoneration of the Accused Party;

OR

**4.2.2** Where the Hearing Committee is satisfied that a *prima facie* case has been made it shall proceed to a Formal Hearing of the Charge of Alleged Unmasonic Conduct;

OR

**4.2.3** Refer the Charge of Alleged Unmasonic Conduct to be dealt with under the Guidelines for handling Grievances.

**4.3** It shall be the responsibility of the Secretary in each case to write to both parties and advise them of the Committee's decision.

## **5 Hearing Committee - Formal Hearing**

**5.1** Where the decision is to proceed to a Formal Hearing the Hearing will follow the procedure set out in Appendix 3

**5.2** Where the Hearing Committee decides to issue a verbal or written reprimand the Chairman shall inform the Accused Party of this at the end of the Hearing. Where the decision is to issue a written reprimand the Accused Party will be informed that this will follow in due course signed by the Secretary on behalf of the Hearing Committee.

**5.3** In the case that the Hearing Committee shall recommend to the Grand Lodge Conduct Committee the suspension of or expulsion of any Brother, it shall report the recommendation to the next meeting of the Provincial Grand Lodge Board of General Purposes for its information. The decision of the Grand Lodge shall be brought to the attention of the Provincial Grand Lodge Board of General Purposes at a subsequent meeting.

## **6 Verdict**

The Secretary shall communicate in writing the outcome of the proceedings however they are determined, to:

The Accused Party

The Aggrieved Party

The Secretaries of the Lodges to which the aggrieved and accused parties belong

PGLA Board of General Purposes

Grand Lodge when appropriate

## **7 Appeal**

The Accused Party or the Aggrieved Party may lodge an appeal against the decision of Provincial Grand Lodge in accordance with the Laws and Constitution of Grand Lodge.

## **8 Review**

This Procedure will be reviewed from time to time by the P.G.L.A. Executive Committee in order to assess its suitability and efficacy.

# Appendix 1



Constituted 1868

Provincial Grand Lodge of Antrim

Registering a Charge of Alleged Unmasonic Conduct

Ref
-----

Please use this form to tell us about your concerns. Complete in black ink.

1 Your details (please use block capitals)

Name in full		
Lodge Name & Number		
Masonic Rank		
Address (including postcode)		
Telephone / E-mail	Home: _____ Mobile: _____ E-mail: _____	

2 If you are acting with, or on behalf of, other brethren, please give names, lodges and Masonic rank, or particulars of the Masonic body for whom you are acting

Name	Lodge / Masonic Body	Rank (if applicable)

### 3 Details of alleged unmasonic conduct

Please state the name(s) and allegation(s) with date(s) and place(s) where appropriate.  
More detailed information should be recorded overleaf

Allegation

Detailed information about the allegation, if available  
e.g., court proceedings, witnesses; attach any relevant documentation

4 Declaration

I confirm that the information I have given is, to the best of my knowledge, correct.

I understand that the information on this form, with the exception of my personal details, will be made available to the Brother about whom I am registering the charge of unmasonic conduct

I understand the confidentiality of any proceedings will be subject to the regulations of the General Data Protection Regulation (G.D.P.R.) and other associated legislation.

I understand that my allegation will be investigated in accordance with the Laws and Constitution of the Grand Lodge of Ireland, the Bye-Laws of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Antrim and in the interests of maintaining the highest standards of Masonic conduct.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Return this form to:

Provincial Grand Secretary  
Provincial Office  
53 High Street  
Belfast  
BT1 2QS

For Office use:

Form received: \_\_\_\_\_

Acknowledged: \_\_\_\_\_

Hearing Cttee: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 2 Constitution of the Hearing Panel and Hearing Committees**

1 The Board of General Purposes of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Antrim (hereinafter referred to as the Board) shall nominate a Panel of thirty-six Brethren (hereinafter referred to as the Hearing Panel) who are Subscribing or Emeritus Master Masons of Lodges under the jurisdiction of P.G.L.A. Membership of the Panel shall be approved by the Board which may establish criteria for membership of the Panel. Members shall serve for a period of three years, after which time they may be re-considered for membership or replaced. Each year, twelve members of the Panel will be replaced, thereby establishing a three-year cycle of membership.

2 On receipt of the Form, the Secretary shall convene a Hearing Committee comprising twelve Brethren who are members of the Panel. This Committee will hear

the Charge: the membership of the Committee shall remain the same for the duration of the proceedings concerning the Charge. Each member is expected to attend every meeting of the Committee. Five members shall constitute a quorum and decisions shall require a simple majority of those present.

3 The Hearing Committee shall be chaired by a Provincial Assistant Grand Master, who will be assisted by the Secretary and the Provincial Grand Registrar. None of these three brethren shall be entitled to vote in the decision making process. A majority of those members of the Committee in attendance and entitled to vote will be required for a charge of Unmasonic Conduct to be upheld. Otherwise the Charge will be dismissed.

4 Any member of the Committee who feels he has a conflict of interest shall declare that fact and shall be excused from serving on the case being considered. The Secretary shall arrange for that brother to be replaced.

5 Members of the Executive Committee shall not be eligible for membership of the Panel and shall not participate on Hearing Committees except as outlined in 3 above.

### **Appendix 3 Conduct of Proceedings of the Hearing Committee**

1 The Chairman will first see that all present are introduced as may be necessary.

2 The Chairman will set out the parameters of the Hearing.

3 Each party may give evidence and will have the opportunity of questioning the other, and any witnesses appearing for them, and examining any documentary evidence produced by them immediately after such evidence is given, under the guidance of the Chairman.

4 The Chairman will first ask the Secretary to set out details of the Charge. (Any questions will follow).

5 The Chairman will then ask the Provincial Grand Lodge, Subordinate Lodge, Brethren or Brother to state their case and give their evidence followed by the evidence of their witnesses (if any) and by any documentary evidence in support. (Any questions will follow).

6 The Chairman will then ask the Accused's Provincial Grand Lodge, Subordinate Lodge, Brethren or Brother, or their representative to answer the Charge, give their evidence, followed by the evidence of their witnesses (if any) and by any documentary evidence in support. (Any questions will follow).

7 It is important for all parties to bear in mind that admissible evidence consists of what has been actually observed or heard by the witness relating to the matter under consideration. Relevant facts appearing in formal records and documents are also admissible. Hearsay, i.e., that which has not been observed by the witness directly but merely heard by him from others, is not usually admissible evidence. These rules of evidence are observed by Judicial Bodies generally to ensure, as far as is possible, a fair hearing and a just decision. The Committee is no less expected to reach its decisions and recommendations upon the same basis.

8 At all times the Chairman will give the parties such guidance as may be necessary as the hearing proceeds and any members of the Committee may ask questions of the parties or witnesses in order to obtain or clarify relevant facts.

9 At conclusion, each party will be given a further opportunity, if they so desire, of adding anything which they consider relevant and helpful to their case, after which the Chairman will ask the parties to retire temporarily whilst the Board considers its findings.

10 Finally, the parties will be recalled and informed of the Committee's findings. Any proposed recommendation for Suspension or Expulsion will be forwarded to the Grand Lodge Conduct Committee.

11 The hearing will then be closed.

#### **Appendix 4 Sanctions & Disciplining Authorities**

The following are the sanctions and the bodies implementing them.

Sanction	Disciplining Authority
No further action	P.G.L.A.
Verbal reprimand	P.G.L.A.
Written reprimand	P.G.L.A.
Suspension	Grand Lodge
Expulsion	Grand Lodge

## **Appendix 5          Role of the Provincial Grand Secretary**

1        Because of responsibilities of his office, the Secretary is in a key position to offer the necessary administrative support for the smooth operation of the Procedure. The duties at the various stages in the Procedure are outlined below.

### **2        Receipt of a Charge of Unmasonic Conduct**

2.1     Write to the Aggrieved Brother, acknowledge receipt and invite the submission of documentation, and the names of witnesses accompanied by witness statements.

2.2     Write to the Accused Party advising him of the situation

2.3     Contact twelve members of the Panel (as per Appendix 2) and arrange a date for the Pre-Hearing Assessment.

2.4     Prepare the necessary documentation for each member for the Pre-Hearing Assessment (copy of the Form; copy of any other document included with the Form; copy of any relevant information which becomes available).

2.5     Where the Committee is satisfied that there is a *prima facie* case or 4.1 of Pre Assessment the Secretary is to issue a Summons to the Accused Brother and proceed to a Formal Hearing of the Charge. The Summons shall be accompanied by details of the Charge, any documentary evidence, witness statements and details of the time and place of the Hearing. The Secretary shall act in accordance with Paragraphs 3.1 to 3.4 as set out below and should ensure that G. L. Law No 30 and any Grand Lodge Laws, Policies and Procedures in respect of Charges of Unmasonic Conduct are adhered to.

### **3        Hearing Committee (Formal Hearing)**

3.1     Attend the meeting as Secretary and make such records as may be appropriate.

3.2     In consultation with the Chairman, arrange for adjourned meetings to be re-convened and advise the membership accordingly.

3.3     Write to both parties on behalf of the Committee, as required, according to the outcome of the meeting.

3.4     Make the necessary reports to the P.G.L.A Board of General Purposes and Grand Lodge Conduct Committee (when appropriate)

4        When an appeal is submitted, attend to the necessary administration as required.



5 All Summons to the Accused Party and the Aggrieved Party must be sent by Recorded Delivery

## 6 Records

Ensure that all records (and access to the same) relating to the Charge and its outcome are secured in accordance with Provincial Grand Lodge Bye-Laws, GDPR and any associated legislation.

### **Appendix 6 Rights and Records**

1 In all proceedings, acknowledgement must be given to natural justice. It is essential that the natural and self-evident rights of both the aggrieved party and the accused party are respected throughout.

2 Ascertaining the truth about any issue must be the overriding concern and personal prejudice must not be allowed to influence perceptions or outcomes: this principle applies to the Committee, the aggrieved party and the accused party.

3 The accused party must be considered to be innocent of any allegation until, and if, the findings of the Committee indicate otherwise.

4. Record keeping must be in accordance with the Laws and Constitution of Grand Lodge, the Bye-Laws of P.G.L.A, the G.D.P.R. and any associated legislation. Records of a particular Hearing Committee should include the original Form, letters sent and received by the Secretary and written submissions from the Committee.

5 Access to records will be in compliance with the provisions of the G.D.P.R.

## **Section J Guidelines for handling Grievances**

### **1 Objective**

It is accepted that from time to time difficulties or disagreements may arise within lodges or amongst brethren or between Masonic families. In the first instance, such issues should be resolved at lodge level, with the assistance and guidance of senior members of the lodge. In the event that a matter cannot be resolved at lodge level, then it should be referred to Provincial Grand Lodge through communication with the Provincial Grand Secretary.

**1.1** The objective of this procedure is to provide every member of a Lodge in the Masonic Province of Antrim who has a grievance against another Brother, Lodge or Masonic body, with the opportunity to have it examined quickly and effectively, and to have that grievance resolved at the earliest practicable moment if at all possible.

**1.2** Ideally, Brethren should initially raise any grievances informally with whomever the grievance is held, with a view to finding a solution in the proper context of brotherly love and harmony.

**1.3** It should be recognized that issues of unmasonic behaviour or conduct will not, and should not, be raised or dealt with under this grievance procedure. Where a grievant does during the course of this procedure raise such an issue then the procedure must be halted immediately and the grievant referred to the appropriate procedure for dealing with unmasonic conduct.

**1.4** Sections 2 and 3 of these guidelines are presented in simplified form as a flow chart in Section 5.

**1.5** In Sections 2 and 3 it is expected that at any stage all options for the resolution of any grievance will be explored before proceeding to the next stage.

### **2 Grievance Procedure for Subordinate Lodges**

**2.1.1** Should any member/members of a lodge under the jurisdiction of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Antrim (P.G.L.A.) have a grievance against another member/members of his/their lodge or the lodge itself he/they should raise the issue with his/their Worshipful Master. The Worshipful Master should endeavour to secure a fair and equitable solution to his/their grievance within three months of the grievance first being raised formally.

**2.1.2** If the Worshipful Master feels that he cannot resolve the grievance himself or has a conflict of interest, it is recommended that the following process should be adopted.

## **2.2 Stage 1**

**2.2.1** The Worshipful Master will set up a Lodge Grievance Committee comprising 3 - 5 lodge members designated by the Worshipful Master and chaired by a senior officer of the Lodge to hear the grievance. This committee shall exclude the Worshipful Master and any member who has a direct interest in or is a party to the grievance

It is the duty of the Lodge Grievance Committee to hear both sides of the grievance and, when in possession of all the facts attempt to resolve the issue in a fair and impartial manner, reporting the outcome to the Worshipful Master and all the relevant parties.

## **2.3 Stage 2**

**2.3.1** Should the grievant(s) consider that his/their grievance has not been resolved to his/their satisfaction under Stage 1 of the procedure and all options have been exhausted, he/they may submit an appeal in writing to the Provincial Grand Secretary (P.G.S.) of P.G.L.A. setting out the basis of the grievance and grounds for appeal and providing, where appropriate, all relevant documentation or witness statements.

**2.3.2** On receipt of the Grievance, the Secretary shall convene a Hearing Committee comprising twelve Brethren who are members of the Panel. (as per Section I appendix 2.1 ) This Committee will hear the Grievance: the membership of the Committee shall remain the same for the duration of the proceedings concerning the Grievance. Each member is expected to attend every meeting of the Committee. Five members shall constitute a quorum and any decisions shall require a simple majority of those present.

The Grievance Committee shall be chaired by a Provincial Assistant Grand Master, who will be assisted by the Secretary and the Provincial Grand Registrar. None of these three brethren shall be entitled to vote in any decision making process.

Any member of the Grievance Committee who feels he has a conflict of interest shall declare that fact and shall be excused from serving on the case being considered. The Secretary shall arrange for that brother to be replaced.

Members of the Executive Committee shall not be eligible for membership of the Grievance Committees except as outlined in above.

**2.3.3** It is the duty of the P.G.L.A. Grievance Committee to hear both sides of the grievance and when in possession of all the facts attempt to resolve the issue in a fair and impartial manner reporting the outcome to the aggrieved party and any other relevant parties.

## **2.4 Stage 3**

Should the grievant(s) consider that his/their grievance has not been resolved to his/their satisfaction under Stage 2 of this procedure, he/they may submit an appeal in writing to the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Ireland setting out the basis of the grievance and grounds for appeal and in accordance with the rules and regulations of Grand Lodge.

## **3 Grievance Procedure as between Lodges and other Masonic Bodies**

### **3.1 Stage 1**

**3.1.1** Should an aggrieved party or parties or a lodge under the jurisdiction of P.G.L.A. have a grievance against P.G.L.A, any Officer of P.G.L.A, or a member of another subordinate lodge within the province he/they should submit his/their grievance in writing to the P.G.S. setting out the basis of the grievance.

On receipt of the Grievance, the Secretary shall convene a Grievance Committee comprising twelve Brethren who are members of the Panel. This Committee will hear the Charge: the membership of the Committee shall remain the same for the duration of the proceedings concerning the Charge. Each member is expected to attend every meeting of the Committee. Five members shall constitute a quorum and any decisions shall require a simple majority of those present.

The Grievance Committee shall be chaired by a Provincial Assistant Grand Master, who will be assisted by the Secretary and the Provincial Grand Registrar. None of these three brethren shall be entitled to vote in any decision making process.

Any member of the Grievance Committee who feels he has a conflict of interest shall declare that fact and shall be excused from serving on the case being considered. The Secretary shall arrange for that brother to be replaced.

Members of the Executive Committee shall not be eligible for membership of the Grievance Committee except as outlined in above.

If the grievance is against a Senior Officer of P.G.L.A, then a Senior Officer from a neighbouring Province shall be invited to chair the Grievance Committee.

It is the duty of the P.G.L.A. Grievance Hearing Committee to hear both sides of the grievance and when in possession of all the facts attempt to resolve the issue in a fair and impartial manner reporting the outcome to the aggrieved party or parties or lodge and any other relevant parties.

### **3.2 Stage 2**

Should the grievant(s) consider that his/their grievance has not been resolved to his/their satisfaction under stage 1 of this procedure, he/they may submit an appeal in writing to the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Ireland setting out the basis of the grievance and grounds for appeal and in accordance with the rules and regulations of Grand Lodge.

### **4 Review**

These Guidelines will be reviewed from time to time by the P.G.L.A. Executive Committee in order to assess their suitability and efficacy.

### **5 Flow Chart**

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Flow Chart

