

**ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS  
GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE OF IRELAND**



**ROLL CALL AND MINUTES  
OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
GENERAL & RECONVENED MEETING  
OF CONFERENCE 2020**

**TULLAMORE COURT HOTEL  
7<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> March 2020  
and  
21st November 2020 (Reconvened Online)**

## **Agenda Item 1: Opening of Conference by Chairperson**

Emmet O'H. (Chairperson) opened Conference by welcoming everybody and asked for a moments silence to consider why we were here. Conference recited the Serenity Prayer and Tradition Two was read. Emmet O'H. read from page 71 of the General Service Handbook 'Why Do We Need a Conference?'

Conference agreed to adjourn at 10pm on Saturday and recommence at 9am on Sunday.

## **Service Handbook for Ireland (2014/01 Article 14, voting at meeting, Page 66)**

The decision of Conference resulting from any vote or any Motion or Item before Conference shall be:

1.1 All Items or Motions passed unanimously becomes Conference policy immediately and are recommended in trust to all Groups, Area Committees, Intergroups, Conference and Board.

1.2 All items or motions passed by a two-thirds majority are recommended and unless rescinded by notice of motion, become Conference policy after the expiry of one year.

1.3 All Items or Motions receiving only a simple majority are recommendations and shall be further debated at the next Annual General Service Conference.

## **Agenda Item 2: Roll Call**

<b>Connaught</b>		<b>Munster</b>	
Trustee	Richard O'M.	Trustee	Martin C.
(Alt) Delegate	Joseph B.	Delegate	John T.
Delegate	Marilyn K.	Delegate	Michael McG.
Delegate	James O'S.	Delegate	Nicholas R.
IG Secretary	Maura K.	(Alt) Delegate	Tom K.
		IG Secretary	Michael D.
<b>Leinster</b>		<b>Ulster</b>	
Trustee	Pat K.	Trustee	Brian F.
Delegate	Philip Mc G	Delegate	Tom D.
Delegate	Anthony McN.	Delegate	Colum P.
Delegate	Barbara A.	Delegate	Brian G.
Delegate	Michael D.	Delegate	Kenny P.
IG Secretary	Maria M.	IG Secretary	John McC.

<b>Other</b>		<b>Observers</b>	
Board Secretary	Tony O'C.	Moira S. Liam O'B. Pat B. Barbara Counihan Nigel P. Eric C (Apologies) Michelle R. Finn O'M.	WSD Nominee WSD Nominee WSD Nominee Operations Manager GB Observer GB Observer Observer Observer
WSD's	Helen H.		
Non-AA Member Director/Trustee	Diarmuid Mc Keown		
Non-AA Member Director/Trustee	Cindy O'Shea		
Non-AA Member Director/Trustee	Liz Cullen		
Chairperson	Emmet O'H		

A lengthy debate ensued on Alternate Delegates to Conference and the legitimacy of the Delegates attending on behalf of Connaught Intergroup. It was pointed out that you cannot have an Alternate Delegate for a Delegate that has resigned or has not completed their term. There were contributions on this matter from all members of Conference, with some members expressing concern on the conflicting accounts that were emanating as to resignations and the attendance of Alternate Delegates, for the Province of Connaught and the attendance of Alternate Delegates at Conference who had resigned or retired as there were two Alternates in attendance representing Connaught. Following deliberations of the General Service Conference, the issue was voted upon on whether one of the Delegates should be requested to leave or to remain for the duration of Conference.

It was agreed by vote that the Alternate Delegate remain for the Conference. On the matter of a second Alternate Delegate alternating for a Connaught Delegate who had missed two Conferences thereby, deeming them ineligible for the position of Conference Delegate. A further debate and discussion took place on having an Alternate Delegate replace a Conference Delegate who was not currently fulfilling their role. Conference voted on the second Alternate Delegate from Connaught remaining for the duration of Conference. It was the decision of the General Service Conference after a vote, that the second Alternate Delegate would not attend the remainder of Conference as an Alternate.

Subsequently the Alternate Delegate who was deemed ineligible by Conference to attend, requested permission of the General Service Conference to sit as an Observer for the remainder of Conference proceedings. There was unanimous agreement on this that they could remain as an Observer.

**Agenda Item 3: Adoption of 2020 Conference Agenda (Appendix 1)**

**Adoption of Agenda and other urgent business in accordance with Paragraph 12.3, page 66 of 2014/1 Service Handbook.**

A brief discussion took place on Draft Agenda; it was proposed by Helen H. (WSD) Seconded by Tom K (Munster) that the Agenda be adopted with minor changes to item numbers.

**Agenda Item 4: Adoption of 2019 Conference Minutes and Matters Arising**

Chairperson went through the Minutes page by page. There were no matters arising.

Minutes were proposed by Mick D. (Leinster) seconded by Anthony McN. (Leinster). Roll Call amended on 2019 Reconvened Conference in relation to attendance for Connaught.

**Agenda Item 5: Introduction of new AA Trustees**

Incoming Trustee Martin C. was welcomed by the General Service Conference of Ireland as AA Provincial Trustee for Munster.

Incoming Non-AA–Member Trustee Cindy O’Shea was also welcomed by Conference Members.

**Agenda Item 6: Election of World Service Delegates**

Three nominations for the position of World Service Delegate were received, all of which came through Structure.

It was pointed out by Brian G. (Ulster) that due regard be given to rotation in relation to this position as per the General Service Handbook.

It was also noted by Anthony McN. (Leinster) that two of the nominations were former Trustees. Anthony felt this was wrong and was not in the spirit of rotation.

It was pointed out by James O’S (Connaught) that the nominee on behalf of Connaught was approached by members in Galway to allow his name to go forward and was done in the AA spirit. Helen H. (WSD) read from qualifications for the role of WSD p63/64 of the General Service Handbook. Each nominee gave a brief history of their service in AA.

The nominations were Liam O’B. (Connaught), Moira S. (Leinster) and Pat B. (Ulster). ‘Third legacy procedure’ was used to select a candidate, one candidate was withdrawn after the third ballot, as they had not received one third of the total vote.

Following a fifth and final ballot as agreed by Conference, no nominee had reached the required two-thirds majority, both remaining names were placed in a hat. Moira S's name was drawn deeming her to be elected as World Service Delegate.

**Agenda Item 7: Election of GB Observers April 2019**

Brian F. (AA Ulster Trustee) proposed Nicholas R. (Munster) Seconded by Tom K. (Munster).

Pat K. (Leinster Trustee) Proposed Marilyn K. (Connaught) Seconded by Maura K. (Connaught).

Barbara A. (Leinster) proposed Mick McG. (Munster) Seconded by Martin C. (Munster).

Following a vote by Conference Mick McG. (Munster) & Marilyn K. (Connaught) were selected to attend the 2020 GB Conference as observers.

**Agenda Item 8: Motions to Conference. (Appendix 8)**

Pat K. (AA Leinster Trustee) requested that all Delegates presenting Motions to Conference confirm that each Motion had come through the Structure from Group, to Area and on through Intergroup for inclusion at Conference.

Conference agreed that all the Motions below be taken together and debated as one Motion pertaining to the 'Road Back Magazine'.

<b>Connaught Intergroup: Motion</b>	<b>Oranmore Good Morning Group, Galway</b>
	<b>Title: The Road Back.</b>
<b>Connaught Intergroup:</b>	<b>Salthill Morning Group, Galway.</b>
	<b>Title: The Road Back.</b>
<b>Connaught Intergroup:</b>	<b>Turloughmore Cuan Mhuire Group, Galway.</b>
<b>Connaught Intergroup:</b>	<b>Summerhill Group, Athlone</b>
	<b>Title: The Road Back.</b>
<b>Ulster Intergroup:</b>	<b>Dungannon Third Legacy Group, Tyrone.</b>
	<b>Title: The Road Back</b>

Connaught Motions were by presented by James O' S, (Connaught).

Ulster Motion was presented by Kenny P, (Ulster).

Synopsis of points highlighted in relation to the above Motions.

Diarmuid McKeown (Non-AA Member Trustee) stated that the 'Road Back' would continue to be printed and available free of charge on request to the General Service Office.

Pat K. (Trustee Leinster) said that surplus back issues of the magazine had been available for some time for distribution to Treatment Facilities, Prisons, etc.

It was found that nobody was interested in taking these copies to distribute hence, GSBA were paying to have the magazines shredded. Pat K. went on to say that a lot of misinformation was circulating in relation to this matter.

There was a reference to a letter that was circulated regarding the future of the 'Road Back' and it was pointed out by Liz Cullen (Non-AA Member Trustee) that the letter was not entirely clear.

In response to a query from Mick McG. (Munster), the Board Secretary stated that any AA Member that wished to have a hard copy of the 'Road Back' magazine could contact GSO and a printed copy of the magazine would be posted to them free of charge. He further pointed out that all issues of the magazine would be available on the National AA Website under the eMagazines button.

In response to a query from Joe B. (Connaught), the Board Secretary clarified that the General Service Board are the Publishers and Editors of the 'Road Back' this falls within their remit. The decision taken by the Board from the outset was always to have the 'Road Back' available in printed format for anyone requiring a hardcopy on request.

Nicholas R. (Munster) stated that we were moving too quick to online facilities. It was again reiterated that the 'Road Back' would continue to be available on hardcopy free of charge.

Tom D. (Ulster) said that the explanations presented in response to all five Motions relating to the 'Road Back' effectively nullified the Motions on this issue. Tom went on to point out that the Ulster Trustee had on many occasions brought back issues of the 'Road Back' to the Province of Ulster and this was not a problem.

Kenny P. (Ulster) stated that that Dungannon Third Legacy Group Tyrone had also submitted a Motion on this issue, Kenny P. went on to state in presenting the Motion that the queries raised in the Motion had been dealt with in the discussion in so far as, if somebody rings requesting copies of the publication they can and will receive hardcopies.

The Chair of Conference (Emmet O'H.) confirmed that the 'Road Back' would still be available to anyone who requested a copy of the publication and that there were no plans now or in the future to cease the publication.

John McC. (Ulster) posed three questions:

- Q1.** Is the 'Road Back Magazine' being phased out?  
Response on behalf of the Board was No.
- Q2.** Are hardcopies available?  
Response - Yes.
- Q3.** Are Subscriptions being phased out?  
Response - Yes.

John further queried why are we discussing this matter? We should move on.  
Pat K (AA Leinster Trustee) again clarified that GSBAA are the editors and publishers of 'The Road Back'.

***The consensus of Conference was that the Motions submitted regarding the 'Road Back' were satisfactory and that the publication going forward, would continue to be available to all.***

**Connaught Intergroup – Ozanam House Group. Galway**  
**Title: AA Group Information Sheet**

Synopsis of points highlighted in relation to this Motion.

James O'S. (Connaught) presented this motion. Pat K. (Leinster AA Trustee) spoke on behalf of the Office Committee in relation to the item and stated that the Office Committee were in the process of designing a less cumbersome and more efficient method of processing Group Information details. James O'S. (Connaught) cited examples of inaccurate information contained in the AA National Directories and the process of filling out and changing information on GIS was becoming an issue for some groups because of the protracted process involved. Diarmuid McKeown, (Non-AA Member Trustee) read an Office Committee Report which directly related to this item to bring clarity to this Motion which also incorporated proposals to change the current system in relation to groups completing GIS.

Nicholas R. (Munster) stated that the current system was not working, and he had received complaints of frustration from Areas in Limerick and Clare. He stated that they were calling for a more simplified system.

Anthony McN. (Leinster) pointed out that there was a hold up with the information getting from Group, Area, to Intergroup.

The Chair of Conference (Emmet O'H.) recapped on the discussion relative to the Motion and stated that the feeling seemed to be emerging that Group Information Sheets could be sent directly to the General Service Office where, a checklist as described earlier in the discussion would be in place to ensure accuracy of information provided.

It was agreed that the proposal brought by the Office Committee relating to Group Information Sheets and the process and procedure i.e., that Groups completing a GIS can send them directly to GSO. It was further agreed by Conference on a suggestion from Anthony McN. (Leinster) that this be reviewed in 12 months' time.

***The motion was approved unanimously.***

**Leinster Intergroup – Motions**  
**Title: The Deaf Community Interpreter**

Anthony McN. (Leinster) presented this Motion on behalf on Leinster Intergroup. Anthony further stated that the Intergroup had set up a Sub-Committee to explore all of the matters in relation to this item.

Synopsis of points highlighted in relation to the Motion.

James O'S. (Connaught) said that he would be in favour of this Motion given that it would be of enormous assistance to the Deaf Community.

John T. (Munster) queried the costings involved in this facility.

Nicholas R. felt that the Motion ought not be heard as it had come from Leinster Intergroup and did not come from a Group.

Brian F. (Ulster AA Trustee) said that his sense was that this item was a decision for the relevant Intergroup.

Martin C. (Munster AA Trustee) queried how other Countries dealt with these matters.

Anthony McN. (Leinster) clarified that he had been in contact with the GB and USA in relation to this facility. Anthony clarified that all these meetings would be Open Meetings.

Cindy O'Shea (Non-AA Member Trustee) said that she felt the Motion was an excellent suggestion. Brian F. (Ulster AA Trustee) said that he thought it was a very good idea and that it should be done, and it should not be about money. However, his feeling was that the Intergroups should be the people responsible for rolling such an initiative out.

James O'S. (Connaught) stated that this Motion should be supported by Conference and that we ought to take charge of this project. It should not, he felt, be handed back to the Intergroup.



Mick McG. (Munster) queried if there had been any consultations directly with members of the Deaf Communities.

Anthony McN. (Leinster) confirmed that there had been extensive consultations with members of the Deaf Community, both inside and outside the Fellowship of AA, to gain a better understanding of their needs.

Helen H. (WSD) queried technological solutions i.e., Phone Apps. Anthony McN. (Leinster) stated that there were many advances in technology and that there were many variations of technologies available and huge advances in hearing devices. This, Anthony stated, was another avenue of exploration that would be investigated.

Pat K. (Leinster AA Trustee) said he was very much in favour of the Motion. However, Pat stated that he was concerned about requesting the Board to finance such a project as he believed it would open contentious ground. Pat K. further stated that a possible solution to this would be for the General Service Conference to authorise the Intergroup to make such a decision.

Kenny P. (Ulster) proposed that Leinster Intergroup hold twelve monthly Open AA Meetings at the cost as outlined by the Intergroup, for Deaf Signing and report back to Conference next year on the progress of the proposed project. This proposal was seconded by Martin C. (Munster AA Trustee).

Moira S. (WSD) agreed with the Motion, she further stated that she did not feel that it warranted a formal proposal from Conference as her sense was that it was a matter for the Intergroup.

Barbara A. (Leinster) stated that what was put forward in this Motion was on a trial basis and that this issue was going on for a considerable period of time in Leinster. Barbara felt the Intergroup needed to do something in relation to this matter as it was going nowhere, and the feeling was that a solution needed to be found.

***The Motion was approved unanimously.***

Anthony McN. (Leinster) thanked Conference for its support.

**Leinster Intergroup Motions  
Keep it Simple Group, Carlow Area 13  
Title: Pamphlet 'Traditions Checklist'**

The Motion was presented by Maria M. (Leinster).

Synopsis of points highlighted in relation to the Motion.

Barbara A. (Leinster) highlighted that the Pamphlet - Traditions Checklist may have to be adapted slightly.

Board Secretary sought clarification on whether the Pamphlet was to be made available on the National AA Website and on hardcopy. He was informed by Michael D. (Leinster) that it was to be available in both formats.

***The Motion was approved unanimously.***

**Munster Intergroup – Motions  
Middleton Group, Cork**

**Title: That Conference is changed back to a solely 'Spiritual Entity'**

John T. (Munster) presented this Motion. John stated that the AA Group for a period, were not happy and for a while contemplated operating outside AA Structure. However, he was glad to report that the AA Group were indeed functioning within the Service Structure. John T. outlined his consultations with the Group and gave an overview of his discussions.

Synopsis of points highlighted in relation to the Motion.

Pat K. (AA Leinster Trustee) gave an overview of AA as two separate entities as depicted at the Annual General Meeting of the Company on the previous evening.

Barbara A. (Leinster) stated that she believed that this matter was laid out in great detail at the AGM last evening.

Michael D. (Munster) strongly disagreed with the views expressed by the two previous speakers.

Pat K. (AA Leinster Trustee) reiterated that the Company known as the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous is a Company limited by guarantee. It has seven Directors who, along with twenty-three further Members, form the Company. The seven Directors are accountable to the twenty-three Company Members for their stewardship at its Annual General Meeting. The General Service Conference of Ireland is a spiritual entity that happens to have the same thirty members, the General Service Conference is also held annually. These he pointed out are two separate bodies.

Mick McG. (Munster) stated that he felt offended by a number of points raised in the Motion; Mick further pointed out that these matters had been dealt with on the previous evening at the AGM of the Company.

Anthony McN. (Leinster) said he was opposed to this Motion.

Nicholas R, (Munster) said he would not be supporting the Motion as the position outlining the difference between the Company and Conference was dealt with in detail the previous evening.

Tom D. (Ulster) stated he had studied the Motion several times and while it was skilfully worded and mentioned the word 'spiritual' several times he did not feel he needed to be blackmailed into what spirituality was.

Tom D. went on to say that he had listened very carefully the previous evening, to the external professional who attended the AGM, to offer guidance and he had no difficulty in understanding how Alcoholics Anonymous was constituted. Brian F. (Ulster AA Trustee) pointed out that it was his view that the seven Trustees and Board Secretary along with the General Service Office have always acted with integrity. The fact that we have now thirty Members of the Company is not going to make the Board any better.

John T. (Munster) summing up in relation to this Motion stated, that he would report back on what was discussed here today and would report that there was more oversight in relation to the seven-member Board. John T. (Munster) went on to say that it was vital that we, as a Company, and as a Conference, pay attention and take notice of Motions and Submissions from AA Groups. It should also be important to have clear lines of accurate communication.

***This Motion was put to a vote, 23 voted against the Motion. 4 voted in favour of the Motion.***

***The Motion was not approved.***

**Ulster Intergroup – Motions**  
**62 Lisburn Road Group, Belfast**  
**Title: Guidelines for Area and Intergroup Inventory Meetings.**

Tom D. (Ulster) presented the Motion, stating that the Motion was born out of last year's Conference regarding round table discussions on encouraging members into Service.

Synopsis of points highlighted in relation to the Motion.

Nicholas R. (Munster) stated that the Motion was a very good document.

Brian G. (Ulster) said he felt the Motion would be very beneficial particularly for new members to Service.

Michael D. (Leinster) said that he also felt that it was a good Motion and worthy of approval.

Anthony McN. (Leinster) said the Motion was an excellent document.

Moira S. (WSD) felt that a lot of thought and work went into the format of the Motion, Moira was unsure as to why Conference approval was entirely necessary.

Pat K. (Ulster AA Trustee) commended the work on the Motion and felt it was a very well-prepared Motion. However, his sense was that he would like to have the feeling of the other groups in relation to the Motion before it is inserted in the Service Handbook. Tom K. (Munster) stated that it was welcome Motion and again thought it was beneficial.

James O'S. (Connaught) posed the question that if this document was sent to Groups for consultation, could the document be added to, given that it was a Motion.

A discussion ensued on Inventories at this point. Tom D. (Ulster) asked if it was acceptable to use the Suggested Inventory Questionnaire in the interim. The consensus was that it could be used.

Brian F. (Ulster AA Trustee) stated that the question on behalf of Ulster was could these inventory documents be included in the General Service Handbook. Brian went on to propose that the said document be included in the Handbook as it was a Motion to conference, this proposal was seconded by James O'S. (Connaught).

At this point the Ulster Conference members were asked if they would like the Motion voted on. Their response was yes it was a Motion to Conference.

***The Motion was put to a vote, 24 voted in favour and 3 abstained.***

***The Motion was approved.***

### **Agenda Item 9: World Service Delegates – ESM 2019 Report. (Appendix 9)**

Helen H. (WSD) presented report on the European Service Meeting.

Diarmuid McKeown (Non-AA Member Trustee) queried the necessity of reading reports given, that all Conference Members had been given advance copies of all reports and submissions several weeks prior to Conference.

Tom D. (Ulster) stated that it was important that the work of the World Service Delegates is presented and heard at Conference.

Brian G. (Ulster) commended Helen on the preparation of the report however, he felt that the reading of the entire report was unnecessary and suggested that maybe a brief bullet pointed report with an overview of the event would suffice.

Moirá S. (WSD) stated that it was wonderful to hear Helen's experience shared and believed the reading of the report was beneficial.

Anthony McN. (Leinster) stated that he agreed with the sentiments expressed by Diarmuid McKeown in relation to reading reports that are furnished in advance of Conference. Anthony further stated that the reports could be taken as read, if there were any questions relative to the documents these could be answered by the Conference Member who would have presented an advance copy of the report.

The ESM 2019 report was approved by Conference on a proposal by Tom K. (Munster) and was seconded by Michael D. (Munster).

It was proposed by Kenny P. (Ulster) that going forward, all reports including Conference Delegates Area reports be taken as read, with the Delegate highlighting any important points that requires Conferences specific attention. This proposal would take effect in 2021 General Service Conference. This proposal was seconded by Brian G. (Ulster) and was unanimously approved by the General Service Conference.

### **Agenda Item 10: Conference Delegates Reports. (Appendix 10)**

#### **Connaught**

Galway Area Report: James O'S. (Connaught) presented the report.  
Liz Cullen (Non-AA Member Trustee) congratulated Galway Area and said that there seemed to be a lot of good work going on in the Galway Area.

Mayo Area Report: Marilyn K. (Connaught) presented the report.  
Sligo/Nth. Leitrim Report: James O'S. (Connaught) presented the report.

#### **Leinster**

Area 1: Anthony McN. (Leinster) presented the report.  
Area 2: Anthony McN. (Leinster) presented the report.  
Area 3 & 4: Anthony McN. (Leinster) presented the report.  
Area 6: Mick D. (Leinster) presented the report.  
Area 7: Mick D. (Leinster) presented the report.  
Area 9: Philip Mc G. (Leinster) presented the report.  
Area 10: Mick D. (Leinster) presented the report.  
Area 12: Anthony McN. (Leinster) presented the report.  
Area 13: Philip McG. (Leinster) presented the report.  
Area 14: Philip McG. (Leinster) presented the report.  
PI Report: Maria M. (Leinster) presented the report.

#### **Munster**

Clare Area: Nicholas R (Munster) presented the report.  
Cork City Area: Mick McG. (Munster) presented the report.  
North and East Cork Area: John T. (Munster) presented the report.  
Kerry Area: John T. (Munster) presented the report.  
West Cork Area: Mick McG. (Munster) presented the report.  
Limerick City Area: Nicholas R. (Munster) presented the report.  
Limerick County Area: Nicholas R. (Munster) presented the report.  
Tipperary Area: Tom K. (Munster) presented the report.  
Waterford Area: Tom K. (Munster) presented the report.

## **Ulster**

Armagh/Derry/Tyrone:	Colum P. (Ulster) presented the report.
Antrim/Belfast/Derry/Down:	Brian G (Ulster) presented the report.
Fermanagh/Cavan/Monaghan:	Kenny P. (Ulster) presented the report.
Ulster Delegate Report:	Tom D. (Ulster) delivered the report.
Ulster PICC Report:	Presented by John McC. (Ulster) on behalf of UPICC.

There were several observations, comments, and views expressed by Members of Conference on all of the reports presented, a number of queries were also responded to by Delegates who presented reports. On the issue of Public Information in Alcoholics Anonymous, a useful exchange of information took place. Brian F. (Ulster AA Trustee) highlighted the Public Information Folder (Kit) that is available to purchase from GSO which, Brian stated, was a very useful tool in carrying the AA message. Liz Cullen (Non-AA Member Trustee) paid tribute to the work being undertaken by AA Nationwide. Liz further stated that she found all the information shared very useful and enlightening. It was also flagged that new Business Cards with the National AA Website contact details were available from GSO and CSO for PI work. Cindy O'Shea (Non-AA Member Trustee) also commended the work on the reports presented at Conference, Cindy stated that it gave her a flavour of the amount of impressive work that people did on the ground.

### **Agenda Item 11: 62<sup>nd</sup> All Ireland Convention Report 2019 (Appendix 11)**

Brian F. (Ulster AA Trustee) presented the report to Conference.  
The report was accepted by Conference.

### **Agenda Item 12: Report from GB Conference 12<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> April 2019 (Appendix 12)**

Kenny P. (Ulster) and Anthony McN. (Leinster) presented the report.  
The report was accepted by Conference. There was a further substantive discussion on the contents of the GB Observers Report, along with three questions posed by the two Observers.

#### **Questions:**

**(a)** In GB, retiring Delegates and Trustees are encouraged to stay involved in Service at Intergroup/Regional levels. Is this something we should look at in Ireland? Maybe there is some way we can harness and use this experience, which is currently being lost.

**(b)** AA in GB have a Young People's Liaison Officers, GB Conference recognised that younger members had different 'needs' and needed supports. These YPLOs have proven to be hugely successful. Is this something that we as a Conference in Ireland should explore?

**(c)** A lot of Literature, particularly pamphlets, in GB are sold to groups for a nominal fee (1 penny). This is done for a number of reasons, primarily to encourage Groups and Members to purchase and read this material. Are there any items of Literature that we could consider adopting a similar policy with in Ireland?

There followed a lengthy discussion on this topic with contributions from all Conference Members.

On the matter of Young People in AA., Nigel P. (GB Observer) stated that in his experience that if you had young people involved in PI work in AA, it would yield excellent results.

Helen H. (WSD) stated that regarding a Young Person's Liaison Officer in AA, guidelines would be required for such a role.

On the issue of young people, Barbara A. (Leinster) raised the matter of young dynamic people operating Conventions and Conferences outside the AA Service Structure and this is a subject that ought to be discussed by Conference, with a view of finding a pathway to bringing these young people inside the AA Structure. Cindy O'Shea (Non-AA Member Trustee) commended the two GB Observers on the report and recommended that the three very important questions be discussed and debated as part of the Reconvened Conference.

As a result of the report delivered by the two GB Observers, Moira S. (WSD) stated that the three questions posed had a lot of merit and warranted a discussion and should be dealt with in the short term as opposed to waiting for Motions to come through Structure. It was proposed by Anthony McN. (Leinster) that the three questions be incorporated into 'Service in AA, the Solution' and be debated at the Reconvened Conference. The proposal was seconded by Maria M. (Leinster). There was also a proposal by Tom D. (Ulster) that the three questions be built into the Strategic Plan. This was seconded by Brian G. (Ulster).

Further discussion took place on remaining agenda items for Reconvened Conference.

Tom D. (Ulster) stated that he wished to withdraw his proposal and accede to Anthony McN. (Leinster) proposal.

It was further agreed by Conference that that the item 'Service in AA, the Solution' including the three questions would not be discussed until Conference reconvenes in an attempt to give all Delegates an opportunity to bring feedback on the Agenda Item. The Agenda would be amended accordingly.

**Agenda Item 13: Invitation to AAGB to attend General Service Conference Ireland 2021.**

Conference agreed unanimously to invite Observers from GB to attend the 2021 General Service Conference.

**Agenda Item 15: Suggested Guidelines for Personal Conduct and Appropriate Behaviour for AA Members (leaflet issued 2019).**

Tom D. (Ulster), in relation to this item, reported that seven out of ten Areas in Ulster agreed with the Personal Conduct and Appropriate Behaviour Pamphlet and the members that he had consulted with, were happy that we had this type of document in place.

Anthony McN. (Leinster) reported that 90% of Groups are in favour with a substantial number strongly in favour. Groups have found it to be beneficial and helpful. Anthony (Leinster) said there were a small number of people not in favour and it was likely that these were the ones that most needed the document.

Mick D. (Leinster) endorsed Anthony's comments.

Barbara A. (Leinster) said that a particular group that she was familiar with, found the pamphlet a huge help as a form of guidance.

Tom K. (Munster) shared that it was an asset to Group Conscience.

Mick McG. (Munster) reported that it was worthwhile pamphlet as long as guidance was provided to compliment the document via the AA Group Conscience, it was generally well received.

Nicholas R. (Munster) pointed out that the pamphlet was for all individual AA Members, it was an educational tool that needed to read by all. It was not necessarily for any one AA Group.

John T. (Munster) stated that generally the document was well received, and AA Groups felt that now had some form of guidance to refer to in the event of any inappropriate conduct.

James O'S. (Connaught) reported that the pamphlet was well received, the guidelines were clear in relation to unacceptable behaviour.

Maura K. (Connaught) stated that in Mayo, the suggested guidelines were again generally well received. Maura was very pleased to see such a document being produced.

Marilyn K. (Connaught) stated that it was a very worthwhile document, and, in her Areas, it was very well received.

***The Suggested Guidelines for Personal Conduct and Appropriate Behaviour for AA Members (leaflet issued 2019) was unanimously adopted by the General Service Conference.***



Nigel P. (GB Observer) congratulated Conference on the pamphlet and stated that it was an excellent piece of work. Nigel also thanked all Members of Conference for their hospitality and warmth.

Moira S. (WSD) thanked the Board for bringing the document forward to the General Service Conference for deliberation and approval.

Brian F. (Ulster AA Trustee) queried, given the Coronavirus situation, what would be the position in relation to the Reconvened Conference, scheduled for May 2020. Board Secretary stated that the venue was booked and that the hope would be that Conference would proceed. However, we would have to wait and review the position, the hope would be that the Coronavirus situation would not deteriorate.

**Conference concluded with the Serenity Prayer.**

**ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS  
GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE OF IRELAND**



**ROLL CALL AND MINUTES  
OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
RECONVENED MEETING OF CONFERENCE 2020**

**Online Meeting  
Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2020**

## Opening of Reconvened Conference by Chairperson

Emmet O'H. (Chairperson) opened Reconvened Conference by welcoming everybody and asked for a moments silence to consider why we were here. Conference recited the Serenity Prayer. Conference Chair (Emmet) then stated the following *'at Conference last March, proceedings were delayed due to queries that I had regarding attendees. On reflection, irrespective of my motives, this was beyond my role as Conference Chairperson. Attendance, or who attends Conference is not one of the roles of Conference Chairperson. Personally, I would like to take this opportunity to wholeheartedly apologise to all members of conference for this.'* The Conference Chair then handed the meeting over to the Board/Company Secretary for the Roll Call.

### Roll Call

<b>Connaught</b>		<b>Munster</b>	
Trustee		Trustee	Martin C.
Alt Delegate	Joe B.	Delegate	John T.
Delegate	James O S.	Delegate	Michael Mc G.
Delegate	Marilyn K,	Delegate	Nicholas R.
		Alt Delegate	Tom K.
IG Secretary		IG Secretary	Michael D.
<b>Leinster</b>		<b>Ulster</b>	
Trustee	Pat K.	Trustee	Brian F.
Delegate	Michael D.	Delegate	Tom D.
Delegate	Anthony Mc N.	Delegate	Colum P.
Delegate	Barbara A.	Delegate	Kenny P.
Delegate	Philip Mc G	Delegate	Brian G.
IG Secretary	Maria M	IG Secretary	John Mc C.
<b>Others</b>			
Board Secretary	Tony O'C.	<b>Observers</b>	
WSDs	Moira S. Helen H.	Barbara Counihan	Operations Manager
Non-AA Member Trustee	Liz Cullen		
Non-AA Member Trustee	Cindy O'Shea		
Chairperson	Emmet O'H		

Following the roll call, the Chair of Conference (Emmet O'H.) announced that the Company/Board Secretary wished to issue a statement on Behalf of the GSBAA Director/Trustees,

### **Statement on behalf of the GSBAA Trustees.**

The purpose of the Reconvened Conference is to complete the agreed Agenda of the Annual General Service Conference which normally begins in March each year. The Reconvened Conference is not a new or separate meeting, it is merely the completion of the Annual Conference, begun in March.

The Board recognises that holding a virtual online Conference is not the usual method of carrying out the vital ongoing business of Alcoholics Anonymous. Regardless of our own personal preferences, the global COVID-19 Pandemic this year has dictated otherwise. There is adequate precedent for us to be flexible in all our affairs. Our Co-Founder Bill Wilson, stated that, and I quote: *"Nothing matters more to AA's future welfare than the manner in which we use the colossus of modern communication. Used unselfishly and well, it can produce results surpassing our present imagination."* It was of course the firm intention to proceed with a physical Reconvened Conference in May of this year, but this had to be deferred to September, and as you will be aware from the correspondence you received it was then rescheduled for November in Mullingar, when yet another postponement became necessary, due to continuing Covid-19 restrictions. The Board will always, in accordance with best practice and Public Health advice, follow the guidelines issued by our statutory authorities. The Board are not just Provincial Trustees, we are also Directors of the Company called GSBAA Ireland CLG. In these joint roles we are required to act as leaders. Leaders lead, not to curry favour with certain elements within the organisation, not to pander to individual preferences, but for the collective good of the Fellowship and the Company of Alcoholics Anonymous.

It is worth repeating that Alcoholics Anonymous in Ireland comprises two closely connected, but nonetheless separate, organisations: The Fellowship of AA, known as General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous in Ireland which is comprised of Groups, Areas, Provincial Intergroups and the General Service Conference of AA on the one hand, and the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous Ireland CLG.

The General Service Board of AA is both a Company Limited by Guarantee and a Registered Charity, so the company is subject to Statutory Laws, Company Law, and Charity Law.

The General Service Conference conducts the business of the AA Groups of Ireland in accordance with the Constitution for Conference in Ireland.

Members of Conference and Intergroup Secretaries are, of course, Trusted Servants, elected via their Groups, Areas, and Intergroups to serve the AA Groups of Ireland collectively. They are also expected to act as leaders and make decisions along with offering guidance and support within the AA Service Structure.

All of us here today, including members of the General Service Board, are volunteers who give freely of their time to ensure the AA message is carried to the still-suffering alcoholic, which is our Primary Purpose. While not a popularity contest, none of us took up our AA Service roles to be vilified, criticised, gossiped about or to be told our best is not good enough. This is not what the AA Programme of Recovery is about. We need solution-focused thinking and not relentless negativity. We should all ask ourselves when we last praised someone for putting in a good effort on behalf of the Fellowship.

We thank those members countrywide who took the time to send messages and calls of support to the staff at GSO. It is always heartening to have one's efforts acknowledged.

Sadly, some pockets of inaccurate information get passed around, often because these are more interesting than the actual facts. Such information, of course, only adds to the confusion and uncertainty. Some people like to throw stones into calm water just to see how far the ripples travel. It is the responsibility of all of us, as Trusted Servants, as leaders in AA, to ensure that accurate information is transmitted to Intergroups, Areas, and Groups to assist them in arriving at well-informed decisions at their respective Group Conscience Meetings, this is the duty of all members of Conference. The message to the Fellowship throughout the Pandemic has remained constant - follow Public Health/Government advice and let a well-informed Group Conscience be your best guide (Tradition 2).

We ought to remind ourselves that Governments, Companies, and volunteer-led organisations like AA, scrambled to find ways of maintaining their services after the outbreak of COVID-19. There was no blueprint, no rulebook for this Global Pandemic. Millions have become ill, millions of lives lost, and we are not yet free of this disease. A vaccine is still not available for general use.

Our fellowship is at a critical crossroads, not just in Ireland but globally. What we do today, how we behave and conduct our vital business, now and over the coming months and, indeed, years, will shape Alcoholics Anonymous, Change is inevitable. There is no avoiding this. The only question that matters is: are we changing for the better? If we are not, then we are changing for the worse. Doing nothing is not an option.

Within our fellowship we need to realise that change can be seen as a threat to our old, comfortable ways, or it can be seen and embraced as an opportunity. Adapting to change and having the courage to change are the keys to positive growth and success.

Meaningful change is achieved through effective communication. We need to build on our communication skills, both internally and externally, in a spirit of consensus within AA, to enable us to convey accurate information and decisions to our AA Groups, Areas, and Intergroups.

Successful organisations continue to change.

We as a Fellowship and as a Company need to take a pragmatic approach to the many difficulties that have arisen during 2020 as a result of the unforeseen effects of COVID-19. We need to continue to take Inventory, personally and at group and other levels and evaluate how we practise the Principles in all our affairs. Today, we need to act. We urgently need to decide and to act with courage. Yes, we could debate and deliberate indefinitely, but today we need to act. We urgently need to prepare this unfamiliar ground for the AA members yet to arrive at our door. Please keep our fellowship strong and united.

Before finishing I would like to add a few words about AA finance. I stress that AA is not about money, but that without money, there is no AA. Contributions are falling severely from last year's levels. We will shortly be updating the website with full information regarding our situation. We ask you all here today, as AA leaders, to take the lead in asking Groups, Areas and Intergroups to inform members of the various ways they can contribute via Tradition 7. Members can donate via the website Tradition 7 option, via Electronic Transfer, Cheques, monthly Direct Debits. Of course, physical meetings can continue to pass the basket. We urge you to forward surplus funds through the structure in a timely manner and not to leave money lying around doing nothing.

The Board wishes you all well during these difficult times, with continued and strengthened sobriety for all.

Thank you,  
GSBAA

The Board Secretary stated that there was another matter that needed to be addressed. This issue was in relation to an email that was received from two members of Connaught Intergroup requesting the General Service Conference to hold a vote of no confidence in the Conference Chairperson Emmet O'H.

James O'S. (Connaught) gave an overview of the background relative to the proposed vote of no confidence in the chairperson. James stated that it was his belief that the Chairman acted in a biased way at March 2020 Conference. He further stated that the Chairman did not demonstrate the qualities that are usual with Chairmanship of Conference.

Marilyn K. (Connaught) endorsed and fully supported James O'S. sentiments and further stated that the Chairman of Conference went outside his remit.

Nicholas R. (Munster) posed the question as to why he was joining the meeting at 11.00am. Nicholas went on to state that he had absolutely no confidence in the Conference Chairperson.

Anthony Mc N. (Leinster) stated that at the outset he wished to state that he had full confidence in the Chairman of Conference. Anthony further went on to point out that he did not think it was necessary for the chair to apologise at the commencement of the Reconvened Conference. Anthony went on to say that it was amazing to note that the people involved in proposing the no confidence motion were the same people that were trying to have this Conference cancelled. The Secretary was asked to clarify when he had received the request for the no confidence motion? Board Secretary responded by saying he had received the written request via email on November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Anthony Mc N. (Leinster) pointed to the fact that it had taken from March 2020 until November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020 for this no confidence motion to be forwarded. He went on to say that this was an attempt by a small number of people to derail Conference.

Tom K. (Munster) said that we could stay all day discussing this motion and go around in circles it was his belief that no malice was intended by the Conference Chairperson last March. Tom's proposal was that we get along with the business of the agenda.

Mick McG. (Munster) stated that he was very disappointed in the Chairperson of Conference in March 2020. Mick McG. fully endorsed the sentiments of the Connaught Conference Members.

Joe B. (Connaught) said that Connaught had been decimated as a result of what transpired at March Conference. Joe further pointed out that the Members of the Board were not very forthcoming. He was supporting the vote of no confidence.

Tom D. (Ulster) stated that he found this debate incredible using words like decimated and demeaned on one hand, and on then talking about love and service in Alcoholics Anonymous. Tom went on to say that there was no ill intent in what had occurred, and he was wishing the Conference Chairman well.

The Secretary advised that we were now going to an electronic vote on the proposed motion and there were 26 members eligible to cast votes.

The result of the electronic ballot was 23% did not have confidence, and 77% had confidence in the Conference Chairperson.

Board Secretary said we were now going to proceed with conference as per the agenda and was handing over to Conference Chairperson Emmet O'H.

**Agenda Item 14 & 14a: Service in AA 'The Solution' (Appendix 4)**

(Encouraging Members into Service Update)

Anthony Mc N. (Leinster) spoke on this Agenda Item and referred to page 60 of the General Service Handbook on the role of Conference Delegate. Anthony stated that the Encouraging Members into Service item related back to 2018 and 2019 when there were round table discussions, on how best to encourage members into service. Each Intergroup was requested to explore this matter and report back to Conference. Anthony said that it was disappointing to note that in March 2020 Conference that no new proposals or initiatives had been brought forward from other Intergroups.

Anthony Mc N. (Leinster) said was aware that Ulster were indeed working to explore new initiatives in relation to this matter. However, he expressed disappointment in the other Provinces, noting from the minutes that the matter of Encouraging Members into Service had not even been raised by the Conference Delegates at the Intergroups or Areas. All of this said, Anthony was now making a proposal that this item be deferred until the next Annual General Service Conference to afford the other Intergroups to prepare reports for Conference discussion and deliberation, in an attempt to establish focused based solutions to this ongoing issue. Anthony McN. (Leinster) appealed to Conference Delegates to bring this matter back to the respective Intergroups so that it could be discussed at Areas and AA Groups.

Synopsis of points below were raised in the debate that ensued on this item.

Marilyn K. (Connaught) in responding to Anthony's comments said that what she was taking from the sentiments expressed by Anthony, was that Connaught and Munster were not doing anything in relation to Service while Leinster seemed to be doing it all. She said that Connaught were doing all they possibly could, to encourage people into Service.

Nicholas R. (Munster) stated that in Munster they were doing all they possibly could in relation to Service, and particularly to keep AA Meetings open that had been closed down by GSO. He further stated that AA Meetings were being run excellently and that there absolutely no problems in AA Groups.



Nicholas R. (Munster) further pointed out that no help was being received from the General Service Office or the Board. That there was an agenda by GSO and the Board to close AA Groups and AA Meetings particularly during the pandemic. Nicholas pointed out that AA was always an essential service. He further stated that Delegates had been bypassed by the National AA Website. Nicholas went on to say that he had to apologise to his groups for coming on this meeting today, as he was breaking the AA Traditions. He again reiterated that the Board and GSO did their best to close AA Meetings and that he had received no assistance or support from GSO or the Board of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Mick McG. (Munster) pointed to the fact that there were problems in all areas of Service throughout the country and it was not fair to say that any Province was doing better than another. He felt the Structure was being short circuited. He said one Intergroup should not be put on a pedestal.

On Misinformation, Philip McG. (Leinster) made the point that in relation to AA Meetings being closed because of the Global Pandemic. He wished to clarify that NPHET had effectively closed meetings and gatherings of people in settings to avoid the spread of the Covid-19 virus. It was, he said the Fellowship as whole that got them back up running again. On Service deficiencies he said these existed throughout the Country. Leinster does not have the exclusivity on ideas. It was hoped that Intergroups would bring their experiences in the form of reports to enable us to do better.

Joe B. (Connaught) stated that he felt it was wrong that one Province should be placed above another when it came to any aspect of work in AA and there should be no criticism of an Intergroup.

Kenny P. (Ulster) stated that we as a Conference have no right to tell the Fellowship how they can conduct their Group Meetings. He further pointed out that most of our Fellowship had by now read the foreword extract of the Fourth Edition of the Big Book. *'In order to stay sober in Alcoholics Anonymous modern to modern, face to face. AAs speak the language of the heart with all its power and simplicity.'* This, Kenny pointed out was written in 2001 and is approved by AA World Services. He further went on to say that we should be looking at how we can move forward.

Moira S. (WSD) requested to hear the proposal by Anthony again. Moira went on to say that it was heart-breaking to see such division at Conference and asked would it be possible to have a Conference where we could work in unity.

The Proposal was that the entire item be postponed until 2021 Conference, to enable Conference Members to deliberate on the item at their relevant Intergroups and submit their respective reports for debate at Conference. The item would also incorporate the three questions as decided at March 2020 Conference. It was also requested that the item be placed as a priority item on 2021 Agenda.

This was proposed by Anthony McN. (Leinster), Seconded by Moira S. (WSD).

Michael D. (Munster) said his feeling was the item should be discussed today.

***Conference agreed to defer this item as per the proposal until Conference 2021.***

### **Agenda Item 16: Strategic Plan (Appendix 6)**

This Agenda Item was introduced by Cindy O'Shea (Non-AA Member Trustee) and Company/Board Secretary.

Synopsis of points below were raised in the debate that ensued on this item.

Joe B. (Connaught) raised some queries in relation to the Strategic Plan. Cindy O'Shea (Non-AA Member Trustee) responded by clarifying that the General Service Board was a Company since 1975 this was not new; she went on to state that we were not above the law when it came to Charity Regulation and it was necessary to have a Strategic Plan in place in line with Charity Regulation.

Mick McG. (Munster) raised an issue on permission of use of the AA Logo and Online AA Meetings. The Conference Chairperson stated that neither points were Agenda Items and requested Conference to please adhere to the approved Agenda.

Michael D. (Munster) stated that he would like to commend the Board on an excellent document, and he had no difficulty with the proposed document.

Nicholas R. (Munster) said that he was not in favour of the Strategic Plan, as it was in breach of Traditions, the reasons he pointed out were as follows; AA was not a Company. AA did not engage with National Newspapers and furthermore we do not engage with outside agencies. Nor do we target other agencies to assist us in carrying our recovery message as outlined in the document. Nicholas further wished to point out that we are not guided by HSE Guidelines. He wished to remind Cindy that we are a Fellowship. The AA Groups, he said, make the decisions. Nicholas stated that we did not have to adhere to Charity Regulation, we could relinquish our charitable status. Nicholas stated that the Groups would not at all be in favour of the proposed document, he reiterated that the proposed Strategic Plan was for a Company and AA was not a Company.

Nicholas R. (Munster) went on to state that the HSE had nothing to do with Alcoholics Anonymous, GSO had no business sending documents/posters to groups from the HSE. Nicholas felt that the Structure was not being used. He would be calling for a full root and branch review of the Board and GSO. In conclusion Nicholas stated that there was no need for this proposed document.

Pat K. (Leinster AA Trustee) stated that he wished to clarify that AA was not above the Law of the Land.

He went on to point out that Alcoholics Anonymous in Ireland comprises two separate but closely connected Organisations: The Fellowship of AA - comprising of Groups, Areas, Provincial Intergroups and the General Service Conference (AA), and then there is the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous Ireland CLG (GSBAA).

GSBAA is both a Company Limited by Guarantee not having a Share Capital, and a Registered Charity, so the Company is subject to both Company Law and Charity Law. The Company operates in accordance with its Constitution and the seven Directors of the Company are both Company Directors and Charity Trustees with specific legal responsibilities imposed on them by the Companies Act 2014 and Charities Act 2009 respectively.

In conclusion, Pat K. (Leinster AA Trustee) stated that a lot of people tended to forget that AA is comprised of two separate entities which are closely connected but nonetheless are separate organisations. The Board and the Company are there to interact and deal with the Government and State Authorities of the Country of the State we live in, every citizen is subject to the Laws, Rules, and Regulations that apply within the State. Pat K. went on to stipulate that at every juncture when the Board issued an Update on the Covid-19 Global Pandemic, it was clearly stated that the Group Conscience should be the ultimate guide. He stated that this has been the message consistently. If people continuously choose to misinterpret this message, there is nothing we can do about it.

Tom D (Ulster). said that that there are clearly two separate organisations here. One is a registered Company, and one is a Fellowship, this Conference represents our Fellowship. Tom D. went on to state that we need the Company to manage our Finances, Book Sales, our General Service Office which is the registered premises of the Company and its Employees. Tom D. (Ulster) stated that he had read the Strategic Plan and thought it was a worthwhile document. He said that Alcoholics Anonymous will not disappear and what we were now seeing was a change and we could embrace change or fear it. Tom complimented the Board of Directors of the Company in their roles as both Company Directors and AA Trustees and stated that they were going through a difficult time in trying to do the right thing for the Company and for the Fellowship. Tom D. asked that people realise the Company has been in existence since 1975, it is registered, legal and lawful. There are 30 Members of the Company who have the power to hold the Board of Directors to account at an AGM Annually.

In conclusion Tom D. (Ulster) said that all the Board could do was bring recommendations before the Company or Conference, it was up to Conference or the Company to accept or reject as they saw fit. Tom added that he would appeal to people to embrace change. 'I do not believe', he said, 'that if, and when a vaccine is found and administered for Covid, everything will go back to normal. We are seeing a whole new way of doing business and one of them is the method we are using today. Increasing communication is vital and the Strategic Plan is attempting to do just that. Let's not knock our Board of Directors/Trustees or our Company. No one was prepared for Covid-19. The Board did they best they could under very difficult circumstances. Alcoholics Anonymous has changed forever, as a result of this current situation, and if we don't change, we will get left behind. The Board have done their best and sometimes they have gotten it right and sometimes not so right. But as a Fellowship we must change and encourage change which in turn will ensure a stronger Fellowship'. Tom concluded.

Marilyn K. (Connaught) said she believed that some of the targets in the Strategic Plan were already in action. Marilyn also touched on instilling positivity as contained in the Plan. She did have other issues in relation to engaging with the Media.

Moira S. (WSD) stated that she would like to congratulate everyone involved in compiling the Strategic Plan. It is an excellent document, Moira said, and no one should be in no doubt, as to its purpose of the document. It was quite clear from the outset, that it is a Strategic Plan was for the Company known as GSBAA. She said she was struck by the necessity that as a charity we must be honest, truthful and compliant with the law. Moira went on to point that she was also struck by the fact that the Plan sets out the key purposes of the Board of Directors of the Company. GSBAA being a Registered Company is there to ensure the Company's success. She stated that the Plan was clear and unambiguous, setting out a clear roadmap for the Company while taking account of the needs of the Fellowship. She went out to say that the term Key Performances Indicators (KPI) was for some, scary and daunting and that it possibly needed to be made clear that the Board would be required to measure these indicators. In conclusion, Moira S. said it was an impressive Plan and she would certainly be very supportive of its implementation.

Philip McG. (Leinster) stated that he welcomed and understood the Strategic Plan. Philip said that a Strategy document effectively is a roadmap, and if a Company or Business does not have a roadmap, then you get lost. Philip remarked how much misinformation gets spread about especially about the Charity Regulator. The Company, GSBAA, has legal obligations under Charity Law. He further stated that that it was a very good document for the Company. It was clear he said that the Fellowship and the Company are two separate organisations. Philip McG. (Leinster) said the Strategic Plan spelled this out. Philip further pointed out in relation to a point raised earlier about the sharing of our Recovery Message with other Agencies and allowing our message to be available on other organisations websites.

He said AA was not a secret organisation and while we didn't have to shout out what we do, we do have a duty to let people know where we are and how to find us, particularly those who need our service. He complimented the authors of the Plan.

Barbara A. (Leinster) complimented the Board and Cindy O'Shea (Non-AA Member Trustee) in presenting the Plan to Conference. Barbara stated that we are Members of the Company and Members of the General Service Conference. The Company needs a clear plan which maps a way forward while taking account of the Fellowship and communicating in a positive and meaningful way. Barbara further stated that it is important that as Conference Delegates, we understand our roles and responsibilities. In concluding, Barbara wished to echo Tom D's (Ulster) remarks in relation to the shifting ground each day and that either we shift with it or go under.

Brian F. (Ulster AA Trustee) stated his sense was that the document should have been presented to the Company as opposed to the General Service Conference, nevertheless Brian felt that it was a good document.

In conclusion, the Company/Board Secretary acknowledged and appreciated all the comments by members of Conference. He outlined that there was no hidden agenda when it came to the proposed Plan, it was standard best practice for all companies to develop and implement a Strategic Plan. It was, he said also necessary to have such a plan in line with Charity Regulation given that a new Charity Governance Code was taking effect in January 2021. He further pointed out that the intention was, along with having a roadmap in place for the Company it was designed to take account of the Fellowship and its needs when it came to improving communication internally and externally.

In summation, Cindy O'Shea (Non-AA Member AA Trustee) also acknowledged and thanked Conference for their valuable contributions to the discussion. Cindy highlighted that the spirit of the document was to encourage more transparency and accountability which, she said was one of the main objectives along with developing a strong communications strategy within the Fellowship, the Public and Professionals. Cindy further stated that the minor changes as recommended by Conference would be made to the proposed document.

***Conference approved the Strategic Plan on a vote of 26 in favour, and 3 against. 1 member was absent for the vote.***

### **Agenda Item 17: General Service Handbook Update (03/2020)**

Chair of Conference, Emmet O'H., introduced this Agenda Item by stating that all members had been issued with a draft copy of the proposed update of the General Service Handbook for Ireland at 2020 March Conference. He pointed out that Conference were requested to review the document for grammatical errors, typos, etc., anything that was not a substantive change to the Handbook.

Submissions were received from Munster, Leinster and Ulster, all of which were discussed and debated at length for inclusion. Following all submissions and lengthy discussion, the General Service Handbook for Ireland was approved by the General Service Conference of Ireland for printing and sale.

**Agenda Item 18: Election of 2021 Chairperson**

There were three outgoing Delegates. One of whom expressed interest in acting as Chair of Conference for 2021. Tom D. (Ulster) was approved by Conference to chair 2021 Annual General Service Conference. Colum P. (Ulster) agreed to act as Alternate Chairman.

Emmet O'H. thanked all members for their contributions throughout the Reconvened Conference. Brian G. (Ulster) said he would like to extend this thanks to Conference Chairman for his fortitude and patience throughout Conference and for the way in which he conducted the business of Conference.

**Conference concluded with the Serenity Prayer.**

# Appendices

- (Appendix 1)            **Adoption of 2020 Conference Agenda**  
(Adoption of Agenda and other urgent business in accordance with Paragraph 12.3, page 66 of 2014/1 Service Handbook.)
- (Appendix 4)            **Service in AA 'The Solution' (inc. Agenda Item 14a)**  
(Encouraging Members into Service Update)
- (Appendix 6)            **Strategic Plan**
- (Appendix 8)            **Motions to Conference**
- (Appendix 9)            **World Service Delegates – ESM 2019 Report**
- (Appendix 10)           **Conference Delegates Reports**
- (Appendix 11)           **62<sup>nd</sup> All Ireland Convention Report 2019**
- (Appendix 12)           **Report from GB Conference 12<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> April 2019**



## DRAFT AGENDA

**Meeting Type:** General Service Conference of AA in Ireland  
**Date:** Saturday 7<sup>th</sup>- Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2020 at 9.00am  
**Venue:** Tullamore Court Hotel, Tullamore, Co. Offaly

---

1. Opening of Conference by Chairperson
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda and other urgent business in accordance with Article 12.3, page 66 of 2014/1 Service Handbook
4. Adoption of 2019 Conference Minutes and Matters Arising
5. Introduction of new AA Trustee
6. Election of World Service Delegate (WSD)
7. Election of Observers to GB Conference April 2020
8. Motions to Conference
9. WSD Delegates' Report – ESM 8<sup>th</sup> – 20th October 2019
10. Conference Delegates' Reports
11. All Ireland Convention 2019 Report
12. GB Conference 12<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> April 2019 Observers' Report
13. Invitation to AAGB to attend General Service Conference Ireland 2020
14. Service in AA 'The Solution' – update from Intergroups
15. Suggested Guidelines for Personal Conduct and Appropriate Behaviour for AA Members (leaflet issued 2019)
16. Strategic Plan 2020-2023
17. General Service Handbook for Ireland – update
18. Election of 2021 Conference Chairperson



**Service in AA 'The Solution'  
Encouraging Members into Service**

**Leinster Report**

**29<sup>th</sup> January 2020**

At Conference in 2018, there was a long discussion about the problems in Service throughout the country, particularly attracting new members into Service. It was agreed that each Intergroup Committee would look into Service to see if any solutions could be found to the age-old problem of attracting members into Service. Each Intergroup was to report back to Conference 2019, to discuss our findings with a view to collating them, in the hope that we might find some solutions.

In Leinster, a tremendous effort was made into finding solutions. At every Area Meeting and at every Intergroup Meeting, the topic of Service was put on the Agenda. Numerous suggestions came forward, which are being successfully implemented. These suggestions were included in Leinster's report to Conference 2019, for discussion.

It was extremely disappointing to arrive at Conference last year, to find that no other Intergroup had submitted a report into Service as had been agreed the previous year. However, the discussion still went ahead at Conference, where recommendations were made, which were sent out to all of the groups. It was again agreed by Conference that Service be put on the Agenda for Conference 2020, and we report back with the results of the implementation of these suggestions. Again, Leinster Intergroup has spent some considerable time at this over the last year. We both hope and expect that the other Intergroup Committees have done the same this year, and we look forward to reading their reports into this so that maybe we can all benefit from ideas and initiatives introduced by them throughout their Areas.

Following on from last year's report, where we stressed the importance of the role of the Conference Delegates, we have found this to be even more important than previously stated. Without going into any great detail, there was quite a lot of disharmony between the Leinster Conference Members over some of the last year. Without apportioning blame for this, this disharmony greatly affected our ability to operate as a cohesive unit, which trickled down into the Intergroup Committee and various other Committees throughout Leinster. It has been a very important learning experience for us, in that it has shown us that if the Conference Members are not able to work together as a strong cohesive team, then we feel that the rest of the Fellowship in the Intergroup will suffer as a result.

## Appendix 4

On a similar note, we would like to mention the relationship between our Trustee, Pat K., and our other members of Conference. While we would view Pat as being our leader, he is very much a team player and he leads by example rather than by instruction. Practically all decisions are made by discussion and consensus.

While many topics are debated at length, all of our team usually end up "on the same page". Pat is very inclusive and encouraging, and it must be stated that he has been a pleasure to work with.

Given our experience in Leinster over the last year, where we have learned that disharmony between the Conference Members can have a hugely negative effect on the whole Province, we would be very interested to know what sort of relationship exists between the Conference Members in other Intergroups. This would include Trustees, Delegates and Intergroup Secretaries. Is there the same team ethos and the same feeling of inclusion and encouragement which exists in Leinster? Have other Intergroups experienced problems similar to those faced by Leinster last year and how did they deal with them? Do other Intergroups feel that they may have a more effective approach to this topic than the one used by Leinster?

Leinster Intergroup have continued the work which they started last year. While progress is slow, it is happening. It's important that this process is led by the Delegates, and others in Service are encouraged by the example shown by the Delegates. We continue to offer encouragement at all times. One of the most important things we do is to encourage Intergroup and Area Members to bring someone with them to the next meeting, as an observer. This has proven to be very successful.

Other suggestions which have come forward which are also proving to be helpful are:

1. Holding meetings dedicated to Service. This has happened in many groups throughout Leinster, in various formats. The most common being that the group would ask a member with a lot of experience in Service, to do a Chair at a regular meeting, outlining their involvement in Service and the benefits that Service has brought to many areas of their lives.
2. Asking members currently involved in Service, when they are sharing at meetings, to spend a minute or two, sharing about the benefits of Service to their lives. As this is a programme of attraction rather than promotion, it's important that this sharing is mindful of that.
3. A number of groups who have had trouble attracting Secretaries for a 3-month period, have now introduced a system of a rotating Secretary, where the Secretary changes from week to week. This has proven to be very successful, particularly with lunchtime meetings.

## Appendix 4

4. It's important to stress the fact that we are inclusive, that the views and opinions of all members of a group are equally important. In a number of groups throughout Leinster, there were often one or two members, due to their many years of sobriety, who felt that they 'owned' the group, that they were entitled to make decisions rather than the Group Conscience. Some of these groups have sought guidance and advice from Areas and Intergroup.
5. One of the biggest helps to Service over the last few years has been the publication of the 'Suggested Guidelines for Personal Conduct'. There has been an overwhelming positive response to this across Leinster. While there have been a small number of dissenting voices, the vast majority of members are in favour of it. It has given guidance to new Secretaries as to what is acceptable and what is not, as well as offering suggestions as to how to deal with unacceptable behaviours. Prior to this, some members were reluctant to get involved in Service, due to fear of not knowing what to do if faced with a difficult situation.

While other measures are also being implemented, these are a synopsis of the most successful to date. We look forward to hearing other suggestions from the other Intergroup Committees as to how we can further improve Service in our Intergroup.

**Anthony McN.**

**On behalf of the Leinster members of Conference.**

### Questions (14a)

- (a) In GB, retiring Delegates and Trustees are encouraged to stay involved in Service at Intergroup/Regional levels. Is this something we should look at in Ireland? Maybe there is some way we can harness and use this experience, which is currently being lost.*
- (b) AA in GB have a Young People's Liaison Officers, GB Conference recognised that younger members had different 'needs' and needed supports. These YPLOs have proven to be hugely successful. Is this something that we as a Conference in Ireland should explore?*
- (c) A lot of Literature particularly pamphlets, in GB are sold to groups for a nominal fee (1 penny). This is done for a number of reasons, primarily to encourage Groups and Members to purchase and read this material. Are there any items of Literature that we could consider adopting a similar policy in Ireland?*



# GENERAL SERVICE BOARD OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS IRELAND CLG



## STRATEGIC PLAN

2020 – 2023

## Contents

<b>Preamble</b> .....	38
<b>Introduction</b> .....	39
<b>Our Vision</b> .....	39
<b>Our Mission</b> .....	39
<b>Our Objectives</b> .....	40
<b>Strategies and Processes</b> .....	41
<b>1. TO FUNCTION THROUGH BEST PRACTICE</b> .....	41
<b>2. TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATION WITHIN THE ORGANISATION</b> .....	43
<b>3. TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATION WITH THE HEALTHCARE PROFESSION, COOPERATION WITH THE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY (CPC) AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC</b> .....	46
<b>4. TO ENSURE ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY WITHIN THE ORGANISATION</b> .....	48
<b>5. TO CREATE GUIDANCE THROUGH ACTION</b> .....	50
<b>NEXT STEPS</b> .....	52



## **Preamble**

“Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for AA membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. AA is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organisation or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy, neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

### **Introduction**

This strategic plan is intended to provide the framework within which the General Service Board AA CLG interacts with the General Service Office to facilitate and support AA's provision of services throughout the island of Ireland.

At all times, the General Service Board of AA (GSBAA) strives to be responsive to the concerns of the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous and to provide clear lines of communication throughout the structure of AA.

The GSBAA fully intends to deliver the objectives outlined in this strategic plan, and to implement any new strategies contained therein.

These objectives will be achieved through the cooperation of all sections of the fellowship, the GSBAA, members of Conference, Intergroups, Areas and, local groups and individual members.

### **Our Vision**

To provide clear and effective guidance to the Fellowship through the General Service Conference of Ireland. We are concerned with all matters affecting our primary purpose of carrying the AA message to the still-suffering alcoholic.

### **Our Mission**

Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

## Our Objectives

1. To function through best practice
2. To improve communication throughout the organisation
3. To improve communication with professionals and the general public
4. To ensure accountability and transparency within the organisation
5. To create guidance through action





# Strategies and Processes

## 1. TO FUNCTION THROUGH BEST PRACTICE

### Intended Purpose

The establishment of four key pillars:

- Plan
- Organise
- Lead
- Manage

**Strategy 1: We will be proactive in the implementation of policies and laws that relate to Charities Governance and Corporate Governance.**

Key Strategy		Process	KPI (measurables)	Timeline
1S1	P1	GSBAA will respond in an efficient, timely and comprehensive manner to new policies and laws that relate to the company.		
	P2	Ensure that plans once confirmed by the GSBAA are efficiently implemented.		
	P3	As a Board we will lead by influencing, motivating and communicating to encourage effectiveness throughout our fellowship.		
	P4	GSBAA will ensure that it adheres to, and annually reviews the Principles of Good Governance as adopted and signed by all Directors.		

		<p>These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Leading our Organisation</li><li>➤ Exercising Control over the Organisation</li><li>➤ Being Transparent and Accountable</li><li>➤ Working Effectively</li><li>➤ Behaving with Integrity, Honesty and Respect</li></ul>		
--	--	--	--	--

## 2. TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATION WITHIN THE ORGANISATION

### Intended Purpose

For most individual AA members, their AA experience is limited to their local group. Thus, improvements are needed in communication within the organised service structure to engage individual members and groups to demonstrate how a working structure would interact and impact the individual members and groups lives.

Providing the membership with relevant and ongoing information is important. Our experience would suggest there is a historical gap between individual AA members and the Board. If we are not working locally to engage the full membership the disconnect will remain.

### Strategy 1: Encourage timely and transparent communication within all levels of the service structure, in keeping with our Traditions.

Key Strategy		Process	KPI (measurables)	Timeline
2S1	P1	Ensure that all members of the Company are fully informed on the decisions taken regarding policies relevant to Alcoholics Anonymous General Service Conference of Ireland.		

### Strategy 2: To ensure that Company approved decisions are communicated to our membership. The flow of information from the provincial trustees to the delegates, should be clear and unambiguous. When information is transmitted unevenly, it can lead to misunderstanding and misapprehension on the part of the Fellowship.

Key Strategy		Process	KPI (measurables)	Timeline
2S2	P1.1	Provincial Trustees will meet with their Conference delegates regularly with a view to giving and receiving up to date information.		

2S2	P1.2	Conference delegates will attend their Intergroup and Area Committee meetings to enhance the flow of information.		
2S2	P1.3	The General Service Representatives (GSRs) will in turn convey all relevant information from Area to their home groups. The GSR will also bring the opinions and views of their home group to Area and thus through the Structure.		

**Strategy 3: To promote a positive internal culture within AA supported by good communication and teamwork. This communication (at all levels) would focus more on the “why” of particular actions, suggestions or recommendations. This would help improve transparency and offer greater insight into the issues at hand.**

<b>Key Strategy</b>		<b>Process</b>	<b>KPI (measurables)</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
2S3	P1	Provincial Trustees, Conference members, Intergroup Representatives and GSRs will strive to generate and instil positivity in all areas of		

		AA, advocating to all members our three legacies of Recovery, Unity, and Service.		
2S3	P2	We will endeavour at all levels of structure to collectively communicate and work in unison to achieve focused-based solutions to problems as they arise and not focus on problems.		

**3. TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATION WITH THE HEALTHCARE PROFESSION, COOPERATION WITH THE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY (CPC) AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC**

**Intended Purpose**

To make Alcoholics Anonymous visible and available to all with a desire to stop drinking, giving them an opportunity to experience recovery in AA.

**Strategy 1: Attract more people to AA and enhance our cooperation with the healthcare profession by agreeing and implementing a National Public Information (PI) policy.**

Key Strategy		Process	KPI (measurables)	Timeline
3S1	P1	Engage with national newspapers, online print media and broadcast media.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Establish and train media spokespeople for the organisation</li> <li>b) Establish a designated media liaison officer to manage proactive and reactive media coverage</li> <li>c) Achieve balanced press coverage across online, print and broadcast media</li> </ul>	
3S1	P2	Target professional organisations who can assist AA in carrying the message of recovery to those whom they come in contact with who may have a drinking problem.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Create database of contacts with medical practitioners, pharmacists, mental health professionals.</li> <li>b) Create standardised pitch and presentation to communicate key values and mission of AA to above, and how AA can support those who may have a problem with alcohol.</li> </ul>	
3S1	P3	Use the AA structure to assist national PI to carry		

		the message of AA to outside organisations.		
--	--	---	--	--

**Strategy 2: Use the national website for Alcoholics Anonymous to extend our reach beyond AA’s traditional approach.**

<b>Key Strategy</b>		<b>Process</b>	<b>KPI (measurables)</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
3S2	P1	Explore the website’s potential to encompass how outside organisations could benefit from our services by linking from their website to AA’s website.		
3S2	P2	Promote the use of the website.		
3S3	P3	Conduct an audit of all sections of the website to maximise its potential to attract more people to avail of our services.		

#### 4. TO ENSURE ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY WITHIN THE ORGANISATION

##### Intended Purpose

As a Charity we must be honest, truthful and compliant with the law. Being accountable and transparent is essential to maintaining the trust of both AA members and the public. This should be integral to everything we do as a charity for the purpose for which our charity was established.

The key purpose of a board of directors is to ensure an organisation's success by the collective direction of the organisation's affairs while meeting the appropriate interests of its stakeholders. It must comply with all relevant legislation and regulation. High ethical standards are the norm and good governance with transparency and accountability, will always be GSBAA's guide.

**Strategy 1: GSBAA will continue to be committed to meet its legal responsibilities in relation to Charities Governance and other statutory requirements under the law.**

Key Strategy		Process	KPI (measurables)	Timeline
4S1	P1	Act in accordance with statutory obligations under Company law.		
4S1	P2	Attend relevant training workshops to obtain necessary information that affects the GSBAA and its members.		
4S1	P3	All AA members are stakeholders and therefore have collective responsibility for the Fellowship. These		



		responsibilities are met by engaging in voluntary service positions, by keeping accurate records as required, by working in unity with their own and other groups. These tasks ought to be in keeping with the wishes of their Group Conscience.		
4S1	P4	GSBAA will adhere to the mandatory Charities Governance Code 'Six Point Principles' and submit our compliance records annually		

## 5. TO CREATE GUIDANCE THROUGH ACTION

### Intended Purpose

One of our guiding principles (Twelve Traditions) states: “our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern”. From AA Group to Area to Intergroup to Conference and Board, our primary purpose remains the same; to help the still suffering alcoholic. For those in service it is an integral part of recovery from alcoholism.

Being a service leader means putting the interests of others above your own. Service is leadership in action. Our goal ought to be to encourage more of our members into service to enable them to access the rewards of reaching their full potential in recovery.

**Strategy 1: To motivate members into voluntary service at every level of our organisation by sponsorship/mentoring to ensure the continued existence of our fellowship.**

Key Strategy		Process	KPI (measurables)	Timeline
5S1	P1	Outline to each member the importance of gratitude for the gift of recovery that they have been so freely given through the AA programme.		
5S1	P2	Promote optimism in relation to service throughout the AA Fellowship.		
5S1	P3	We will commit to service sponsoring AA members into service positions throughout our structure,		

		and encourage members to attend at group, area and intergroup meetings as observers.		
5S1	P4	We will support and affirm good communication, and teamwork within the membership.		

**NEXT STEPS**

Many of these processes will need to be further explored, refined and reviewed prior to implementation.

GSBAA will review and update progress on the plan on a regular basis. In order to have an impact this strategic plan must be followed up with action and assessment.

Finally, strategic planning is an ongoing effort. This Strategic Plan represents the current objectives and processes that the GSBAA has developed to help further its mission.





**ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS  
GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE OF IRELAND  
6<sup>th</sup>- 8<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

**MOTIONS TO CONFERENCE**

• **Connaught Intergroup**

1. Oranmore, Good Morning Group, Galway
2. Ozanam House Group, Galway
3. Salthill Morning Group, Galway
4. Turloughmore Cuan Mhuire Group, Galway
5. Summerhill Group, Athlone

• **Leinster Intergroup**

- 6. Leinster Intergroup – Motion from Intergroup, not through Structure**
7. Keep it Simple Group, Carlow (Area 13)

• **Munster Intergroup**

8. Midleton Group, Cork

• **Ulster Intergroup**

9. 62 Lisburn Road Group, Belfast
10. Dungannon Third Legacy Group, Tyrone

**CONNAUGHT**

**1. Oranmore Good Morning Group, Galway**

**Motion Title: The Road Back**

On 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2019, the Group Conscience of Oranmore Good Morning Group would like the following Motion brought to General Service Conference of Ireland.

**Motion:**

That the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous Ireland financially subsidise the Road Back in hard copy for groups who find it financially difficult to purchase copies for their members.

**Reason:**

We find it contradictory that AA provides monies from Irish members to the International Literature Fund, while considering saving monies on the printing of the Road Back, which is the second oldest AA magazine in the world and such a valuable resource and part of the AA history in Ireland.

While we are not against funding the International Literature Fund, we feel that spending our surplus to help Irish Alcoholics should be considered first.

At a recent meeting of 18 members, a short poll found that no one person in the room had ever read literature on the AA Website.

Yours in Fellowship  
Oranmore Good Morning Group

As per AA procedure, this Motion approved at Galway Area, is forwarded to Connaught Intergroup and then to General Service Conference of Ireland.

**2. Ozanam House Group, Galway**

**Motion Title: AA Group Information Sheet**

On 5<sup>th</sup> January 2020, the Group Conscience of Ozanam House Group would like the following Motion brought to General Service Conference of Ireland.

**Motion:**

That a simple method be created for groups, to advise GSO of existing meeting changes, such as change of times or change of one contact name. That an email from the Intergroup Secretary should suffice after the Secretary has verified through the Area Secretary, Intergroup Representatives or Conference Delegates that the change is a bonafide change.

## Appendix 8

### **Reason:**

Any delay in getting the information changed on the Website and Directory results in a delay of assisting the suffering alcoholic reaching us and it is our duty to design a protocol that serves that Principal.

A lot of groups are small with very informal Group Conscience Meetings usually held just to complete this process. We know of Group Secretaries, who find it very frustrating, following up on names and even visiting members' homes just to get signatures on the AA Group Information Sheet.

Sometimes it's not always possible to get the existing contact names to refill and sign the form.

A large number of our Members find the present Group Information Sheet too cumbersome and exhausting.

Yours in Fellowship  
Ozanam House Group Conscience.

As per AA procedure, this Motion approved at Galway Area, is forwarded to Connaught Intergroup and then to General Service Conference of Ireland.

### **3. Salthill Morning Group, Galway**

#### **Motion Title: The Road Back**

On 6<sup>th</sup> January 2019, the Group Conscience of Salthill Morning Group would like the following Motion brought to General Service Conference of Ireland.

### **Motion:**

That the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous Ireland provide printed copies of the Road Back free of charge, to all groups whose meetings are held in Prisons, Hospitals, Alcoholic Treatment Centres, and Counselling Services both Residential and Out-Patient, where new members frequently attend their first meeting.

### **Reason:**

It's our experience that most newcomers have limited access to online resources and that the look and feel of a "real" Magazine will serve better our message and stories of AA experience at such a vulnerable and shaky time. Most in-patients do not have access to online reading devices.

The hard copy of The Road Back is also very real help for those members (new and old) that are hospitalised, "off the grid", or incapacitated through the "rock bottom" of their disease.

Recent research shows that MOST people prefer to read physical books rather than an electronic book.

## Appendix 8

Resource: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/262372834\\_E-books\\_Versus\\_Print\\_Books\\_Readers'\\_Choices\\_and\\_Preferences\\_Across\\_Contexts](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/262372834_E-books_Versus_Print_Books_Readers'_Choices_and_Preferences_Across_Contexts)

Yours in Fellowship  
Salthill Morning Group

As per AA procedure, this Motion approved at Galway Area, is forwarded to Connaught Intergroup and then to General Service Conference of Ireland.

### **4. Turloughmore Cuan Mhuire Group, Galway** **Motion Title: The Road Back**

On 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2019, the Group Conscience of Turloughmore Cuan Mhuire Group would like the following Motion brought to General Service Conference of Ireland.

#### **Motion:**

That the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous Ireland cancel the decision to phase out the hard copy print versions of our Road Back and replace it with an electronic copy.

#### **Reason:**

This is a valuable resource to help the suffering alcoholic in the rooms. It is a valuable contribution to Tradition 5 as well as helping our members with 12 Step Programme. It is the second oldest AA magazine in the world and should be preserved in its current print format and quality as a mark of respect to the Tradition it serves.

In Cuan Mhuire it is very valuable to the 110 patients for alcoholism who attend our AA meetings here. When the limited number of copies are delivered, they are immediately taken by our members. You can walk around the Centre and find copies, on tables, shelves, windowsills, with some hidden for future reading in bedside lockers. They are swapped for cigarettes and chocolate. They are passed on to new in-patients by long term residents to ease their first-time recognition of their alcoholism. They are precious AA reading materials here when most in-patients do not have access to electronic reading devices.

Yours in Fellowship  
Turloughmore Cuan Mhuire Group Conscience 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2019

As per AA procedure, this Motion approved at Galway Area, is forwarded to Connaught Intergroup and then to General Service Conference of Ireland.



**5. Summerhill Group, Athlone**  
**Motion Title: The Road Back**

Submission to Area regarding Road Back.

That Alcoholics Anonymous changes its decision to phase out the Road Back.

It is the will of this group that the Road Back keep its present printed form. We feel that it is the better way to pass the AA message on.

**Reasons:**

1. We don't believe that this decision was the decision of the groups.
2. Also, the benefit to prisoners will be lost, as they don't have access to electronic reading devices.

We wish that this submission be passed on to Conference, to be read out and discussed.

Yours sincerely  
Secretary Colaiste Chiarain AA Group.  
Summerhill, Ballinsloe Road  
Athlone, County Westmeath  
Group Number L227

**LEINSTER**

**6. Leinster Intergroup**

**Motion Title: Deaf Community Interpreter**

Leinster Intergroup would like to propose a Motion to Conference, recommending that GSO employs a special worker, or a number of special workers, in the form of a Sign Language Interpreter(s). This is in line with Tradition 8. This Interpreter would be used for a series of monthly Open Public Meetings, in a yet to be determined venue, in order that we can carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic, among the Deaf Community. As this is a National issue, the Meetings should be organised through the National Public Information Officer, or whoever Conference may deem appropriate.

These Open Public Meetings should be considered to be on a trial basis, for 12 months, with the expectation that if they prove to be successful, then a further Motion might be submitted to Conference in March 2021, should that prove to be appropriate.

**BACKGROUND:**

This Motion is being presented to Conference by the Leinster Intergroup Committee. However, the thinking behind it originally came from a group.

In early 2019, a group in Dublin brought forward a suggestion to the Intergroup Committee, through the Structure. This suggestion was that the Intergroup Committee would pay for an Interpreter for the Deaf Community in Ireland, on a trial basis. However, the Intergroup Committee, while in favour of doing everything possible to help the Deaf Community, felt that it could not pay for an Interpreter, as it would conflict with our Traditions. Currently, there are no meetings available in Ireland to facilitate the Deaf Community. A number of requests have been received, over the last few years, by both GSO and various groups, to organise meetings to facilitate the Deaf Community.

Leinster Intergroup appointed a Sub-Committee to research this issue and report back to the Intergroup Meeting.

The above Motion is the recommendation of that Committee, and it reconciles with Tradition 8. As this Motion differs from the original suggestion sent to Intergroup by a group, we felt that it would be more appropriate that this Motion came from the Intergroup Committee, rather than an individual group.

This topic has been discussed at length in Leinster, at Intergroup, Area and Group levels. The consensus of Leinster is that they are in favour of this. There wasn't a single objection to this Motion throughout Leinster.

**7. Keep it Simple Group, Carlow (Area 13)  
Motion Title: Pamphlet 'Traditions Checklist'**

**Motion** to Conference from Carlow *Keep it Simple* Group (L288) received at Area 13 meeting 9/12/2019.

The 'Keep it Simple' Group of Alcoholics Anonymous Carlow wish to bring the following Motion to Conference.

We request Conference adopt the Pamphlet 'Traditions Checklist' already approved in Alcoholics Anonymous Great Britain and if necessary adapt it for use by AA in Ireland.

**Notes**

We feel this Pamphlet would encourage members to look to our Traditions for guidance and give a better understanding of our Fellowship.

We also believe the Pamphlet would facilitate Tradition Workshops, and help us seek solutions within our Groups, Areas and Intergroups to any issues that may arise.

**This Motion was discussed at the Area Meeting on Monday 9th December 2019. It was noted that material Conference approved in Great Britain is automatically approved here. We looked at the original US version of the *Traditions Checklist* ([https://www.aa.org/assets/en\\_US/smf-131\\_en.pdf](https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/smf-131_en.pdf)) and noted where the GB version (<https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/download/1/Library/Documents/Literature%20Downloads/3345%20Twelve%20Traditions%20Checklist.pdf>) differed. We agree it may need to be adapted for publication in Ireland.**

**Area 13 supports this Motion.**

Yours in trusted service,  
Jane B  
Area 13 Secretary

MUNSTER

8. Midleton Group, Cork

**Motion Title: That the Conference is changed back to a solely 'Spiritual Entity'**

September 2019:

**Our AA Group Motion is that the Conference is changed back to a solely "spiritual entity", as outlined in our AA Traditions, carrying AA's spiritual message of hope to alcoholics who turn to us for help.**

**For the spiritual wellbeing of AA, we believe AA should go back to the seven Members of the Board the Members of the Company and the Conference Delegates are not Members of Company.**

The Midleton AA Group Conscience, over the past few months has discussed and given a lot of time making a decision under the guidance of a loving God to take some action regarding the Adoption of the new Constitution of Alcoholics Anonymous on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2018.

The issues that our Group Conscience feel is not accordance with Traditions are:

1. Decision for all Conference Delegates to be Members of the Company without regard to the 12 Traditions and consulting the AA Groups.
2. The decision removes the separation of the spiritual of the Conference from the business of the Board.
3. By forming a Company of the Members of Conference, we believe the Board of Trustees and Conference have not followed Concept XII Article Six, *"That though Conference may act for the service of Alcoholics Anonymous, it shall never perform any acts of government, and that, like the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous which it serves, the conference itself will always remain democratic in action and spirit"*.

Our group is based on the Spiritual Principles of AA, indeed if the group is even to survive as an AA group, it really has no choice, the 12<sup>th</sup> Step suggests, "that we carry this message to alcoholics and practice these Principles in **all** of our affairs".

So, our group cannot abandon our AA Traditions and continue as "a spiritual entity" and the Conference and the Board of Trustees should not have by their own actions and decisions, chosen not to follow our AA Traditions and Concepts.

The Principles that Alcoholics Anonymous was founded on, AA unity is spiritual unity, any other forms of unity is not AA unity. On 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1955, a resolution passed unanimously by the entire Fellowship when AA "Came of Age" and is effectively the "agreement" between the AA Groups and their Conference.

## Appendix 8

- It was passed and adopted in the same manner and spirit as the 12 Traditions were 5 years previously.
- It formed the basis of the Conference Charter.
- It is where the groups state that they are not even to consider changing any of the 12 Traditions without first consulting every AA group in the world and first get permission from the ¾ who replied.
- It is also where the AA groups instruct their Conference that they are not to perform any acts of government.

These instructions from the AA groups and the 12 Traditions are the basis of any AA Conference.

AA in Ireland formed a separate Conference in 1968 and opened GSO in Essex Quay in 1970. They formed a separate Board in 1978, essentially to run GSO and sign leases of office, keep copyright, operate bank accounts etc.

The Board was answerable to Conference, as representing the AA Groups and the collective Conscience of AA in Ireland. The Conference Charter and the 12 Traditions are the guidelines for any AA General Service Conference, not Company Law.

Notwithstanding the above, the Board has not demonstrated or published the Conference, Intergroups, Areas or Groups any aspect of Irish Company Law, Charity Regulation or Company Registration Office requirements, which required the full Conference to become part of a Company.

A Conference which has all Delegates as Members of the Company may be an option open to other Societies, but that could not possibly work for AA, both as Individuals and as a Fellowship, we must live by **Spiritual Principles**. Failure to do so means our Fellowship dies spiritually, alcoholics will end up drinking and the spiritual solution so necessary to alcoholics beyond human aid dies with us.

Even partially going along with a Conference who are all Members of the Company is taking the wrong spiritual path. It is like allowing Group Conscience to work part of the time, AA cannot be half spiritual.

Each AA Group has only one authority, a loving God as he may express Himself in our Group Conscience. This is what we are all answerable to.

**Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.**

Yours Sincerely,  
Secretary Midleton Group of Alcoholics Anonymous  
On behalf of Midleton Group of Alcoholics Anonymous, Cork.

**ULSTER**

**9. 62 Lisburn Road Group, Belfast**

**Motion Title: Guidelines for Area Inventory Meetings**

The Group Conscience of 62 Lisburn Road Group at their AGM on Sun 17 Nov 2019 proposed the following Motion be taken to Area, on to Intergroup and forward to Conference for consideration. There is a clear guideline for holding a Group Inventory Meeting in the Green Service Handbook but no indication as to how an Area or Intergroup could conduct an Inventory. We would submit the attached documents as suggestions which could be used and published in our Service Handbook to address this situation.

In fellowship,  
62 Lisburn Road Group, Belfast Area.

**GUIDELINES FOR AREA INVENTORY MEETINGS**

1. What business should be conducted at an Area Meeting.
2. What more could Areas do to attract GSRs.
3. Considering the number of Groups in our Area are we doing enough to reach them all.
4. What has the Area Committee done in the past year to inform groups about the need for and value of Service to groups and individuals.
5. Is the Area business being carried out in a manner which would attract members into Service.
6. Are new groups informed about their role within the Fellowship as a whole.
7. Has the Area taken steps to inform Groups Conscience Meetings about the need to fill service positions with members who meet the requirements as laid out in the Service Handbook for Ireland.
8. Are GSRs, when attending Area, being given the opportunity to express opinions and to ask questions.
9. Are Area Officers elected on merit and not by popularity votes.
10. Is the Area providing a Forum which affords all groups the opportunity to learn more about the AA Structure in Ireland.
11. Does the Area send 4 Representatives to Intergroup.
12. Is the role of Intergroup Representative explained and are they given the Area's permission to act as they deem correct at any votes which arise after debate at Intergroup thus fulfilling the role of TRUSTED SERVANT.

**PROPOSED FORMAT FOR INTERGROUP INVENTORY**

1. What is the function of a Provincial Intergroup within AA Structure?
2. How proactive should/can Intergroup be within the AA Structure.
3. What is the Intergroup relationship/responsibility to Area Committees.
4. Does this Intergroup encourage a transparent information flow down through Area Committees to Groups.
5. Are Sub-Committees of Intergroup made fully aware of the parameters within which they should work and are they made aware of their accountability.
6. What is the role of the Trustee within Intergroup.
7. What is the role of Conference Delegates within Intergroup.
8. What responsibility does Intergroup have for keeping Conference in Ireland apprised of various Service functions within their Province.
9. Should Provincial Intergroups share Information/Practices with other Provinces other than at Conference.
10. Does Intergroup encourage Area Representatives to openly talk about what happens at this level in Service.
11. Do Conference Delegates make regular visits to all Areas offering guidance and direction as per Conference in Ireland.
12. Do Conference Delegates stress in Area visits and at Conference the vital importance of the Green Service Handbook.

**10. Dungannon Third Legacy Group, Tyrone**

**Motion Title: The Road Back Magazine**

The Group Conscience of Dungannon Third Legacy Group as of 6<sup>th</sup> December 2019 proposed the following Motion to Conference.

That the 'Road Back' Magazine be still made available in hard copy alongside online version as not all members of the Fellowship area able to access the Internet.

**Report from 20<sup>th</sup> European Service Meeting  
Alcoholics Anonymous  
18<sup>th</sup>- 20<sup>th</sup> October 2019, York**

**Statement of Purpose**

The primary purpose of the European Service Meeting is the same as that of all AA activity – to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers, whoever he may be, whatever the language he speaks. The European Service Meeting seeks ways and means of accomplishing this goal by serving as a forum for sharing the experience, strength and hope of Delegates who come together from all parts of Europe. It can also represent an expression of the Group Conscience throughout Europe.

Experience teaches us that developing a sound Structure enables us to deliver our services more effectively. The European Service Meeting encourages the planning of the sound Structure suited to the needs and capabilities of the various Countries and the exploration of expanding AA services to reach the alcoholic through internal communication, community relations and institutions work.

Delegates from 29 European Countries gathered together at the Park Inn, York from the 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> October 2019 to take part in the 20<sup>th</sup> European Service Meeting.

On Friday afternoon, Registration and Reception took place which provided an ideal opportunity for the Delegates to familiarise themselves with the venue, to renew friendships and to share with Delegates attending for the first time. It was lovely see familiar faces previously met at the World Service Meeting and for Pat, at the previous European Service Meeting.

The meeting was opened by the Chair, Rita M. (Italy), with a moment's silence. She welcomed all the Delegates as well as the staff of the ESM including Ranjan B., General Secretary of the European Information Centre and also Greg T., General Manager of GSO, New York – Eva S. of the International Desk and David R., Publications Director.

A Roll Call was taken where each Delegate was called upon to introduce him, or herself. Greg T. then gave the Keynote Address on the theme of the meeting "An Unchanged Message in a Changing World". He spoke of the importance of the Three Legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service with a particular resonance regarding the Legacy of Unity.

"The Co-Founders and earliest pioneers – both alcoholic and non-alcoholic alike – were committed to the concept of AA unity, even as they witnessed AA as a spiritual society always in a state of becoming – never something completed. A matter of progress rather than perfection, if you will".



## Appendix 9

Lotus A. from France then gave a report on the 25<sup>th</sup> World Service Meeting in Durban, followed by individual presentations of Country highlights which were given by one Delegate from each Country. These reports were a condensed version of the full reports given by each Country and were very interesting and informative.

- The literature from the various Countries was displayed in the Conference room, many thanks to Barbara and the staff in GSO for all the work they put in behind the scenes to organise the literature from AA in Ireland.

On Saturday morning, Delegates attended their various Committee Meetings, Pat was on the Service Committee and Helen on the Unity Committee. All Delegates got an opportunity on these Committees to share and discuss their experience of service within their Countries.

Helen was elected to chair the Unity Committee at the 21<sup>st</sup> European Service Meeting.

Topics discussed included:

- How can we use new communication technologies more effectively in Service and to spread the AA message?
- Sharing of experience regarding operating the AA Telephone Helpline and how Telephone Service organised in the various Countries.
- How to ensure that there is good communication, understanding and cooperation between the General Service Board and its Committees.
- Attracting AA Members' attention to our literature.
- Are we "too anonymous" or "not anonymous enough"? What work could be done to make the general public aware of AA through Public Information work.

On Saturday afternoon, the finalised Committee Reports were presented and discussed.

This was followed by an Open Sharing session in which Delegates shared on the contents of the Committee Reports as well as other topics. There was a long discussion about Public Information and Cooperation with Professional Community. Some of the Countries with less well-developed Structures shared of their challenges in this area. Many useful suggestions were put forward by Delegates. One Delegate described a new initiative by AA Great Britain where, as part of Public Information event, a simulated AA Meeting was organised which could be attended by Professionals. He said that this had worked very well and seemed to dispel some of the misconceptions about AA and show AA in action.

## Appendix 9

On Saturday evening, the meeting resumed with an AA Sharing Meeting on the Theme "Country to Country Cooperation – 40 years of the ESM". Amanda S. (Great Britain) and Michal F. (Poland) gave presentations on this topic. It was followed by a very lively and heartfelt discussion in which developing Countries shared their gratitude for the help they had received through Country-to-Country Sponsorship, not only in terms of finance but also through help with setting up Structure and help with carrying the message to Prisons, Treatment Centres, Hospitals etc. Eva S. from G.S.O in New York shared her experience in relation to AA Service Structures being introduced to China and sub-Saharan Africa. Delegates in the room appeared visibly moved by her sharing and spirit of AA worldwide was evident.

Sunday morning resumed with the Presentation of the Workshop Reports on the following topics:

### **1. How can we benefit from the experience of rotated Trusted Servants?**

It was felt that the spirit of rotation and gaining experience from our Trusted Servants is what keeps our Fellowship alive. Experience was shared on the importance of being Sponsored into Service by those leaving the role and passing down lessons learnt, both good and bad. Some Delegates spoke about those who were unwilling to rotate out of Service, and this had negatively impacted the person, the Fellowship and its Unity.

### **2. Back to Basics**

What is "Back to Basics"? was asked. There was a discussion as to what is meant by the term. Some Delegates mentioned the book "Back to Basics". It was clarified that in AA terms, getting back to basics means working the AA Programme (going to meetings, the Home Group, Service, Sponsorship, working the Steps and respecting the Traditions).

### **3. Understanding and application of the 12 Concepts**

Across the European Service Structures, there are varying levels of understanding of the Concepts, from those Countries that don't have them translated in their own languages to those Countries that run Workshops on them.

It was felt that the use of the Concepts helps to make the group and the individual feel safe so that when a decision is being made within the group, it is not just the opinion of one person but the experience of the whole Fellowship worldwide. The Concepts help us preserve our future by understanding the experience of our past.

It was a great learning experience for us both sitting on both the Committee and Workshops, along with the various informal discussions with Delegates over coffees and dinner.

## Appendix 9

The next item on the Agenda was the election of Chair of the next ESM. Yuri T. (Ukraine) was elected to become Chair of the 21<sup>st</sup> European Service Meeting.

**“Love and Service”** was chosen as the Theme for the next ESM from a variety of suggestions which had been put forward from the various Committees.

The final closing addresses on the theme “An Unchanged Message in a Changing World” were given by four of the second term Delegates – Ewa B. from Sweden, Jon O. from Iceland, Nur I. from Turkey and Werner F. from Austria. These were all heartfelt and moving shares on their experiences and thoughts on the European Service Meeting.

The ESM Chair, Rita M. (Italy) then closed the meeting with her final address which was followed by all Delegates forming a circle around the room and taking turns to say the Serenity Prayer in their native language, when it was our turn we said “Paidir an Suaimhneas” in Irish.

### **Personal note from Pat D, outgoing Delegate**

I wish to thank Conference for giving me the opportunity to serve as WSD/ESD for the past 4 years. I have benefited enormously from the experience, to have observed how our Fellowship continues to grow globally and Ireland’s contribution to that growth is heartwarming. Listening to the difficulties that other Countries have in carrying the message makes me realise how fortunate we in Ireland are and how indebted we are to those who went before us and who forged the Structure that we can sometimes take for granted. I wish to extend my gratitude to Helen for her friendship over the past 2 years and to Seamus for nursing me through my first ESM. I conclude with the following lines: “Prior to finding AA I saw life as it was and said Why, thanks to AA I can now dream of things that never were and say Why Not”.

Pat D.

As always, this report is just a brief synopsis of the ESM Meeting and the full Report is available to view in the Documents Library in the Members Section of the AA Great Britain Website.

In conclusion we would like to thank Sophie and all the Members of AA in York, along with Barbara and the staff at G.S.O for all their help. We would also like to thank Conference for having been given the opportunity to attend the 20<sup>th</sup> European Service Meeting.

Pat D 2<sup>nd</sup> Term ESD

Helen H 1<sup>st</sup> Term ESD



# ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE OF IRELAND

6<sup>th</sup>- 8<sup>th</sup> March 2020

## CONFERENCE DELEGATES REPORTS TO CONFERENCE

<b>CONNAUGHT</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Galway</li> <li>2. Mayo</li> <li>3. Sligo/North Leitrim</li> </ol>	<b>LEINSTER</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Area 1</li> <li>5. Area 2</li> <li>6. Area 3 and 4</li> <li>7. Area 6</li> <li>8. Area 7</li> <li>9. Area 9</li> <li>10. Area 10</li> <li>11. Area 12</li> <li>12. Area 13</li> <li>13. Area 14</li> <li>14. PI Report</li> </ol>
<b>MUNSTER</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15. Clare</li> <li>16. Cork City</li> <li>17. North and East Cork</li> <li>18. Kerry</li> <li>19. West Cork</li> <li>20. Limerick City</li> <li>21. Limerick County</li> <li>22. Tipperary</li> <li>23. Waterford</li> </ol>	<b>ULSTER</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>24. Armagh, Derry and Tyrone</li> <li>25. Antrim, Belfast, Derry and Down</li> <li>26. Fermanagh, Cavan and Monaghan</li> <li>27. Ulster Delegate Report</li> <li>28. Ulster PICC Report</li> </ol>

# **Connaught**

## **1. Galway Area Report**

It was decided to amalgamate both Galway East and West Areas into one Committee for the foreseeable future. The new Committee has reignited enthusiasm and commitment to Service with an average attendance at Area Meetings of 16 to 20 GSR's compared to 3 or 4 at each previous Area Meeting.

A new PI Committee is developing a PI plan for Galway. PI is already happening in Galway, in the form of local Posters and Business Cards, regular Open Public Meetings, providing a Telephone and Website connection, and each element will benefit from this new Committee.

### **Galway Area PI Report**

Galway, (both East and West Areas) have always committed to PI in the form of weekly advertising, planned Open meetings, an active Telephone Service providing public contact, for any enquiries to us as well as an important 12 step connection. It also publishes its website providing valuable local information to the public as well as professionals in the area.

A PI workshop was held at the recent Galway Area Convention last January, where interested members could hear of our PI plan for 2020, the work that was needed and how they could become involved. This was especially helpful because it was also attended by PI conveners and members from around Ireland, who shared their experiences.

We have business cards which have proved to be excellent individual contact information for the Garda, Probation service, HSE etc.

The 45<sup>th</sup> Annual Galway Area Convention happened on the 3rd, 4th and 5th of January last. Overall it was another success with 660 delegates registered. The decision to charge a €10 registration which included the Disco and Dance was welcomed by most attendees. This year we had a number of Workshops including, a Service Workshop, PI Workshop, and a Workshop on how to submit stories to the Road Back, where members who had their own story in print gave their experience on how to submit.

We have our Phone Service, which is going well, we are still finding it difficult to recruit Telephone Responders. The same people seem to have the phone all the time but are dedicated to this Service. We get an average of 12 calls answered weekly.

Connacht Group Insurance Scheme was established to offer groups an Insurance cover for their meetings. It is felt that this service would be better operated on a National level by GSO.

## Appendix 10

One of the most controversial items discussed at Area this year was the decision to phase out the "hard-copy" of the Road Back. It was agreed that this would be a backward move and not in line with our Traditions of carrying the message, especially to the many members who do not read from a Phone, Tablet or Computer. It is understood that there is ample scientific and commercial evidence nowadays that most people want to read "hard-copy" material as opposed to electronic copies. The look and feel is still such a natural and comfortable way for most people to read AA news.

Galway Area would like to recognise the dedicated service offered and actioned by everyone in Galway. Service to Alcoholics Anonymous is such an important aspect of our individual sobriety.

Respectfully submitted Galway Area

### 2. Mayo Area Report

Mayo Area Meetings are held on a six-weekly basis on a Thursday night with most meetings held in Westport. 10-15 members generally attend, and Mayo Area has been successful in attracting members that had not previously attended with these attending as G.S.R. or Observer.

However, it is the same Groups that attend and of the 36 Mayo Groups, some have never been represented. In an effort to change this, it was decided to move Area around to different locations in the County in 2020.

Of note also is the fact that Officer/Service positions are not being filled or there is a delay in filling them because members do not have the required length of sobriety to do so or members cannot commit because of work commitments. It is hoped that this may change in 2020.

There are now 36 Groups in Mayo Area with one new Group having opened in Westport in 2019.

The list of Mayo Area meetings has been updated and reprinted to include Eircodes.

Mayo Area is interested in taking and manning the Connaught Intergroup phone for a period of time and names of responsible members will be sought to do so.

Any outstanding Groups that had not filled in the GDPR compliant GIS were contacted to do so.

## Appendix 10

Because of the level of non-attendance of some Groups at the OPM Hope House Sunday mornings, the Convener contacted all Groups to clarify if they wished to remain on the Hope House rota. Of 35 Groups, 21 stated that they did.

Mayo Area held a successful Convention in November in Westport. Preparation meetings were held in conjunction with Mayo Area. New members were involved and served on Committee.

There is a new PI Convenor in place.

Service was again discussed, and suggestions put forward as to how we can attract more people into Service.

The following were discussed at Mayo Area Meetings

Group Insurance Scheme

Group Password

GSO Publications - Privacy Guidelines and Inappropriate Behaviour at Meetings

### **PI Report**

A School talk was held in St. Gerald's College, Castlebar. This was well received.

A cover letter, an AA Poster and a list of AA Meetings in Mayo Area was sent out to all GP's in Mayo.

An OPM was held in The Curam Centre, Claremorris in September. This was well attended and received.

Medical Profession attached to the Mayo Mental Health Services, Castlebar, invited AA to attend a meeting with them in early December. It is envisaged that an Addiction Service be set up in Mayo and the Medical Profession wanted to know what support AA could be to the alcohol in a Hospital setting.

Two members attended the meeting and put some suggestions forward. They found the meeting to be positive and there is to be a follow up in the New Year.

Marilyn K.  
GSCD Mayo

### **3. Sligo/North Leitrim Area Report**

**Attendance:**

Attendance is generally good at the recent meetings, between 10 and 13 members attending with apologies from a number of members.

**Group Reports:**

Most groups reported good attendances at meetings. One group, Ballisodare, mentioned that the meeting is currently struggling as numbers are down and will monitor over coming months.

**Treasurers Report:**

Treasurer reported good income.

**Prison Report:**

Prison going well, we are looking for new members to open meetings there also. Convener is also hoping to have posters of meeting times put up in prison and a meeting with the Governor is being organised as well.

**PI:**

A very good PI event was organised by Area with Sligo IT in conjunction with the Addiction Studies Course, the event was very well attended and went down well with the Students especially. Monica also spoke on Highland Radio in her capacity as PI for the Area. The programme was on Mental Health in Donegal.

**Data Protection:**

The group spoke about data protection and getting the data protection forms back to General Service Board.

**Cloud Storage:**

All Minutes of all Meetings will soon be available on the cloud storage system which each Area has access to with their own password and pin code.

**Trustee Attendance:**

The group appreciated the visit of the new Connaught Trustee, Richard O'M. from Mayo. Richard spoke of his plans for his time as Trustee and spoke at length about the Road Back and encouraged members to contribute or encourage other contributors to the magazine.

**Convention:**

The Convention will be held on the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> March 2020. Permission has already been requested from Intergroup.

Report was delivered by Sean C, Intergroup Delegate from Sligo/North Leitrim.



## **Leinster**

### **4. Area 1 Report**

Area 1 consists of County Louth. The Area 1 Committee meets at 8.30pm on the second Tuesday of each month in St. Brigid's Hospital, Ardee, and is functioning quite well.

Meetings are harmonious and constructive with good participation in discussions. There are 14 groups in Area 1. The attendance at Area Meetings has improved considerably over the last 12 months. The Area Committee are a very enthusiastic, dedicated and hardworking team. All areas of Service in the Area are covered. The Committee are currently working at attracting more Groups and Members to attend the Area Meetings. The Area regularly sends Intergroup Reps to the Intergroup Meetings and it also contributes financially to Leinster Intergroup.

Most of the Groups in Area 1 avail of the combined AA Group Insurance Scheme co-ordinated through the Area Committee.

Area 1 has 14 listed Groups with 38 Meetings per week, including 4 Step Meetings.

Area 1 is functioning quite well. There has been a marked improvement in the Area, and the committee continue to make a huge effort, particularly in attracting members to Area.

Delegate: Anthony McN.

### **5. Area 2 Report**

Area 2 consists of County Meath. The Area 2 Committee meets at 7.30pm on the first Tuesday of each month in the Unity Centre, Navan, and is functioning well.

Meetings are harmonious and constructive with good participation in discussions. There are 25 Groups in Area 2. 10 or 11 Groups attend Area on a regular basis and the Area is working well. All areas of Service in the Area are covered. The Area regularly sends Intergroup Reps to the Intergroup Meetings and it also contributes financially to Leinster Intergroup. All of the Groups in Area 2 avail of the combined AA Group Insurance Scheme co-ordinated through the Area Committee.

Area 2 has 25 listed groups with 44 meetings per week, including 6 Step Meetings, 1 Open Meeting and a weekly meeting in a Treatment Centre.

Area 2 is functioning quite well. The Area Committee are a dedicated, enthusiastic group who are working well.

Delegate: Anthony McN.

### 6. Area 3 and 4 Report

Area 3&4 is situated in the Midlands, taking in Counties Laois, Longford, Offaly and Westmeath.

The Area 3&4 Committee meets at 8.30pm on the first Wednesday of each month in the Siptu Office, Tullamore, and is functioning very well. Meetings are usually very well attended with an average of about 20 Members attending each meeting. Meetings are harmonious and constructive with good participation in discussions.

There are 40 Groups in Area 3&4. The Area Committee are very enthusiastic and dedicated. All areas of Service in the Area are covered. The Committee are currently trying to attract more Groups and members to attend the Area Meetings. The Area regularly sends Intergroup Reps to the Intergroup Meetings and it also contributes financially to Leinster Intergroup. Some of the groups in Area 3&4 avail of the combined AA Group Insurance Scheme co-ordinated through the Area Committee.

Area 3&4 has 40 listed Groups with 74 Meetings per week, including 10 Step Meetings and 2 Big Book Meetings.

Area 3&4 is functioning very well and is still working to improve further.

Delegate: Anthony McN.

### 7. Area 6 Report

The Area 6 monthly meeting takes place on the last Tuesday of the month at 8pm in St. Helena's Resource Centre in Finglas, North, Co. Dublin. There are 27 Groups in the Area. Group representation at Area 6 Meetings can often fluctuate with on average 6 Groups in regular attendance. Groups that attend Area 6 routinely send any surplus monies onto Intergroup via the Structure. All Service positions in Area 6 are currently filled. In order to try, attract and encourage, more members into Service, Area 6 organised and held a Service Day in October 2019. Following the Service Day there has been a small increase in Groups attending Area, but it is too early to tell if this will be sustained. Due to the numbers of AA Groups in Area 6, it would be nice to see a higher attendance at Area 6, but as the Conference Delegate for Area 6, I would personally like to applaud the commitment of those members who regularly attend Area Meetings, and who also try to extol the individual and collective benefits of Service as a way of trying to encourage new members to get involved in the Fellowship.

### 8. Area 7 Report

The Area 7 monthly meeting takes place on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month at 8.30pm in the Oratory Artane, North, Co. Dublin. There are 34 Groups in the Area. Attendance at Area 7 Meetings is usually confined to the same 7 or 8 Groups. Groups that attend Area 7 routinely send any surplus monies onto Area and Intergroup via the Structure.

## Appendix 10

All Service positions in Area 7 are currently filled. In order to try to attract and encourage more members into Service, the Area 7 Committee organised and held a Service Day on November 9<sup>th</sup> 2019. Much the same as Area 6, while there again has been initially an increase in attendance at Area 7 Meetings, it is too early to tell whether this will continue to be the case. As there is a large number of AA Groups in Area 7, it would be nice to see a higher attendance at Area 7, but as the Conference Delegate for Area 7, I would personally commend the commitment of those members who not only regularly partake in Service. Area 7 has also put the issue of Service high on the Area agenda in the past year in an effort to encourage new members to get involved in and support the Fellowship.

### 9. Area 9 Report

The Area 9 Committee meets at 7.15 pm on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each month at the Freemasons Hall, 17 Molesworth Street, Dublin 2, D02 HK50. The Area is working well but attendance by groups is low. The meetings are conducted in a harmonious and business-like manner. There are 22 listed groups in Area 9 and usually about 6 groups are represented at Area Meetings. Typical attendance at Area 9 Meetings is 10. Observers often attend. Area 9 is continuing its efforts to encourage greater participation by groups.

The key filled positions include Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and one Intergroup Representative. More Intergroup Representatives are needed. Positions vacant include Prisons Convenor and Hospital Convenor. The Chairperson and Secretary will rotate out in March 2020.

A representative of Area 9 attended each meeting of Leinster Intergroup in 2019. Area 9 makes financial contributions to Intergroup regularly. Area 9 participates in the combined Insurance Policy for AA Groups.

Area 9 is based in Dublin South City. A total of 72 meetings per week are held in Area 9 and include 8 Step Meetings, 5 Big Book Meetings, 4 Open Meetings and 2 Tradition Meetings. Some particular features are:

- The Molesworth Group is a major centre which hosts 30 meetings per week
- One group (St Pat's) hosts a weekly Open Meeting
- Polish is spoken at one meeting (AZYL Group) and
- Lithuanian is spoken at one meeting (Sala Group)
- One group (Sober Signs) provides an Irish Sign Language Interpretation Service to enable participation by deaf members.

The Clarendon Street Group had a very successful Open Public Meeting (attendance approx. 80 persons) in June 2019.

## **Appendix 10**

The Sober Signs Group and Area 9 put forward a proposal to Leinster Intergroup seeking funding to engage the services of an Irish Sign Language (ISL) interpreter at one meeting per week in Dublin to enable deaf members to participate in AA meetings. The matter was referred to a Sub-Committee of Intergroup for consideration.

The feedback in relation to the Suggested Guidelines on Personal Behaviour was mixed. One major group is unwilling to consider or use it until a statement as to its status is issued by GSO. Other groups are displaying the suggested guidelines. Some groups object to the "top down" approach to producing and issuing the suggested guidelines.

Delegate, John S.

### **10. Area 10 Report**

The Area 10 monthly meeting takes place on the 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of the month at 8pm in St. Michaels House Templeogue, South Co. Dublin. There are 22 Groups in the Area and on average 8 to 12 Groups are regularly represented at Area Meetings. Groups that attend Area 10 routinely send any surplus monies onto Area and Intergroup via the Structure. All Service positions in Area 10 are currently filled except for Prison Convenor with the Area actively encouraging Groups to nominate someone for this important Service position through the Structure. Area 10 appears to have a good track record when it comes to attendance at Area Meetings because of a strong emphasis on Sponsorship into Service that exists at Area Meetings.

Area 10 continues to service the Rutland Centre. Both meetings, Thursdays and Sunday continue to get good support. The general idea is to encourage the clients to share, and to give them an understanding of what AA is all about before they leave the centre. At some point in 2020 the Central Mental Hospital which is currently serviced by Area 10 will be relocated to Area 7. Preparations are underway to make sure a smooth transition occurs when this relocation happens. An Open Meeting was held in the Central Mental Hospital held on Wednesday 4th December 2019. 20 patients, 6 members of Staff and 6 AA members were in attendance. A very successful and enjoyable night was had by all.

### **11. Area 12 Report**

Area 12 consists of most of County Wicklow. The Area 12 Committee meets at 8.30pm on the second Wednesday of each month in the Holy Rosary School, Wicklow Town and is functioning well.

Meetings are harmonious and constructive with good participation in discussions. There are 17 Groups in Area 12. While attendance at Area Meetings is not currently very high, it has improved over the last year. The Area Committee are a very enthusiastic, dedicated and hardworking team.

## Appendix 10

All areas of Service in the Area are covered. The Committee are currently working hard at attracting more Groups and Members to attend the Area Meetings. The Area regularly sends Intergroup Reps to the Intergroup Meetings and it also contributes financially to Leinster Intergroup.

All of the Groups in Area 12 avail of the combined AA Group Insurance Scheme co-ordinated through the Area Committee.

Area 12 has 17 listed Groups with 31 Meetings per week, including 3 Step/Tradition Meetings and 2 Big Book Meetings.

Area 12 is functioning quite well. There is room for improvement, particularly in attracting Members to Area, which the Committee are working on.

Delegate: Anthony McN.

### 12. Area 13 Report

The Area 13 Committee meets at 8pm on the second Monday of each month at Askea Parish Centre, Carlow. There are 16 groups in Area 13 from Carlow (5), Kilkenny (7) and western parts of Wexford (1) and Wicklow (3) with meetings in 19 different venues.

The Committee is functioning well. Meetings are harmonious and business-like, often with lively discussions. However, attendance by groups is often quite low. An average of 4 groups attended the Area meetings in 2019, mainly from Carlow and Wicklow, with an average of 10 persons attending at each meeting. Efforts are being made to encourage attendance and participation. Observers attended half the meetings in 2019.

Most key positions are filled with good rotation. The Secretary and Treasurer have each completed one year of service in those roles. New appointments were made in 2019 to PI and H&TC Convenor and, in January 2020, a new Phone Convenor was appointed. One of the two Intergroup Representatives rotated out in May 2019 and the other in December. Three new Intergroup Representatives began service in January 2020.

Area 13 contributes financially to Intergroup and a Representative of Area 13 attended each of the Leinster Intergroup Meetings in 2019. Area 13 participates in the Phone Service and shares a phone with Area 14. The Hospital Convenor co-ordinates an Open Meeting on a monthly basis in the Francis Farm Treatment Centre and on a bi-monthly basis in the Aislinn Centre. Area 13 organised a large Open Public Meeting in Carlow in March 2019 with AA, Al-anon and Medical Speakers. The Blessington Group held Open Public Meetings in March and September. All groups in the Area participate in the combined Insurance Scheme for AA Groups.

A total of 34 closed meetings are held weekly in Area 13. They include 2 Step Meetings and 2 Big Book Meetings. There is now a meeting every day in Carlow town and Kilkenny City. Feedback on the Suggested Guidelines for Personal Behaviour has been mixed.

## Appendix 10

Some groups feel that guidance is necessary, some feel that the document is heavy-handed, others suggest that groups need to follow the AA Traditions more closely and their Group Conscience.

Area 13 is supporting a Motion to Conference to adopt and adapt the UK Traditions Checklist for use in Ireland.

Delegate: John S.

### 13. Area 14 Report

The Area 14 Committee meets on the second Sunday of each month at 6.30pm in the Parish Hall, Dun Mhuire Theatre, South Main Street, Wexford. The time of the meeting was changed to 6.30pm for December 2019 and onwards with the aim of facilitating attendance by GSRs: previous time was 11am. There are 22 listed groups in Area 14, all in County Wexford. Typically, 10 persons attend Area Meetings, including one or two Observers, and about 7 Groups are usually represented.

All key positions are filled. The Chairperson and Treasurer rotated out at the AGM in November 2019 and new appointees took on these roles.

Area 14 participates in Leinster Intergroup and was represented at four of the five meetings of Intergroup in 2019. The Area makes regular financial contributions to Intergroup. Almost all groups in Area 14 contribute financially to the Area. All groups in Area 14 participate in the combined Insurance Scheme for AA Groups. Area 14 participates in the Phone Service and shares a phone with Area 13. There is active PI work and School Talks are going well. Area 14 has an Irish-Speaking team for School Talks at Gaelscoil. Area 14 organised a well-attended Wexford Convention in February 2019 and passed the surplus to Intergroup. The 2020 Wexford Area Convention took place in February in Whites Hotel, Wexford (report awaited). This has been a successful annual event since 2017.

A total of some 55 meetings take place in Area 14 per week in 22 different locations. These include 4 Step Meetings and 2 Big Book Meetings. They also include two meetings in the Aiseiri Treatment Centre in Wexford Town. The Parish Hall Group in Wexford is a major centre and hosts 16 meetings per week.

Area 14 is strongly in favour of promoting an environment which is free from any form of harassment, bullying or intimidation.

Delegate: John S.

### 14. Leinster PI Report

Communications have been maintained throughout the last twelve months with all Fourteen Areas within Leinster Intergroup. Where an Area has no PI in place, contact has been made with their Area Secretary. Purpose of this is to encourage Area to take responsibility for all PI work and AA Speaker Requests within their Area. Leinster Intergroup currently has seven Area PI's the other seven Areas either have a temporary PI or Area Secretary is covering.

Leinster Intergroup has held two meetings for Area PI's. An Agenda is circulated to all Areas two weeks before the actual meeting takes place. Minutes of Meeting are taken and sent out to all those who were in attendance. Minutes are also sent to Areas that have no PI. Ulster Intergroup have been in touch by email and phone. Sharing of ideas with regards to PI Service work.

Letters that are sent to Schools and Youthreach Centres were reviewed and amendments were made. Copies were sent to all Area PI's for their approval. All requests, apart from one, from Schools and Youthreach Centres have been carried out.

Good communication with GSO is very good. I have found GSO Staff to be very helpful especially when I first took on role as Leinster Intergroup PI. With the need to move to more electronic communication I had a lot of questions and was given training over the phone.

Garda vetting still crops up at times. We received a request for a School Talk with Teacher requesting that all speakers be Garda Vetted. After speaking with the Area PI, contact was made with the Teacher and after some discussion, the Teacher agreed that the AA Speakers could come into their School.

Areas are holding Open Public Meetings and Gratitude Days and have been given support from Leinster Intergroup PI. This support may be by answering any questions that members may have or by providing use of AA 'Pop Up' Stand.

Interviews on Radio and by a Psychologist from Sweden have been carried out.

Leinster Intergroup supports their PI with a Budget. This has been very useful and written records are kept on how AA money is spent, and receipts provided.

Dave D (Leinster Intergroup PI)

## **Munster**

### **15. Clare Area Report**

Clare Area is going very well with new Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer in place also a new PI in place. Attendance in Clare Area is about 50 to 60%. Meetings throughout Clare Area are well attended. Delegates have gone out to groups to help and encourage groups to attend Area, despite this some groups have not forwarded any contributions in a few years this is worrying as it leaves Secretary's in a very vulnerable position and is very unhealthy for groups and individual members.

Clare Area ran its Annual Convention in October which was a great success and showed a surplus of 600e this was passed on through the Structure.

PI is working well and is attending Schools, helping to carry out the message. PI also sent the AA DVD to all secondary Schools in Clare with a cover letter explaining how we can help. A Poster campaign is also in place. Bottle Bank Posters are in place throughout Clare.

Clare Area Phone is working well and Ads advising of our service are in local Papers and in Church Newsletters. We are also providing Stands with Literature at appropriate Events throughout the County.

Clare Area has concerns regarding Group Information and groups have expressed difficulty in changing Group Information. Clare Area would like this process to be made easier and more straightforward. Some groups don't seem to have log on details available.

In general, I think it is fair to say Clare Area is happy with how the Fellowship is going as there is no Motion to Conference.

Kind regards  
Nicholas R, CD.



## **16. Cork City Area Report**

### **Overview**

There are 40 Groups in the Cork City Area. The Cork City Area Committee meets monthly on the first Saturday of each month. The monthly meeting is attended by an average of 20 Groups.

### **Area Officers**

The Area Chairman – Brian S. will be completing his two-year term in March 2020. The Area Treasurer – Paul N. – rotated out of his position in September 2019 and was replaced by Jo K. in November 2019. The Area Secretary – Aidan K. – will be in place until October 2020.

At the end of December 2019, all Service positions were filled except for a vacancy for a fourth Munster Intergroup Delegate.

There are very few groups in Cork City Area which have a full complement of two GSRs.

## **Services**

### **Literature**

The Literature Bank has been running smoothly. Ted H. took over as Literature Bank Secretary in September 2019.

### **Hospital**

The Hospital Service is experiencing some challenges. There are two meetings per week in the Mercy Hospital and these meetings are run by groups in rotation. There are not enough groups on the rota and those on the list are being asked too frequently. This has had the unfortunate knock-on that a number of groups have removed themselves from the rota during the year leaving the remaining 8 groups being asked to cover the meeting every second or third month.

There is a meeting in Tabor Lodge Treatment Centre which is running well at present.

### **Phone Service**

Cork City has a mobile phone number which is answered by groups in rotation. The phone is on from 12 noon to 10pm daily. There are currently more than 12 groups on the rota so no group should have to have the phone more than once per year. Alan K. completed his two-year term as Telephone Secretary in October and was replaced by Eoin Mc. in December.

### **Prison**

The Prison Service has had a very successful year. After a number of years of difficulty, the current Prison Secretary – Mick B – has received very positive feedback from the Prison Educational Facility and there are now two meetings – Tuesday and Thursday afternoons – running in the Prison. The Garda Clearance process has been made less stringent and clearance is now taking approximately two weeks.

### **Public Information**

The Public Information Service has struggled in 2019 and Donal W. completed his two-year term as Public Information Secretary in November. For most of the two years he was on his own as the sole member of the Committee. Despite this he managed to supply Speakers for the monthly Al Anon Open Meeting and made a number of presentations to Schools and other venues.

Brian L. has taken over as PI Secretary in December 2019 and there is another member after joining the Committee. A number of members have made themselves available as Speakers for events.

### **Open Meeting**

The Open Meeting which was highlighted as a particular problem in the 2018 Annual Report continues to struggle. After more than a year without one, Betty McK. volunteered as the Open Meeting Secretary in September. She was investigating new venues but has unfortunately had to stand down due to personal circumstances. There is an interim Secretary, but nobody has come forward to try and resolve the problems which have been on-going for the last number of years.

These challenges include the fact that the parking for the venue is no longer available and the meeting location is perceived as a security risk, particularly for female members. The main problem however is that attendance at the Open Meeting has dwindled to the point where there are regularly more people sitting at the top table than in the audience and often the audience comprises of members rather than newcomers.

The Public Information Secretary was exploring ways to broaden the advertising for the Open Meeting and there are now adverts running on a local radio station. A number of the free Newspapers in the City have provided quotations for advertising in their publications.

One of the groups in Cork has proposed that the meeting run once per month as the current attendance doesn't warrant running it weekly.

### **Convention**

The highlight of the year was the Convention, which ran March 8th, 9th and 10th March 2019 at the Blarney Woollen Mills Hotel. There were 236 people who registered for the Convention and there was a surplus of €474.53.

### Service Workshop

Due to the continued struggle to find people to take up Service positions the Cork City Centre (Grattan Street) Group proposed that a Service Workshop be run by Cork City Area. This was run in November 2019 and was attended by approximately 50 people.

## 17. North and East Cork Area Report

### North and East Cork Area (NaEC) Overview

NaEC consists of 23 groups that cover one of the most geographically dispersed areas of the AA Structure. Meetings in Youghal on the Cork/Waterford border are approximately 125 km. from meetings in Ballydesmond on the outskirts of Killarney.

Area meets 10 times per year in two venues between Mallow in the centre of the County and Castlemartyr in the South East of the County. This is a somewhat new arrangement and has proven to be successful in attracting more participation and service by G.S.R.s.

Members cited convenience and inclusion as motivating factors in the increase in Service commitment.

We did however notice that there was a high level of absenteeism among groups in the north western part of the County. To address this, we were encouraged by our Conference Delegate to visit these groups and ask them to assist us in the running of the AA Structure in Area.

On behalf of our Area we asked the 23 groups to consider the following:

- To continue participation in Area activities by sponsoring into Service, Group Service Representatives, G.S.R. and also
- To discuss in their respective Group Conscience Meetings how their group was planning to follow Tradition Five, that is, did they have a schedule of Public Information Events.

We repeated our understanding of how '*A.A.'s Twelve Traditions apply to the life of the Fellowship itself. They outline the means by which AA maintains its unity and relates itself to the world about it, the way it lives and grows.*'

Extract from **The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions** (A Co-Founder of Alcoholics Anonymous tells how members recover and how the society functions) Foreword Page 15.

Following the visits by our Intergroup Representatives and PI Committee Chairman to all the groups during the summer of 2019, we saw an increase in attendance at Area from groups in the north western part of the County. We discussed ways of keeping this going and have arranged for Area Meetings to be held at various times of the year at locations other than the usual two.

## Appendix 10

We have a provisional arrangement to hold an Area Meeting in Kanturk in the North West in the Spring of this year.

The Area team compiled a detailed report and gave feedback on issues they encountered and urged groups to refer to AA Literature and remedy potential problems such as:

- Meeting cards nine years out of date
- Directories over 10 years old
- No Literature Bank or practically none
- No Group Conscience in several years
- Steering Committee comprised of the same core group for unacceptable number of years, and
- A general distrust and dismissal of the work of the AA Structure.

This report was abridged to a shorter version for groups to read at their individual Group Conscience and posted to each group with the Minutes of Area and the PI Committee. The full version is available on request.

Area decided to put together a "Pack" for incoming G.S.R's to assist them in fulfilling their service commitment, this is to initially include the following literature:

- A.A. General Service Conference "Green" Service Handbook
- Alcoholics Anonymous; The A.A. Group
- Suggested Guidelines For Personal Conduct and Appropriate Behaviour for AA Members
- Copies of the most up to date meetings list
- Contact details for Area Officers and GSO
- An overview of the Website services
- An Invitation to join the NaEC Area private WhatsApp Group

Going forward, this may also include a copy of the Road Back, a Pamphlet on Traditions and other relevant literature.

Area has also decided to post a copy of the following to all 23 Groups:

- A.A. General Service Conference "Green" Service Handbook
- Alcoholics Anonymous; The A.A. Group

Two members have recently taken up service as Intergroup Representatives. June E. (Carrigtwohill) and Jim L. (Midleton Hospital Group), both in the south east of Area and we are still actively looking for members from the north west of the County to join us in service at MI.

### **Phone service**

Area are highly engaged in Phone Service and constantly work to improve the quality and effectiveness of the service. A decision to upgrade the phone was taken recently along with an audit of the group contacts.

We looked to see if the AA National Directory listings were accurate and if it was necessary to use the Group Information Sheets to update any differences. This was done at Area Meetings of the G.S.R.s in attendance.

This process is ongoing, and we recently had a case where the Area number was contacted regarding a Twelve Step call.

When the relevant Area was contacted through the AA Directory listing, the named contact in the Directory was found to be incoherent and unable to help. Subsequent follow up revealed that this member had a debilitating mental condition and had not been in service for some years.

Area Phone Service Representative suggested a Group Conscience for that particular group and the use of the Group Information Sheet. The Twelve Step call was followed up and the individual was brought to a meeting.

This may be an oversight on the part of the group in that location or may be symptomatic of members and groups not fully understanding our Primary Purpose and its practical use in life threatening situations.

### **Prison Service**

NaEC have responded to a request for Service from Cork City Area at the Prison Meetings. A call for Service Volunteers was put out and a list of names was forwarded to Cork City Area Secretary.

### **Public Information**

NaEC formed a PI Committee in 2019. The Committee meets one hour before regular Area Meetings and has a working group of twelve members. These Meetings are Minuted and the Minutes are issued with the regular Area monthly post.

Similarly, to the regular Minutes these are also issued by email.

### **Open Public Meetings**

There have been four Public Meetings in the last six months, and we are working on a 24-month rota where every group will hold a PI Meeting within a two-year period.

Discussion on this has raised questions on the following:

- Groups participation in Area
- Ways to attract relevant Professionals to PI Meetings
- Best Practice for running a PI Meeting.

### **Website and Internal Communication**

We are working on setting up a Workshop for Officers and Members from our 23 groups to assist them in accessing the Online AA Services. We see this as a priority and suggest it could also be a Workshop in upcoming Conventions. This is in response to questions asked about difficulties around Passwords and Usernames for groups using our National Website.

North and East Cork Area (NaEC) thanked the outgoing Conference Delegate John D. (Kerry) for his service to Area over the last four years. John has a tremendous influence on the development of our Area and has fostered a solutions-based culture at Area that is seeing increase participation and effectiveness in carry the message.

The Midleton Hospital Group has submitted a Motion on the status of Conference in Ireland.

## **18. Kerry Area**

Kerry Area consists of 32 Groups and are dispersed throughout the County. From Kenmare in the south of the County to Tarbert in the north. The Area Group meets 11 times per year in Tralee.

Meetings are well attended but Area notes that there are some groups that are infrequent attendees at meetings. In order to reach out to these groups and to encourage them to participate in the direction of AA, Area has rotated monthly meetings to Kenmare and are considering other locations in the County.

In 2019, Munster Intergroup Representatives visited a large number of groups in the County to ask for their continued support in the running of AA and its effort to carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic.

Area Committee report that the business of AA is going well and that there is an active membership engaged in Public Information, Open Public Meetings and Hospital Meeting Service.

In the six months to February 2020, there has been a total of 7 Open Public Meetings held in various parts of the County and more are planned for rest of 2020.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Kerry Area Mini Convention Committee on the running of a very successful Convention in November 2019. Hard worked paid off and the turnout was a record for recent times.

### **Future aspirations**

We are in Service to assist in our Primary Purpose, we may have difficulties in attracting members into Service. We are trying to overcome negative and sometimes entrenched opinions and attitudes towards Service at Area and Provincial level. We realise that mistakes were made in the past and that there will be mistakes in the future, however as AA takes instruction from the Groups, it is the Groups responsibility to direct and guide the Structure, we are but Trusted Servants.

General Service Representative may be the most important job in AA.

*"The strength of our whole AA Service Structure starts with the Group and with the General Service Representative (G.S.R.) the group elects. I cannot emphasize too strongly the G.S.R.'s importance."*

-Bill W. on General Service and the GSR.

John T.

## **19. West Cork Area Report**

The West Cork Area is doing very well this year with meetings being very well attended. We have 14 groups in the Area and 12 have been represented at Area Meetings this year. We are delighted to see Castletownbere and Glengarrif GSRs attending Area Meetings this year which continue to move around from group to group where facilities are available. We held 8 Meetings this year with a very successful Convention on June Bank Holiday Weekend.

There has been a change of Committee this year with Kieran taking over as Chairperson, James as Treasurer and Ann as Secretary. We now have 3 Intergroup Delegates and new GSRs, which is good.

### **Financial Report**

Finances are doing well with nearly all groups now contributing. The amounts being sent to Intergroup has increased.

### **P.I. Report**

2019 has been a relatively quiet year. We were not invited to do any Schools despite 15 different Schools being visited. Literature and Posters were however given to them.

We have been more active in placing AA Posters in Libraries, Medical Cent res, GP Surgeries and Garcia Stations throughout the area. Posters were placed in Supermarkets, but we found them removed soon after.

There are younger members needed to help with PI, and one member has come forward so hopefully this will get more support in 2020 as it is very important connection with the public.

### **Mobile Phone Report**

The phone is a vital link with people who need help. The phone has been moving around, with each group taking responsibility for a few weeks. Reports have been quiet, but calls looked after, and help given to callers.

### **MIG Report**

There are now 3 Intergroup Delegates. We are busy visiting groups to encourage Service. We are being active trying to get email system running smoothly for groups. But cognisant of the need to maintain members privacy in line with statutory obligations and to maintain members anonymity.

### **Convention Report**

The 37th Cork County Convention 2019 was organised by West Cork Area Group. To create more interest and accessibility it was moved from Bantry to The Riverside Hotel Macroom on the June Bank Holiday weekend to facilities families.

The Theme was GRATITUDE, and this was shown by so many members willingly volunteering their services throughout the weekend. The Convention proved a great success with over 200 members registering over the weekend. The feedback regarding Meetings, Workshops and Marathon Meetings was all very positive and the weekend was enjoyed by all.

### **AOB**

We have had a very positive year with more groups being involved and more members doing service.

### **PI Report**

2019 has been a relatively quiet year. We were not invited to do any Schools despite 15 different Schools being visited. Literature and Posters were however given to them.

We have been more active in placing AA Posters in Libraries, Medical Centres, GP Surgeries and Garda Stations throughout the area. Posters were placed in Supermarkets, but we found them removed soon after.

There are younger members needed to help with PI, and one member has come forward so hopefully this will get more support in 2020 as it is a very important connection with the Public.

YOURS IN FELLOWSHIP



## **20. Limerick City Area Report**

Limerick City is going very well with a very high attendance at its monthly meeting up to 80% of groups attend regularly.

All Service positions are filled. Speakers do Jail and Hospital Service.

PI Phone Service is going well, and the number is well advertised in local press. PI are getting requests to attend Schools around the City and are providing Speakers.

Limerick City run a very successful Convention in February in conjunction with Limerick County Area.

There are plenty well run meetings throughout the City Area.

As there are no Motion's to Conference, Limerick City are happy with the way AA is run but problems with Group Information is causing frustration. Limerick City would like the process to be made easier and more user friendly and speed up the process of changing Group Information. Limerick City believe this can be done without a Motion as it is an administrative change that's needed.

Kind regards  
Nicholas R  
CD

## **21. Limerick County Area Report**

Limerick County Area has struggled in terms of GSR attending Area Meetings, indeed if it was not for the hard work of a small number of Officers, Limerick County would not have been able to continue, resulting in all groups closing.

There has been a slight improvement in numbers attending as a result of Delegates going out and appealing to groups for help.

Problems may arise when these Officers step down when their term ends.

A new PI Officer has taken up his role and is working well. Schools have been notified of our availability and got a good response.

The Area Phone is working well.

PI is also working with City Area in relation to the Annual Convention all going well. Groups are providing Speakers for Bruree Treatment Centre.

## Appendix 10

Concerns have been raised in regard to Bruree meeting being run by Limerick County Area as the Treatment Centre only allows men only attend this goes against AA's Traditions. A second meeting has opened to cater for women again going against Traditions.

Limerick County Area is having difficulty with Group Information and would like the process made simpler for groups to change Group Information.

Kind regards  
Nicholas R  
CD.

### 22. Tipperary Area Report

Tipperary holds its Area Meeting in the Horse & Jockey Hotel once every 6 weeks at 8:30pm.

Over the past 12 months I have a seen a marked increase in numbers attending Area.

At the moment Tipperary is a little weak in the PI department and numbers hard to find for Intergroup.

The strong point is its Convention. It could always be held as an example to the Fellowship as a whole. Last year's Convention was excellent. The message was well carried, and great experience had by all.

Officers come and rotate as normal- no problem there.

Phone going well and rotated properly.

Further work needed to try up PI Committee and encourage members to Munster Intergroup.

Yours Faithfully,  
Eddy, Conference Delegate

## **23. Waterford Area Report**

Waterford holds its Area Meeting every 6 weeks. We now have a new format, in so far as having our meetings in Hotels - we now have our meetings in Group Area rooms where normal AA meetings are held. These, of course, are with the kind permission of the groups in question. It saves AA a lot of money.

Last January, our Convention was a great success; message well carried and a very warm atmosphere. Lots of new young blood and new ideas and procedures - great to see. Also, good to see modest surplus.

PI going well at the moment. Literature being put in Garda Barracks, Churches, Doctors' Surgeries etc. Local Radio Stations have given us an opportunity to speak anonymously on behalf of the Fellowship. We also held a few Public Open Meetings.

Phone is very well manned at the moment and on a rotation system that works very well. Officers have come and gone on the rotation system and we always fill vacancies as they arise.

Yours faithfully,  
Eddy, Conference Delegate

## **Ulster**

### **24. Armagh, Derry and Tyrone Area Report**

During the last year I have attended Area meetings in Armagh/Derry and Tyrone.

Armagh Area has 22 Groups, have 50 meeting per week comprising of Closed/Step and Tradition Meetings.

Derry Area has 18 Groups, have 38 meetings per week again comprising of Closed/Step and Tradition Meetings.

Tyrone has 22 Groups have 35 meetings per week here again a mixture of Closed / Step and Tradition meetings.

All Areas have Officer Bearers in place and GSRs who attend contribute positively, however all Areas are trying to attract more participation from other Groups who fail to attend. Most meetings are attended by the same Groups and I think it is important to encourage other Groups to attend Area which is vital for the wellbeing of The Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. It does seem very difficult to get AA Members to commit to Service at all levels. Myself and my fellow GCSDs have went to Groups to encourage them to come to Area and will continue to do so.

## Appendix 10

Areas that I have covered all set agendas which include Group, Treasurers, Hospital, Prison and PI Reports. The Areas regularly send Intergroup Reps to Intergroup Meetings and also contribute financially their surplus money through Structure as per The Charity Regulatory. But some groups seem to be working outside The Structure which would not apply within the guidelines required of The Charity Regulatory.

I feel that newcomers should not just be sponsored into the 12 Step Recovery Programme of AA but also into Service and the importance of Service to enhance the sobriety of each individual.

I have attended Conference last year in March but due to personal commitments I was unable to attend the Re-Convened Conference in May, but I enjoyed the experience and meeting up with other Delegates to share each other's views on different issues.

To sum up this has been an enjoyable year for me in Service and would like to thank Pat the Office Administrator, The Officers at Intergroup Level, My Fellow GSCDs and Brian The Trustee for all their help and support.

COLUM P JANUARY 2020 Ulster Delegate.

### **25. Antrim, Belfast, Derry and Down Area Report**

In the past year I have attended meetings in Antrim, Belfast, Derry and Down Areas. I have found that in general that the meetings were well run, and that the officers and GSR's in attendance made positive contributions. However, on average only 35% to 40% of groups in the area attended meetings. There appears to be a feeling in some groups, that while they will say that service is necessary within AA., that it is left to someone else to do it.

Most of the meetings were conducted by running down the headings on the Minutes of the previous meeting, e.g. Hospital Report, Prison Report, PI Report, Treasurer's Report, Group Reports, and AOB and in some cases suggested closing times were proposed before the meeting started. This tends to make the meetings relatively fixed, and the content, mostly the same as the last one.

It may be a good idea to have a 'one-page Agenda' which lists the standard headings, plus a topic inserted at each Area Meeting either for brief discussion, or to take back to groups for them to discuss at their next Group Conscience. The topic could be e.g. Why is service important? How can we encourage more groups to attend? Why should Area officers attend Intergroup? A time can be set for this discussion.

## Appendix 10

I think it is important to state that the people who do go to Area, do care, and do the very best that they can. It was encouraging at one of the Areas that I attended to see new younger GSR's in attendance for the AGM. They brought a feeling of positivity to the room and were eager to learn more about what happens at Area meetings. The Area concerned agreed to conduct an Area Inventory meeting in March 2020 to review what was being done, and to supply information to the new GSR's.

I have also attended all Intergroup meetings in the year. Some were very good, and some not. I believe we should all bear in mind (including myself), that we are all alcoholics trying to do our best. We all have to remember that 'Speaking the truth kindly' does not make it less true.

The important factor that I took from Conference was that any Motions taken there have to be carefully considered by the Group, Area, and Intergroup before they are brought to Conference as 90% are rejected.

I would like to thank, the Office Manager, the Officers of Intergroup, the other GSCD's and the Trustee for their help & support during the year.

GSCD Report Brian G.

### **26. Fermanagh, Cavan and Monaghan Area Report**

Having completed my first year as Conference Delegate, I have found it extremely rewarding and beneficial to my personal recovery. Over the year I have visited Area meetings in Donegal, Tyrone, Derry, Armagh.

The Areas I have been most involved with is Fermanagh, Cavan and Monaghan, like most Areas the greatest difficulty experienced is getting people in to Service, these 3 Areas have a dedicated group of people that carry out the basic functions of the required Service, they make themselves available and ensure contributions are passed through the Structure and important information is passed to the groups, PI requests for Schools etc. are carried out. The normal question arises when I see these members work for the survival of their Areas, where is the gratitude we hear so often shared in meetings? I am grateful for what AA has done for me but don't ask me to do anything for AA. I read the article written on page 71 of the green Service Handbook by Non- Alcoholic Trustee Bernard B. Smith, when he states *"We may not need a General Service Conference for our own recovery, we need it to ensure the recovery of a child being born tonight, destined to alcoholism"*. This applies to our Intergroup and Areas as well.

Having attended my first Conference in March and May I now see I have a lot to learn in this aspect of Service, but I believe in the 'Pass It On' theory and I thank those who travelled this path for their help.

## Appendix 10

It was a great privilege to be proposed to attend Conference GB in May with Anthony from Leinster Intergroup.

I would like to thank Armagh and Tyrone Areas for their invitation to assist on their Day of Gratitude Committees.

KENNY P.

### **27. Ulster Delegate Report**

Report to Conference 2020 by Delegate Tom D, Ulster.

This being my final report to Conference as a Conference Delegate, may I take this opportunity to thank Ulster Intergroup and our Fellowship as a whole for the great privilege afforded me.

I wish nothing but the best for our great society of ex-problem drinkers and may a loving God express himself throughout our Service Structure for all those still to walk or stumble in the door.

In love and fellowship.

Tom D.

### **28. Ulster PICC Report**

The UPICC Committee is a Sub-Committee of Ulster Intergroup and is responsible for the coordinating of PI within Ulster Intergroup. The Committee is responsible to Ulster Intergroup and currently holds a monthly meeting. It forwards clear transparent Minutes to UIG for inclusion in the UIG Minutes of its work and progress.

The UPICC Committee is made up of the PI Chair and the Chairpersons of the Areas within Ulster Intergroup.

- The Committee is responsible for implementing the Structure of PI in Ulster in conjunction with the Conference Approved Guidelines for PI Information Folder and strives to work within its parameters.
- PI Chair visited the 10 Area Meetings in Ulster and gave a PI Presentation.
- Encouraged all Areas to purchase the PI Folder to assist them and their Groups in their Areas to properly implement PI through Structure.
- Informed the Areas of the Area responsibility in regard to PI.
- Encouraged Areas to have a PI Chairperson in place and set up an Area PI Committee which in turn would meet regularly.
- 8 out of 10 Areas have now a PI Chairperson and are setting up Committees if not already in place.
- Encouraged the Areas to set up a list of Appropriate Speakers for the purpose of PI Events, which is to be reviewed yearly.

## Appendix 10

- Encouraged Areas/Groups to give at least 2 months' notice when planning PI Events to avoid clashing.
- Introduced Centralised Flyers for all Areas/Groups for Events including the correct Logo, contact information and website details.
- Proactively promote our New improved Website at all levels and Events.
- Ran a successful Ulster PI Workshop in September for all Groups.
- Roll out of PI & YOU Mini Workshops in Ulster. These are 1 hour in length and help empower and encourage our members into Service and covers the WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHY AND WHERE of PI. We are running 2 workshops in each Area and split the Area in two geographically to include all Groups from the Area. These are proving to be successful in encouraging others into Service and Groups to set up Group PI Committees with a working framework.
- Encouraged our Areas to get Groups to hold more regular Tradition Meetings and to encourage our members to embrace the fantastic literature our Fellowship provides including AA Comes of Age.
- Ulster had 18 publications of DYING FOR A DRINK story published at Regional level in 2019.
- Committee did a live Interview with Radio Ulster.
- Supplied an article for the Irish News about AA and General Information about our Fellowship in Ireland.
- Plan for mock-up Media Presentations Workshop planned for 2020 to prepare members dealing with the media at Radio and Press level.
- Encouraged the PI Area Chairs to visit the Groups within their Areas to set up Group PI Committees.
- In November, the month of Gratitude, we saw the leaflet drop rolled out to all Groups. 10 Posters per Group were sent out to be put up in the run up to Christmas in local Areas, such as Doctors Surgeries, Libraries, Supermarkets, Churches, Chip Shops, Police Stations etc. to carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic still out there. With over 200 Groups in Ulster we were hoping to get 2000 Posters across Ulster in the run up to Christmas to help plant the seed that help is out there.
- Cooperating with our 4 GSCD's to communicate to Areas about raising the profile of good Public Information within our Fellowship.
- UPICC helped and attended the European Conference on Mental Health in October in Belfast which saw over 400 Medical Professionals attend from all round Europe. We were privileged to have a stand at the Event and also a private Workshop.
- UPICC conducted an Inventory of itself in November and discussed our progress to date and what we could be doing better.
- Committee sent out a Best Practice Sheet on how to hold a SUCCESSFUL PUBLIC INFORMATION EVENT.
- Committee plan to roll out properly the New Doctors Surgery Presentation in Ulster in 2020.
- Plan in place to visit the Leinster Intergroup early 2020 for Fellowship and cooperation and idea sharing.

**62<sup>nd</sup> All Ireland Convention Report 2019  
For Conference 7<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

The Venue for the 62<sup>nd</sup> All Ireland Convention was the Great Northern Hotel, Bundoran on the 27<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> April 2019. Hosted by Ulster Intergroup on behalf of the General Conference of Ireland.

The first Committee Meeting was held on the 24<sup>th</sup> January 2018. Members of the Committee were the four sitting GSCD, The Trustee for Ulster and the Officers of Intergroup. Roles and responsibilities were assigned to each member. The Theme of the Convention was "**The 12 Steps**".

It was also agreed to send an invitation to AI Anon.  
AI Anon are responsible for their own dealings with the Hotel.

All Major decisions regarding the running of the Convention should be taken by the Committee as a whole. The carrying out of those decisions may be delegated to an individual member.

The Committee meet on seven occasions. Two of these meetings were held in the Hotel in Bundoran.

**PRO:**

PR was extensive with over 150 Press Releases sent as email and using the internet as a way of letting our overseas friends know of our Convention.

**Main meetings:**

The main hall of the Hotel was used for the Opening Meeting, International Form, Public Information Meeting, Round Ireland Meeting and Closing Meeting. (Seating for 500).

**Marathon meetings:**

Meetings were run on an hourly basis. The Themes for the Meetings were adhered to and displayed in various locations in the Hotel i.e. Reception, Lounge area and Meeting room. Music from the bar disturbed the meeting on Friday night. Marathon Meetings were moved to main hall.

Marathon Meetings were well attended as was the Early Birds Meeting on the Thursday night.



## Appendix 11

### Meet the Board:

Meet the Board Meeting was held at 5pm on the Saturday. Board Secretary introduced Members of the Board to a large attendance. The meeting lasted for one hour and a healthy discussion was had.

### Entertainment:

There was no entertainment on the Friday night as the Hotel had music in the bar.

A Dance was held on the Saturday night. Dancing to the "The James Peake Experience" 270 tickets were sold.

A good night was had by all.

### Literature:

The Literature stand was manned by members of the GSO staff.

Sales totalling 3,091.53 Euro.

Ulster Intergroup would like to thank all Areas for covering the Marathon Meetings and registration desk, the Speakers for the main meetings, and everyone who helped in any way to make this a successful Convention.

### Registration:

Registration was always manned by a Committee Member. Over the weekend the money was collected every two hours by the Treasurer or Assistant Treasurer.

Total registration was 684. This was slightly down from the last Convention at the same venue.

Registration was 10 Euro. Dance tickets were also 10 Euro.

The Table below shows the general distribution of the areas where members came from.

Area	Members
Connaught	76
Leinster	101
Munster	71
Ulster	353
England	41
Scotland	8
USA	29
Canada	1
Malta	1
Netherlands	1
New Zealand	1
Japan	1
<b>Registration Total</b>	<b>684</b>

## All Ireland Convention 2019 Financial Statement

Income		Expenses Euro	
Registration	€6,840.00	Mall Publications	€60.00
Dance	€2,700.00	Travel	€210.00
		I am responsible cards	€108.40
Total	€9,540.00	Hotel	€600.00
		Hotel for Committee	€2,365.00
Expenses Sterling		Flowers	€100.00
		Gift card	€53.00
Travel	£719.36	Total	€3,496.40
Printing	£558.47		
Band	£1,600.00	Income	€9540.00
Lanyards	£870.00	Less Expenses	€7,940.25
Total	£3,838.48		
Convert to Euro	€4,443.85	<b>Surplus</b>	<b>€1,599.75</b>

Prepared by Treasurer



Chairman



**Report from GB Conference  
12<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> April 2019**

For Conference 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> March 2020

**ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS GB**

Fifty Fourth General Service Conference  
Park Inn Hotel, York  
The Henley Suite  
Pass It On  
12<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> April 2019

Irish Overseas Observers: Kenny P. – Ulster and Anthony McN. – Leinster

Report to General Services Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous March 2020

At the General Service Conference in March 2019, Kenny P., Ulster Delegate and Anthony McN., Leinster Delegate, were elected to attend the 2019 GSC GB in York. We travelled separately to York via Dublin/Belfast and Leeds Bradford on the Thursday evening, arriving at the Park Inn Hotel. Kenny arrived in time to attend a dinner for the Overseas Observers, hosted by the Conference Chair, Matt S. While Anthony's flight was much later.

Following lunch on Friday, we both registered in the main concourse of the Hotel. From 1.00pm – 1.30pm, we both attended an Overseas Observers session prior to Opening of Conference at 2.45pm. There were 9 Overseas Observers at this session. The briefing was chaired by Roger from the GB General Service Board. We were then allocated to our Committees for the forthcoming sessions. Anthony McN. was allocated to Committee 3 and Kenny P. to Committee 2.

We learned that the Committees area a central part of the GB Conference Structure. The task of the Committees was to discuss and find answers to questions which had been submitted the previous year to Conference from Members, Groups, Intergroups and Regions.

There were 6 Committees in total, who dealt with 2/3 questions each. These questions dealt with issues ranging from changes in Literature to Conventions for Young People, to Social Media etc. These questions were discussed at length always in a respectful fashion before the Committees came up with responses which reflected the Conscience of the GB Fellowship, through the voice of Conference. The make-up of each Committee included Representatives from the 16 Regions, as well as General Service Board Members. The Committees also included a Chairperson, a Trustee and Overseas Observers.

As Observers, we were not entitled to vote on any of the matters arising but were encouraged to take part in the discussions and offer any observations we may have had.

## Appendix 12

The Committees worked hard during Conference, debating their various questions over four sessions and tended to finish late Saturday night. In fact, one Committee was still debating their questions until 1am. Preliminary reports were presented to the floor of Conference on the Sunday morning where they were discussed and considered before a vote was taken to whether Conference should adopt them or not.

The 2019 GB Conference comprised of 93 Delegates from 16 Regions, 19 Members of GSB, Matt S., Conference Chair, the General Secretary, 6 Office Staff and 9 Overseas Observers.

Conference opened on Friday at 2.45pm. The Conference Chairperson Matt S., then read the Preamble and Declaration of Unity. Following a tea break at 4pm, everybody went to their allocated Committee to begin further discussion on the questions submitted to Conference. Dinner was 6.15pm – 7.30pm.

At 8pm, the Nominations of Chair of Conference for 2020 began. Each Candidate nominated (four in total), were given approximately 3 minutes to put forward their credentials and Service experience. It was then onto the business of GS Board Reports. There were a vast number of these Reports, which commenced on the Friday night and continued into Saturday. These Reports included presentations on Finance, Electronic Communications, Public Information, Literature, Public Information, Prisons and Probation Services to name but a few. There were also updates on the GB Archives and work being done in unison with the Armed Forces in Britain. It must be said that these Reports and Presentations were very comprehensive and had an almost “professional” quality to them. There was also a lengthy presentation regarding the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations, to be held in Leeds, in 2022.

On Saturday, we returned to our Committees to continue to work on the questions submitted to Conference. As previously mentioned, these Committee sessions were always respectfully conducted. After lunch, the Committees resumed their discussions to prepare their Reports to Conference, which had to be handed in to the secretarial staff by no later than 5pm.

After dinner, at approximately 8pm, there was an Open Forum, which afforded all Delegates in attendance, the chance to ask Board Members anything they wanted to in relation to the Fellowship in GB. Much like the work conducted in the Committees, the Open Forum was often animated but again respectfully observed. At 10pm, all of the Committee Reports were distributed to the 16 Regions, who were given time to discuss them individually.

After breakfast on Sunday morning, Conference restarted with the 6 Committees putting forward their Preliminary Reports for Conference to discuss before voting whether to adopt them or not.

## Appendix 12

At around 12pm, the election took place of the Candidates who had been nominated for Chairperson of Conference 2019, with Marc D. elected to this position. The new General Secretary, Ranjan, was introduced to Conference, and special thanks was given to his predecessor, Roger. At approximately 12.15pm, Conference was closed by the Outgoing Chairperson Matt S., who thanked everyone for their attendance and support. Conference was concluded with the Serenity Prayer and after exchanging goodbyes with new-found friends, we both began our trip back home.

Special thanks are extended to Roger, Matt, Sophie, Geoff and others too. It would be easy to underestimate the welcome we received and the Fellowship we experienced in York. It was a truly wonderful experience. Special mention must also be given to Barbara, the Office Manager at GSO for all the help and assistance she provided in coordinating our travels to and stay in York.

We felt that rather than just travelling to York, and listening to everything that happened, and reporting back to Conference, we should ask a few questions of Conference in Ireland based on our experience of the Fellowship in GB. If we are not sending Delegates to Conference in GB, in order that our Fellowship in Ireland might learn something from it, then why do we send them?

We could have asked many questions, but we have settled on the following 3:

1. In GB, retiring Delegates and Trustees are encouraged to stay involved in Service at Intergroup and Regional levels. Their experience is seen as being invaluable to help less experienced members getting involved in Service. Is this something that we should look at in Ireland? Rather than suggesting that we would have Area Meetings full of 'bleeding deacons', maybe there is some way that we can harness and use this experience, which currently is being lost when very experienced members rotate out of Service.
2. A number of years ago, AA in GB began to introduce Young People's Liaison Officers, following a question to Conference. Conference recognised that younger members had different 'needs' and needed other supports, compared to new members arriving in AA in their forties or fifties. These YPLOs have proven to be hugely successful. Is this something that Conference in Ireland should look at?
3. A lot of Literature, particularly pamphlets, in GB, is sold to groups for a nominal fee (1 penny). This is done for a number of reasons, but primarily to encourage Groups and Members to purchase and read this material. Are there any items of Literature that we could consider adopting a similar policy with, in Ireland?

We would like to thank Conference in Ireland for allowing us to attend the Conference in GB and for the experience that brought to us.

Kenny P.  
Anthony McN.