

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE OF IRELAND



ROLL CALL AND MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2022

- **5th March 2022 Online**
- **15th July 2022 Online**
- **16th October 2022 Physical**
- **8th December 2022 Online**

**ROLL CALL AND MINUTES
OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE
GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE**

5th March 2022 Online

1. Opening of Conference by Chairperson

Mick D. (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. Mick D. read from page 49 of the General Service Handbook 'Why Do We Need a Conference?'

Service Handbook for Ireland (01/2021 Article 9, Decisions of Conference, (Pg 60)

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- 1.2 All Items or Motions passed by a two-thirds majority are recommended and unless rescinded by notice of motion, become Conference policy after the expiry of one year.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

Conference agreed to complete its business on Saturday at 5.30pm.

2. Roll Call

Connaught		Munster	
Trustee	Rory H.	Trustee	Martin C.
Delegate	Joe B.	Delegate	John T.
Delegate	Marilyn K.	Delegate	Michael McG.
Delegate	Hubert J.	Delegate	Thomas K.
Delegate	Sean C.		
IG Secretary	Monica McE.	IG Secretary	Audrey McD.
Leinster		Ulster	
Trustee	Emmet O'H.	Trustee	Seamus B. (Incoming)
Delegate	Philip McG.	Delegate	John McC.
Delegate	Robbie McM.	Delegate	Billy I.
Delegate	Barbara A.	Delegate	Brian G.
Delegate	Deirdre S.	Delegate	Kenny P.
IG Secretary	(Apologies) Andy D.	IG Secretary	James McK.

Other		Observers	
Board Secretary	Tony O’C.	Barbara Bridget Jo F. Hamish McS. Liam O’B. Tom D.	GSO GSO GB Observer GB Observer WSD Nominee WSD Nominee
WSD’s	Helen H. Moira S.		
Non-AA Member Director/Trustee	(Apologies) Liz Cullen		
Non-AA Member Director/Trustee	Cindy O’Shea		
Non-AA Member Director/Trustee	Aisling Hussey		
Chairperson	Mick D.		

3. Adoption of 2022 Conference Agenda (Appendix 1)

Adoption of Agenda and other urgent business in accordance with Paragraph 1.5, page 58 of 01/2021 Service Handbook.

A brief discussion took place on Draft Agenda; it was Philp McG. (Leinster) who highlighted an item that ought to have been included on the Conference Agenda, relating to the rotation of the role of WSD’s and former Trustee’s seeking nominations. Board Secretary stated that Philip McG. was correct, the item should have been included on the Agenda. However, this item had been overlooked. Board Secretary confirmed that an email had been sent to the Board Secretary on January 17th 2022. It was agreed by Conference that the item referred to would be placed on the agenda as item number item 13a. The Agenda was proposed for adoption by Rory H. (Connaught) and seconded by Barbara A. (Leinster).

4. Adoption of 2021 Conference Minutes and Matters Arising

Chairperson went through the Minutes page by page. The Minutes were proposed by Martin C. (Munster) Seconded by Rory H. (Connaught).

5. Introduction of new AA Trustees

Incoming Trustee Seamus B. (Ulster). was approved by The General Service Conference of Ireland as AA Provincial Trustee for the Province of Ulster. Seamus was welcomed by the General Service Conference.

6. Election of the World Service Delegate

There were two nominations for the position Liam O'B. (Connaught) and Tom D. (Ulster). Both nominees gave an overview of their periods of service in AA Structure. The Chair at this point called for a vote on Conference's choice of nominees as per Third Legacy procedure. As no nominee received a two thirds majority on the first ballot, a second ballot was conducted. This also failed to receive a clear two thirds majority. Liam O'B. at this point in proceedings declared that he wished to withdraw from the process rather than take up Conference's time. Tom D. was declared elected as WSD. Tom D. thanked Liam O'B. Tom further offered his thanks to Conference for affording him the honour to serve as a WSD.

7. Motions to Conference (Appendix 2)

Motion No 1. Connaught: Westport Parish Centre Group That AA Literature be sold at cost price or a reduced price to members.

Marilyn K (Connaught) presented the Motion on behalf of the Westport Parish Centre.

Synopsis of Discussion on Motion

Billy I. (Ulster) stated that he was of the view, that if 'one' was to look at the quality of our 'Big Book' it was very good value for money. Billy said that he did not think that our literature was in any way overpriced.

Brian G. (Ulster) pointed that out that without literature sales margin this year, Alcoholics Anonymous, instead of showing a surplus, would be showing a deficit. Brian stated that he did not think that our literature was too expensive.

Sean C. (Connaught) noted that the cost of the 'Big Book' had been reduced in recent times. Sean did however state that some of the ancillary literature that people liked to have could be expensive.

Moira S. (WSD) said that compared to other countries, AA Literature is quite cheap. Moira went on to say that many newcomers to AA over the last number of months, that she had encountered, had not balked at the price of the 'Big Book'. Moira concluded by saying that AA Literature was an investment for life.

Tom K. (Munster) pointed out that he felt that 'Big Book' was priced very well and thought that our literature was quite reasonable in cost.

Hubert J. (Connaught) did feel that the 'Big Book' was reasonably priced.

Emmet O'H. (Leinster) said that the 'Big Book' along with other AA Literature will be available to read on the new website in the coming year. Emmet also stated that in the last year that there had not been a reduction in literature sales as some reports indicated. In fact, there had been an increase the sales of literature.

The Board Secretary (Tony O'C.) was requested to brief Conference on the current position regarding Literature sales. The Board Secretary confirmed that literature sales and contributions were the only sources of income to AA. He confirmed that the gross margin on literature is set a 40%. Board Secretary further confirmed that the gross margin was reduced in 2005 when the finances were in a very healthy position, the benefits of this reduction was passed on to the Fellowship. He went on to point out that in later years when the economic downturn arrived and contributions declined, it was agreed to increase the margin to keep AA financially stable. It was also worth noting that online charges and credit card charges were absorbed into the sale price when it came to online literature sales. There was a decision taken in 2020 to reduce the range of literature available on the advice of our Auditors. A full review of pricing was carried out in 2020 when most of the literature was reduced. The Board Secretary concluded by saying these were the facts historically when it came to Literature Sales. He further stated that the Motion states that a reduction in the price of literature, would facilitate its wider distribution among members but there are no facts and figures to substantiate this statement.

Joe B. (Connaught) stated that he recognised that the 'Big Book' had been reduced below €10.00. Joe felt that the cost of Daily Reflections should be reviewed.

The Chairman called for a vote on the Motion.

17% in favour 83% opposed the Motion.

The Motion was not approved.

Motion No 2. Leinster: Summerhill Group, Athlone

That the World Service Delegate positions should be rotated across the four Intergroups as far as practicable.

Joe B. (Connaught) presented this Motion.

Synopsis of Discussion on Motion

Billy I. (Ulster) stated that the principle of rotation is very important in AA. Billy said that rotation was outlined very well in the General Service Handbook on pages 13 and 24. He stated as follows: The true purpose of rotation is to keep members from occupying offices to avoid problems of personality, power, and prestige. The present system regarding nominations for WSD does exactly this. The proposed system as outlined in the Motion would, he stated, ignore getting the best person for the role. He concluded that he would be opposing the Motion on the grounds that if the Motion was approved it could only ensure a 'shoe in' scenario rather than finding the best person for the role.

Barbara A. (Leinster) completely concurred with Billy I's feelings on the Motion. She was of the view that it was about finding the best possible person for the role.

Moira S. (WSD) also agreed with the sentiments expressed by the previous speakers on the matter.

Tom K. (Munster) said that he believed that the Motion was presented in good faith and thanked Connaught for bringing forward the Motion. However, he felt that the previous speakers were correct in their views that it should be about finding the best person for the role.

Hubert J. (Connaught) pointed out that there was no WSD from Connaught since 2008 and that all provinces should get a fair crack of the whip. He concluded that he would be voting in favour of the Motion.

Sean C. (Connaught) said that the term 'the best person for the job' was all very well, but we are Trusted Servants. Sean concluded that AA was not a corporation or a business, and while the Trusted Servant may not be the best person for the job, as Trusted Servants, we can learn how to do the job.

The Chairman (Mick D.) read the Motion for Conference and requested members to vote.

19% in favour 69% opposed the Motion.

The Motion was not approved.

Motion No 3. Munster: (Hill) Cork First Group, Cork City.

(Hill) Cork First Group, Cork City would like to have 'Daily Reflections' produced in Hardcover (also called casebound or hardbound), to ensure a sturdier piece of literature.

Michael McG. (Munster) presented the Motion.

Synopsis of Discussion on Motion

Marilyn K. (Connaught) said she would be in favour of the Motion.

Kenny P. (Ulster) stated in his experience that quite a number of people were now reading Daily Reflections from their phones. Kenny felt that the Motion currently being presented, would incur expense and wondered if it would be an unnecessary expense. However, he would be interested to hear other members of conference feelings on the Motion.

Martin C. (Munster) said that that the 'Daily Reflections' is a very popular piece of AA Literature and he believed that we should have a choice of hardback cover and soft copy cover.

Board Secretary (Tony O'C.) clarified to Conference that the book 'Daily Reflections' is published by AA World Services and is not available in hardback or casebound format. He concluded that we purchase the publication from AAWS, and the softcover version is currently the only format that is available to us.

John T. (Munster) made the point that a lot of members were reading AA Literature on electronic devices. However, he wondered if the book could be reconditioned and customised to suit our requirements.

Mick McG. (Munster) made the point that books can be reconditioned, he further stated that, he had experience in this matter. He did appreciate the facts as stated that the book was purchased from AAWS, and it wasn't practical to request that it be produced in the format suggested. The Chairman asked Mick McG. if he wished to withdraw the Motion. Mick McG. responded that he would prefer Conference to decide on the Motion before them.

Joe B. (Connaught) said that it was important that AA Groups have the appropriate literature. Would AAWS produce a hardback version?

Board Secretary (Tony O'C.) stated that we have no control on how AAWS produces its literature, he could not envisage a situation whereby World Services would accede to our request. He concluded, that even if there was a way of producing a hardcover/casebound version of this book, that it would drive the cost up even further for fellowship members.

Hubert J. (Connaught) asked if a procedural motion would be in order in this matter and would it be possible to write to AAWS, requesting that Daily Reflections be produced in hardcover and drop the existing Motion currently before Conference.

The Board Secretary stated that what we now had was two separate items, we have a Motion from a group, and we have a possible proposal from Conference to write to AAWS with a request. He asked if Conference wanted to set aside the Motion in the interim until AAWS were written to?

Brian G. (Ulster) felt that the Motion before Conference should be voted on to enable Mick McG. to return to the group with a response and then the next step of writing to AAWS could be taken by the Secretary on behalf of Conference.

The Chair called for a vote on the Motion.

14% voted in favour 52% opposed the Motion.

The Motion was not approved.

In relation to the item (Motion No 3). It was proposed by Hubert J. (Connaught) and seconded by Moira S. (Leinster), that AA World Services be written to requesting that Daily Reflections be produced in a hardback version.

Motion No 4 Munster: Mallow Mercy Group

1. To make an entry addition to the Entity Financial Statements in the Balance Sheet (preferably) or in the notes to the Financial Statements to show the existence of two separate reserves.

2. To strike the Fellowships Reserves annually as per the Green Handbook (page 61) – 1 years' operating expenses, stocks, and debtors.

John T. (Munster) presented the Motion

Synopsis of Discussion on Motion

Emmet O'H. (Leinster) stated that he would like to comment on the second part of the Motion '*To strike the fellowships reserve*', Emmet pointed out that we do not have a fellowships reserve, we have a Prudent Reserve. Therefore, it does not make sense to vote on something that does not exist. Furthermore, Emmet stated the Motion speaks about when Incorporation occurred in 1978, the operational funds were transferred to an Executive Committee. We do not have an Executive Committee, there was an Executive Committee pre-Trustee time. Emmet's view was it did not make sense to vote on the Motion as its currently worded as the items mentioned do not currently exist.

John T. (Munster) stated that he was in receipt of a significant amount of correspondence from the individual who had submitted the Motion on behalf of the group. John said because of his own limited knowledge of accounting, he was unsure of how to respond to the group and the individual involved.

John T. wondered if it would be in order to request that the group write to the Board Secretary in relation to this matter, or if the Board could in some way assist him with an appropriate response to this item. John further expressed concern in relation to some conspiracy theories that were floating around in relation to this matter.

The Board Secretary was asked if he could bring any further clarity to this item. The Secretary said that he didn't have anything very different to add to what Emmet O'H. had stated. However, the Board Secretary did say that he could recall this same Motion had come before Conference previously. There was information provided then on the Motion and the Motion was defeated. The Board Secretary (Tony) reiterated that there is no Executive Committee. We do not have anything other than a Prudent Reserve which is one year's running costs plus stocks and debtors. There is no Capital Redemption Fund/Reserve.

The Secretary, in conclusion and response to John T., stated that if the group in question wished to write to the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous, an appropriate response could be drafted for the group. Our figures are audited annually by reputable Auditors and everything in relation to the finances of Alcoholics Anonymous is conducted in a transparent and accountable manner.

Brian G. (Ulster) suggested that John T. (Munster) return to the group and the individual who were responsible for drafting the Motion and advise that their queries re the Motion be forwarded to the General Service Board. This matter could then also

be taken up with the Company Auditors who might also assist in drafting a suitable response.

Moira S. (WSD) said that in her experience of attending Conference, all Motions deserve to be voted on, irrespective of how they are worded. She further stated that this should not exclude John T. reporting to the group the outcome of their Motion.

Mick McG. (Munster) agreed that the Motion be voted on.

John T. (Munster) said that it would be vital that the Board, in conjunction with the Auditors, issue a response on this matter. John concluded that there was a suggestion here that there was an understatement of assets, and he was not qualified to even form an opinion on this.

The Chair of Conference called for a vote on the Motion.

0% voted in favour 88% opposed the Motion.

The Motion was not approved.

Motion No 5 Munster: New Beginnings Group, Waterford City.

On page 36 of General Service Conference Handbook for Ireland, Members responding to AA calls should have an up-to-date AA meeting information to hand as well as a list of other helping organisations such as Al-Anon, Samaritans, Aware, Rape Crisis Centre etc.

John T. (Munster) presented the Motion

Synopsis of Discussion on Motion

Tom K. (Munster) stated that depending on who you speak to there are some who agree, and others disagree with this insertion in the General Service Handbook. However, Tom queried where the insertion had originated. as he did not recall seeing this in previous editions of the General Service Handbook. The Board Secretary responded by stating as time moved on. more and more calls were coming to the GSO from people seeking help with mental health, domestic violence, and family members of people seeking help for loved ones suffering from alcohol problems. It was always our policy to give out the telephone contact for Al Anon. However, with people contacting GSO for other related issues it was decided to add contact details of other organisations such as The Samaritans etc. He confirmed that this was brought to Conference in 2021 and it was agreed.

Kenny P. (Ulster) asked had it been necessary over the last 12 months for GSO to give out these numbers to people to assist them. Kenny stated that we have responsibilities to give information in an appropriate manner to help people by offering them contact details of other organisations.

Hubert J. (Connaught) stated that he was looking at the insertion in Service Handbook and the more he read it, the more uncomfortable he was getting with it. Hubert

questioned if it was the role of Alcoholics Anonymous to give out numbers of other organisations. Hubert went on to state that maybe we need to rethink the practice. Could we refer the caller to their GP for example without giving out contact details of these organisations? Hubert concluded that he had absolutely nothing against the organisations or the excellent work they are involved in, he said he would have no problem giving the Al Anon contact details, as they were engaged in the problem of alcohol.

Marilyn K. (Connaught) stated that Hubert J. had said all she wished to say. She did not feel that Samaritans, Rape Crises contact details should be given out, but agreed Al Anon contact details were acceptable.

At this point in the discussion the Chair of Conference requested the Barbara (GSO) to address Conference on this item. Barbara (GSO) stated that the reason the contact details of these other organisations have been given out to callers was that over a period of time, it was emerging that people ringing due to excessive drinking would sometimes mention in the course of their call regarding their drinking, sexual abuse, depression/suicide etc. The staff always stipulate that AA deals only with drinking problems but if the caller wanted help with any of the other issues, they (the caller) would be informed that if they required any assistance with any other problems, they could contact the other agencies and the contact number relative to the organisation would be given to the caller. Barbara (GSO) concluded by stating that staff do not discuss the details of any other organisation with callers.

The Chair of Conference thanked Barbara (GSO) for her concise explanation.

John McC. (Ulster) said that in his experience, it was necessary to have other agency contact details for people requiring help with other problems while emphasizing to the caller that AA deals with alcohol related issues only. He did not see how providing a telephone number for another organisation could be viewed as 'affiliation'.

Rory H. (Connaught) agreed completely with the views expressed by Barbara (GSO). He stated that there is a clear link between depression and alcoholism. Rory concluded that if someone's life can be saved by referring them to the Samaritans then we ought to continue to do that in order to try and save a life.

Audrey McD. (Munster) had some concerns regarding this matter, her concerns were that these numbers were being given out at GSO. She believed that the first point of contact for such callers should be their GP.

Cindy O'Shea (Non-Alcoholic Trustee) stated that she could not understand the logic behind this Motion and what prompted this. Furthermore, a referral for somebody who might be in trouble is simply just that, a referral. You are not going down the professionalism route and you are certainly not seeking to solve their problems. What you are doing is sending them on to a more appropriate service. Cindy O'Shea stated for the purposes of information, Samaritans referred 427 people to Alcoholics Anonymous last year alone.

Tom K. (Munster) said that when the Motion was discussed at Munster Intergroup, the feeling was that it was acceptable to leave in the segment in the Service Handbook relating to the AI Anon contact but the rest should be removed. Tom concluded that there were people who felt uncomfortable with contact numbers of other agencies been given to callers.

Joe B. (Connaught) appreciated that this was a difficult topic and discussion, yet it was interesting and maybe we ought to consider having further debate and discussion on this item.

Moira S. (WSD) pointed out that multiple organisations sent people to AA.

Philip McG. (Leinster) shared his experience as a former Leinster Phone Convenor. Philip stated that the Fellowship of AA had always taught him to have constant thought of others. Philip said he could not see what the issue was in relation to just giving contact details of other helping organisations.

The Chairman requested conference to vote on the Motion.

28% in favour 68% opposed the Motion.

The Motion was not approved.

Motion No 6 Ulster: Dungannon Third Legacy Group.

Re-Appointment of Trustee/Director - It is the Conscience of Dungannon Third Legacy that the current method of selecting Trustee/Director should be changed and be done in a similar manner to which Conference Delegates are elected to Intergroup.

Kenny P (Ulster) presented the Motion

Synopsis of Discussion on Motion

Kenny P. (Ulster) in presenting the Motion declared that he was a member of the group where the Motion originated. He gave an overview of some of the members views on the Motion, however, Kenny stated that he had his own views on the Motion and his duties as Conference Delegate were to present the Motion to Conference as drafted by the AA Group.

James McK. (Ulster) declared that he was also a member of the group that drafted the Motion. However, for ethical reasons he was not involved in its drafting. James wished to confirm that the Motion was coming from a genuine concern and has been driven by frustration regarding the situation that had arisen in Ulster on how Trustees are selected.

James went on to say that although the Board had to intervene recently on the selection of a suitable Trustee, the process set out in the Service Handbook does work, and the proof of this is evident today with the selection of Seamus B. (Ulster Trustee). Marilyn K. (Connaught) stated that the two words 'résumé and interview' in the Motion had jumped out at her. These two words, Marilyn said, had connotations of somebody

going complete with their folder for interview for the position of Trustee. This, Marilyn said, made her feel uncomfortable. She felt it was not a professional position and therefore would not be supporting this Motion.

Moira S. (WSD); In her view the process as set out in the Service Handbook does work. She went on to point out that it was her feeling that the role of the Trustee had evolved and the requirements at Board level had also evolved. However, she said that she was not sure if 'résumé/CVs' were required as part of the process. We should, she concluded, be aware of previous Conference Delegates and their strengths and weaknesses who are eligible for the position of Trustee.

Billy I. (Ulster) stated that the Province of Ulster has suffered with only what can be referred to as a buddy system. Billy referenced his GSCD's report on pages 23 and 24. There is a perception in Ulster, Billy stated, that there was an inner circle relating to the Board. That there was a coronation of sorts when it came to Trustee selection. All of this said, he would not be happy with following an interview process for the position of Trustee. Billy would respectfully suggest that the Motion be represented to Conference next year with the removal of words such as 'interviews' and 'résumé/CVs' etc.

Sean C. (Connaught); The issue of 'résumé/CV' did not sit well for positions in AA. Sean said it would be difficult for him to support the Motion as its currently worded.

Kenny P. (Ulster) Kenny said that we should not get too hung up on the word 'résumé/CV'. Kenny concluded that he would agree with the sentiments expressed by his colleague James McK. (Ulster) particularly in relation to how the process worked well on this occasion in the selection of a new Trustee for Ulster.

Brian G. (Ulster) said that on this occasion relative to Ulster, the process worked very well as there was full consultation with the GSCD's. Hence, we have arrived at the position we are at today with the selection of Seamus B. (Ulster Trustee) who has the full support of the GSCD'S. Brian concluded that he saw no need to change the current process.

The Chair requested conference to vote on the Motion.

4% in favour 88% opposed the Motion.

The Motion was not approved.

8. Conference Delegates Reports (taken as read) (Appendix 3)

Billy I. (Ulster) expressed the view that after reading the reports he noted that there were still problems getting people into Service. He complimented the Delegates on their document 'Encouraging Members into Service' and concluded that we need to be more proactive in getting members into Service.

Barbara A. (Leinster) said that Conference had spoken previously in relation to Delegates attending Intergroup Meetings outside of their own Province, she said she would be available to do this if invited.

9. GB Conference 2021 Observers Report (taken as read) (Appendix 4)

10. European Service Meeting 2021 Report (taken as read) (Appendix 5)

Moira S. (WSD) urged all to read the full report on the European Service Meeting, although extensive, it is worth reading. There is also a two-page summary available to read. Moira paid tribute to the Chair of the European Service Meeting, who was Ukrainian and requested Conference to spare a thought for Ukraine and what they are currently going through.

Helen H. (WSD) stated that she was rotating out today and paid tribute to GSO, Dublin, York, and New York for how they continued to maintain services. Helen H. also thanked Conference for affording her the opportunity to serve and thanked the four Provincial Intergroups for their welcome during her term. Helen concluded by wishing Moira S. well during the rest of her term and wished incoming WSD Tom D. every success in his role.

Moira S. (WSD) thanked Helen for her service and for her support and assistance and wished her well.

Cindy O'Shea (Non-Alcoholic Trustee) thanked Helen H. for her service and diligence to the role of WSD and formally proposed a vote of thanks.

11. All Ireland 2021 Report (taken as read) (Appendix 6)

12. All Ireland 2022 Update

Martin C. (Munster Trustee) reported that all plans were in place for the 2022 All Ireland Convention to be held at the Metropole Hotel, Cork City. Martin thanked the Committee drawn from Munster Intergroup for their hard work in the preparations for the event. Martin stated that he was looking forward to welcoming all members to Cork from April 22nd to 24th for the event.

13. Election of Observers to attend GB Conference 2022

Board Secretary stated that in relation to this item that this event would take place from the 8th to the 10th of April 2022, and that it would be a physical Conference. He confirmed that whoever is elected to attend, must be in a position and eligible to attend the Annual General Service Conference next year (2023) and be in a position to present a report. He further stated that the Observers on this occasion will be responsible for putting in place their own travel (flights transport) arrangements. There will be reimbursement for the travel costs. The registration forms for the event will be completed by GSO. There is a €200 out of pocket expense for each Observer, which

can be sent via EFT to the bank account of the Observers or alternatively a cheque for the amount can be issued. Moira S. (WSD) was proposed by Emmet O'H. (Leinster Trustee), seconded by James McK. (Ulster). Hubert J. (Connaught) was proposed by Rory H. (Connaught). This was seconded by Marilyn K. (Connaught).

13a. World Service Delegate Role/Qualification/Terms

The Board Secretary confirmed that this item ought to have been included in the 2021 Conference Agenda for discussion. Secretary read from page 54 of the General Service Handbook: *'Retired Trustee/Directors are eligible for the role as World Service Delegate'*. The submission received from Leinster Intergroup reads *'again we fell that they should not be eligible for this role as it is also a voting member of conference'*. The Board Secretary said that his understanding was, that a discussion/debate was requested on this item.

Emmet O'H. (Leinster Trustee) said that given the sentiment of what is being expressed and the sensitivity of this matter, maybe it would be better to have it discussed by Groups and Intergroups and all levels of Structure. It might be an idea to set up a subcommittee with Representatives from each Province to examine this item. That way we could go back to Intergroups and establish how the fellowship would like Conference to proceed on this item. Emmet O'H. formally proposed that a subcommittee be set up comprising of a WSD and a Representative from each province plus a Trustee to examine the matter and report back to Conference. Philip McG. (Leinster) seconded this proposal.

Conference agreed that the subcommittee would look at the entire section of The Service Handbook relating to World Service Delegate.

15. Invitation to AAGB to attend Annual General Service Conference 2023

Conference agreed to invite two GB Observers to attend The Annual General Service Conference of Alcoholic Anonymous in 2023.

16. Preamble (Appendix 7)

Emmet O'H. (Leinster) reported that the US and Canada had made a change to the wording of the AA Preamble. There was a number of queries that came to the Board as to whether we were going to make changes. Emmet went on to state that this was a matter for the General Service Conference to decide.

He said that while we in Ireland do print a small amount of in-house literature that has the Preamble contained within it, we buy our main literature from AAWS so, the

imported literature we sell would have the Preamble contained within it from its country of origin.

Billy I. (Ulster) stated that he did not agree with the change. Tom K. (Munster) stated that according to the documentation in relation to this that GB had no plans to change the wording to the Preamble. Moira S. (WSD) stated that according to the information she had received, GB are looking also at the wording change.

Jo F. (GB Observer) reported that there was a question going before GB Conference this year in relation to this matter, but yet no decision had been reached. Hamish McS. (GB Observer) confirmed what Jo F. had reported and stated that the question being posed to GB Conference will be *'Should AA GB update the AA Preamble in its literature and AA Website to the gender-neutral version recently updated by the Grapevine and agreed upon at the 71st General Service Conference of US / Canada''*

Joe B. (Connaught) was of the view that Conference would be in a position to pass a Motion to either change it or not change it.

Kenny P. (Ulster) stated that he had been to meetings where people were not only reading the altered version of the Preamble but were also now reading passages from AA literature using the word 'People' Kenny proposed that Groups, Areas and Intergroups, ought to decide via their Group Conscience if they should use the term 'people' as opposed to men and women. Emmet O'H. agreed with Kenny P's point of view and stated that we don't need to make a decision right now. He continued that we do purchase our 'Big Book' from the US where the change to the Preamble has already been made. However, we can choose to leave the Preamble as it is and let each AA Group decide according to its own Group Conscience. The matter, Emmet concluded, can be brought back to Conference again next year for mention.

John T. (Munster) believed that if we try to micromanage something through Conference, some groups will reject, and some will approve and you will have other groups who just don't care. John T. concluded that we must be sensitive to the issues facing our fellowship, while keeping our core values and compassion for people.

Moira S. (WSD) was of the view that Group Conscience of the group should decide, however, Moira pointed out that it would be important that AA Groups are made aware that the issue was discussed by Conference, and they should be advised that wording in the literature will change. Moira concluded by stating that she would be opposed to issuing any directives to AA Groups in relation to this matter.

Barbara A. (Leinster) said she would be very reluctant to advise any AA Group what they can and cannot adopt.

Emmet O'H. (Leinster Trustee) said everything relative to this item ought to be left currently as it is and allow groups to decide what they ought to do.

This proposal was seconded by Rory H. (Connaught Trustee).

Address to the General Service Conference from GB Observers.

Jo F (GB) stated that she very much enjoyed the experience of attending the Irish Conference and learned a lot from how we conduct our business. She said it was a privilege to have been part of the day.

Hamish Mc S (GB) thanked conference for affording them the opportunity to attend and giving him an understanding how the Irish structure works. He went on to say it was also a wonderful opportunity to see group conscience in action and to witness how conference reached its conclusions.

17. Election of 2023 Conference Chairperson

The Chair called for nominations for 2023 Conference Chairperson. Kenny P (Ulster) was proposed as Chairperson for 2023 Conference by Seamus B (Ulster Trustee) this proposal was seconded by Rory H (Connaught Trustee).

Mick Mc G (Munster) was selected as Alternate Chairperson for 2023 Conference

Conference concluded with the Serenity Prayer

Appendices

- (Appendix 1) Adoption of 2022 Conference Agenda.
Adoption of Agenda and other urgent business in accordance with Paragraph 1.5, page 58 of 01/2021 Service Handbook.

- (Appendix 2) Motions to Conference

- (Appendix 3) Conference Delegates Reports

- (Appendix 4) GB Conference 2021 Observers Report

- (Appendix 5) European Service Meeting 2021 Report

- (Appendix 6) All Ireland 2021 Report

- (Appendix 7) Preamble



DRAFT AGENDA

General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous in Ireland Saturday, 5th March 2022 Online via Zoom Platform

Saturday 5th March 2022 10.00am – 5.00pm

1	Opening of Conference by Chairperson	10.00am
2	Roll Call	10.00am – 10.10am
3	Adoption of Agenda and other urgent business in accordance with Article 7, page 58 of 01/2021 Service Handbook	10.10am – 10.45am
4	Adoption of 2021 Conference Minutes and Matters Arising	10.45am – 11.00am
	Tea/Coffee Break	11.00am – 11.15am
5	Introduction of New Trustees	11.15am – 11.20am
6	Election of World Service Delegate	11.20am – 11.40pm
7	Motions to Conference	11.40am – 1.00pm
	Lunch Break	1.00pm – 2.00pm
8	Conference Delegates Reports (taken as read)	2.00am – 2.10pm
9	GB Conference 2021 Observers Report (taken as read)	2.10pm – 2.15pm
10	European Service Meeting 2021 Report (taken as read)	2.15pm – 2.20pm
11	All-Ireland 2021 Report (taken as read)	2.20pm – 2.25pm
12	All-Ireland 2022 Update	2.25pm – 2.30pm
13	Election of Observers to attend GB Conference 2022	2.30pm – 2.50pm
14	Tea/Coffee Break	2.50pm – 3.00pm
15	Invitation to AAGB to attend General Service Conference 2023	3.00pm – 3.05pm
16	Preamble	3.05pm – 3.40pm
17	Election of 2023 Conference Chairperson	3.40pm – 4.00pm

Motions to Conference

Connaught	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Westport Parish Centre Group, Mayo
Leinster	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summerhill AA Group, Athlone
Munster	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Hill) Cork First Group, Cork City • Mallow Mercy Group, Cork • New Beginnings Group, Waterford City
Ulster	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dungannon Third Legacy Group

Connaught

Westport Parish Centre Group, Mayo

Motion:

That AA Literature be sold at cost price or a reduced price to members.

Reasons:

1. AA Literature is currently too expensive for members to buy, particularly newcomers.
2. A reduction in the price of AA Literature would facilitate its wider distribution among members.
3. There has been a reduction in literature sales in GSO, and this shows that AA Literature is too costly for Groups and members to buy.

Submitted by Westport Parish Centre Group at Mayo Area Meeting 27/9/21.

Leinster

Summerhill Group, Athlone

Motion:

That the World Service Delegate positions should be rotated across the four Intergrups as far as practicable.

Submission to Area regarding World Service Delegate Selection.

It is the will of this group `that the World Service Delegate positions should be rotated across the four Intergrups as far as practicable`.

This could commence with:

1st Delegate - (a) Connaught (b) Ulster (c) Munster (d) Leinster.

2nd Delegate – (d) Leinster (c) Munster (b) Ulster (a) Connaught.

Reasons:

It is recommended throughout the Fellowship that due regard be paid to rotation. Thus, each Province will have their turn.

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

Yours sincerely,

Secretary Summerhill AA Group, Drum Community Centre, Summerhill, Ballinasloe Road, Athlone, Co. Westmeath, N37 AH97. Group Number L227

Munster

(Hill) Cork First Group, Cork City

Motion to General Service Conference (Munster)

(Hill) Cork First Group, Cork City would like to have 'Daily Reflections' produced in Hardcover (also called casebound or hardbound), to ensure a sturdier piece of literature.

Many thanks.

**Mallow Mercy Group
Motion to Conference and The Board**

The Motion:

1. To make an entry addition to the Entity Financial Statements in the Balance Sheet (preferably) or in the notes to the Financial Statements to show the existence of two separate reserves.
2. To strike the Fellowships Reserves annually as per the Green Handbook (page 61) – 1 years' operating expenses, stocks and debtors.

Reason for Motion:

To show a true and fair view.

The entry on the 2020 Balance Sheet – “Members Funds” – is misleading as the Fellowship’s Prudent Reserve is “Ring Fenced” and has been so from the start of the Fellowship (1970).

When incorporated in 1978, the Operational Funds were transferred to an Executive Committee and a reserve of £10,000 pounds was retained by the Trustees, it was entered into the accounts under “Capital Redemption Reserve”, and these were “Group Accounts” as per the 1963 act. At that time, the Committee’s Reserve was £5000 pounds.

The Fellowship’s Prudent Reserve was upgraded in 1993 by a decision of Conference.

The last entry of Capital Redemption Reserve was 2016 when the Accounts were consolidated, this does not change the fact that it exists as a separate entity.

Additional Information:

The Board of Trustees have a “Fiduciary Duty” to “always” maintain a Prudent Reserve on behalf of the Fellowship as outlined in the Conference Charter – Article 13 (see page 61 of the Green Handbook).

This is to protect the Fellowship against the winding up of the Company – see Article 8 of the Company’s Constitution – the reserve fund would be lost because the Company Members cannot “Benefit” from the winding up.

Both Reserves are explained by the Auditor in the March 2015 Conference Minutes, (page 4) (Appendix 5) Auditors Report and also in the September 2014 Conference Minutes.

Supporting Documents.

1. Conference Minutes September 2014
2. Conference Minutes March 2015
3. FRS 102 Section 1A Quick Guide
4. 01/2021 Edition of Service Handbook for Ireland
5. Constitution of General Service Board dated 26th June 2018.

Yours in Fellowship
Secretary of Mallow Mercy Group

New Beginnings Group, Waterford City Motion to Conference

The Motion:

On page 36 of General Service Conference Handbook for Ireland

Members responding to AA calls should have an up-to-date AA meeting information to hand as well as a list of other helping organisations such as Al-Anon, Samaritans, Aware, Rape Crisis Centre etc.

Be omitted from this and other publications of AA and be replaced with:

Members responding to AA calls should have an up-to-date AA meeting information to hand as included in the current AA Directory of Meetings.

Ulster

Dungannon Third Legacy Group Motion to Conference

The Motion:

Re-Appointment of Trustee/Director

It is the Conscience of Dungannon Third Legacy that the current method of selecting Trustee/Director should be changed and be done in a similar manner to which Conference Delegates are elected to Intergroup.

Appendix 2

Currently a Trustee/Directors is nominated by the outgoing Trustee in consultation from the four Conference Delegates and then put forward for approval by Intergroup.

The Conscience of Dungannon Third Legacy believes this process can be subject to "buddy" nominating and is not in keeping with AA Structure because it happens without an appropriate input or awareness at group level. Dungannon Third Legacy proposes that nominations for a new Trustee/Director be invited from group level and nominations proceed to Intergroup via Area. At Intergroup level, the candidates will be asked to provide a resume. These are reviewed by the Trustee and the four Conference Delegates and following an interview, the names of the appropriate candidates will be forwarded to Intergroup to be elected by Third Legacy if there is more than one candidate put forward.

Yours in Fellowship
James
Ulster Intergroup Secretary

Conference Delegates' Reports to Conference

<p>CONNAUGHT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayo Area • Roscommon / South Leitrim / Athlone Areas • Sligo / North Leitrim Areas • Galway Area 	<p>MUNSTER</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clare Area • Cork City Area • West Cork Area • Limerick City Area • Limerick County Area • Kerry and North and East Cork Area
<p>ULSTER</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Armagh, Antrim, Belfast, Derry, Donegal and Down Area • Ulster GSCD Report Billy I. • Ulster GSCD Report John McC. 	<p>LEINSTER</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leinster Areas Report • LPI/CPC Report

CONNAUGHT

Connaught GSCD Report to Conference Mayo Area Report

2021 proved to be a challenging year again for Mayo Area due to the ongoing Covid-19 Pandemic, but members endeavoured to do as much as they could in the difficult circumstances. Most Area Meetings were able to be held face to face. Attendance was good overall but again a difficulty in getting members from different Groups to attend, though the Area Meetings were held in different locations.

Because of the limit on the number of members attending Area due to the Covid-19 restrictions, some members who were coming as Observers, could not attend unfortunately.

Due to the various levels of lockdowns and restrictions in the early part of 2021, Groups remained closed due to difficulties with the landlords of the premises the meetings were held in, or due to there being a very small number of "core" members of a Group.

As the year progressed more meetings opened up, and to date there are 23 Groups open with live meetings taking place. Groups were continuously encouraged to fill in a GIS form and have their Group listed on the AA website. There are 17 Groups holding live meetings, listed on the AA website, and 2 Groups holding online meetings.

Groups were also encouraged to send any monies through the AA Structure. A number of members in Mayo partake as Phone Responders with the CIG Phone Service. The Mayo Area Secretary regularly updated the Mayo list of meetings, and this has proved to very beneficial to those taking part in the phone service as well as being made available at meetings. Mayo Area also have an App where members can post up any relevant information and communicate with each other. In order to try and encourage members to write stories for the Road Back Magazine, a member was appointed as a liaison person, who would talk to any member who was interested in writing their story for the magazine.

Some work was done in PI. 12 Step Starter Packs and Meeting Lists were distributed to GP Surgeries throughout the County. Prison Officers from Castlerea Prison attended a PI Meeting, and it was discussed with them about having AA literature in the prison for inmates. Copies of The Big Book were distributed to the Mayo Mental Health Hospital. The Mayo Area Convention did not take place, but a Day of Gratitude was held in Castlebar on November 28th. This was very successful with 107 members registering.

David Q., PI Officer Mayo Area, was elected as CIG PI Convenor.

There are 3 vacancies for IGDs at present. Two members, Marilyn K. and John G. served on the All-Ireland Convention Committee. A Motion to Conference 2022 was proposed and seconded at Mayo Area brought by the Westport Parish Centre Group.

€9,500 was forwarded to CIG from Mayo Area.

Marilyn K GSCD Connaught

**Connaught GSCD Report to Conference
Roscommon, South Leitrim, and Athlone Areas
Synopsis Report 2021**

There has been a slightly better attendance of Groups at Area this year, about 8 Groups out of 15 have attended from time to time over the year. Also there has been more new people from the regular attending Groups to Area, which will help the structure going forward.

Like last year, a lot of Groups have changed addresses etc., and more important the time e.g., Roscommon Town, Tuesday and Thursday night was traditionally 9pm (both meetings) but have changed to 8pm (above Florin's Barber Shop) 1st Floor, Castle Street, Roscommon, F42 RP21.

It was agreed last year to move the Area meeting around different locations, which we have done. These locations were, Castlerea, Boyle and Athlone, which was good for local observers to see how area works and meet up with other AA members.

The Connaught Phone Helpline, which has been a great success, in that it is easy to use and record information on the type of calls received by people looking for help. In our Area, one of our members has obliged and recorded the proper information again this year. The actual phone is diverted to the member's personal phone for one week. Hopefully when we all come to terms with, living with Corona Virus, that meeting attendance at Area will improve.

In regard to P.I. (Public Information), we do not have a person for this position as of yet, but we are hopeful. We did not hold an Open Day, but we are discussing the possibility for 2022.

In regard to P.I., we did invite David Q. from Mayo, who is the P.I. Liaison Officer for Connaught, who did a presentation to Roscommon, South Leitrim, Athlone Area Meeting. The presentation involved a Public Information Presentation about Alcoholism for Alcoholics Anonymous. The presentation had AA Videos which involved young actors and also had slide presentation, all of which is AA information, which is very suitable for School and Prisons, especially during Covid-19 restrictions where physical access is not possible.

It is estimated that 56% of prisoners are in prison due to addiction. Since Covid-19 there has been no AA Meetings in the prison in Castlerea. At the moment, we are interested in progressing this with David Q. and others, giving their time and efforts to support AA messages to prisoners and students.

Last but not least, donations for 2021 were €4,015.

**Connaught GSCD Report to Conference
Sligo/North Leitrim Report 2021-2022**

GSCD Sean C.

This is my first report as Conference Delegate, and I am privileged to serve in this position.

The Pandemic is the overriding factor for all members of AA during the past year. AA has adapted well to this very serious situation and Online Meetings were an enormous help to many, many members, new and existing. The Area had numerous home groups providing online meetings and there was a meeting every day at least online. Some meetings resumed face-to-face, and this was also a welcome development. Some groups provided both online and face-to-face and this is a great testament to these Group Conscience Members. The online meetings connected members from the local Area, the Province, the rest of the Country and around the World which was fantastic to witness and be a part of.

The Area continued to forward surplus monies through the Structure from the groups that sent in surplus.

One big concern during the year was the numbers of members attending Area, many groups were consistently not represented, and concern was also voiced at many Area Meetings about some long-time members that were giving negative commentary about Area and Intergroup service which we thought is against the spirit of AA and is damaging to AA as a whole and is not acceptable and contrary to Tradition 1. The Area is committed to continue to look at ways of encouraging all groups to send at least one member to Area. The concern at Area is that attendance is low and that current members are in their positions longer than the suggested period.

The Prison Service of this Area was limited this past year because of the Pandemic, and we are confident that the management of Loughan House will allow face-to-face meetings to resume in the not-too-distant future, and Area Prison Convenor Martin O'B. is working on this.

The Area is also privileged to have Area Representative Monica H. serving her first year as Intergroup Secretary and we thank her for her great work.

One of the highlights for Sligo/North Leitrim last year was the privilege to be awarded the hosting of the All-Ireland AA Convention on behalf of Connacht Intergroup,

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although the pandemic saw to it that a physical All-Ireland was not possible, we did hold a very successful Online All-Ireland Convention which was head-quartered in the Clayton Hotel, Sligo and very well attended and well served by members of Connacht Intergroup.

PI is a concern in this Area as well. While PI at Intergroup level is progressing well, Sligo/North Leitrim is still looking for members to serve in this Area. Despite this there was a lot of PI work going on in the Area during the past year including the hosting of an Open Meeting at IT Sligo for the Addiction Studies students which receives great feedback each year. David Q. from Mayo attended the last Area Meeting, and we thank David for his service and commitment to PI in Mayo and Connacht.

The last year also saw AA celebrate 75 years in Ireland and there were many events throughout the Country to mark this special day, the 18th of November 2021. In this Area the Collooney Group held a special meeting on their usual meeting night which was on that date, and they showed the video recorded by Tom H. from Limerick on the History of AA in Ireland.

The Area will discuss going back to physical Area Meetings over the coming months and this will happen soon hopefully with restrictions easing.

Connaught GSCD Report to Conference Galway Area

Area Meetings

Despite Covid restrictions, regular meetings of Area were held every six weeks. They were usually hybrid (i.e., online, and physical) but online only when appropriate. All meetings were well attended with lively and constructive discussions.

Group Meetings

Every effort was made to keep members informed of active meetings during 'lockdown'. This was sometimes difficult as groups were not always forthcoming with the information regarding the status of their meetings e.g., opened, temporary closed or online.

PI Committee:

Despite the circumstances there was a very active PI Committee who met regularly during the period and reported back to Area. The Committee recognises that the most effective and most likely way to reach younger and middle-aged groups is through social media. Therefore, the main thrust of their work was to create an online presence. This required considerable work and social media skills. The Committee was at all times conscious of the Traditions regarding *anonymity* and *attraction rather promotion*.

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Balancing this is difficult but 'doable'. A small box advertisement continues to be inserted in the local paper.

Positions

The Secretary and Treasurer has rotated out of service and the positions have been filled.

Intergroup:

Galway was represented at all Intergroup Meetings. Unfortunately, there has only been one IG Delegate for most of the year with a second position filled recently. There is difficulty filling the two remaining positions.

Convention

The Galway Area Convention Committee was as customary, inaugurated in September with a view to organising the Convention in January. However, it was decided to cancel as there was an expectation Covid Restrictions would be remaining in place in January. It is proposed a 'Day of Gratitude' will be organised a little later in the year.

Finances

Despite the lack of physical meetings 'Tabletop' contributions covered running costs and generated a surplus which was passed on through the Structure. A Prudent Reserve was held to cover costs of Area expenses, PI activity and the Convention.

MUNSTER

Munster GSCD Report to Conference Clare Area Conference Report 2022

Clare Area meets on the last Thursday of each month and is attended by approximately 50-60% of the 17 Groups in the Area. Those in attendance are well informed, proactive, and open to suggestions as to how best the AA message is carried.

A new Chairperson (Frank) and a new Secretary (Bernie) have recently been appointed, alongside the present Treasurer (Joe) and meetings are conducted in a balanced manner without being disagreeable.

Clare Area has three M.I.G. Representatives, and they are actively encouraging others into Service through the Structure. To this end, a suggestion of a Service Day(s) was brought forward, and Area are considering how best to approach this matter.

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Phone service is active and steady, and queries are dealt with in a brisk fashion, and volunteers for this service didn't wane throughout the difficulties the fellowship has encountered for nearly two years.

Clare Area unfortunately does not presently have a P.I. Convenor in place but is hopeful this will be rectified soon.

A new Group Information Sheet has been sent to all groups by the Area Secretary.

Donations to Area through the Structure are steady and improving with consideration that physical meetings were effectively closed for a long period as mandated by the Government and the law of the land due to the Pandemic.

To alleviate the absence of physical meetings, some groups began online meetings and successfully "kept the door open" not only for current members but also the newcomer.

Recently there has been a query as to whether online meetings are within the AA Structure. Conference 2021 overwhelmingly concluded that they are, as per the 4th edition of The Big Book. This information was relayed to the members of Clare Area and the conclusion of Conference was explained and accepted.

This facility has been of the utmost importance during this time in carrying the message....and whilst there may still be a desire to have online meetings, the majority of members are returning to physical meetings.

The special dispensation given to addiction services has enabled physical meetings to restart and groups are conducting them in a safe and responsible manner. Clare Area is hopeful of hosting a Convention later in 2022.

I would like to thank Clare Area for their assistance and look forward to working with them in the future.

This report was brought before and passed by Clare Area before being submitted to Conference.

Tom K.

Munster GSCD Report to Conference Cork City Area 2021 Conference Delegate report

Hospital Committee: Tabor Lodge operating on Zoom

Prison Service: No meetings due to Covid

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PI Service: Working well but very quiet. Mick McG. (Conference Delegate) made a few observations about the changing nature of 12th Step work and that the traffic on the website is very high demonstrating that people get their information in different ways today.

Open Meeting: Open in new premises at the Lough Parish every month.

Conference: Mick McG. (Conference Delegate) gave a short report on topics to be discussed at Conference in March 2022. Mick reminded all groups to be mindful of the premises where their meetings are held and to be conscious of the changing needs for security and privacy in public buildings. It is generally not appropriate to have AA posters or other information permanently visible. Covid restrictions to be strictly adhered to.

Convention: The Convention, which was held in Blarney Park Hotel was a great success and well attended. Closed meetings were held in 2 separate rooms every hour over the 3 days. Service Workshop was also held and was well attended.

Surplus forwarded to MIG. Logo granted for 2022.

At a Committee Meeting in February, it was decided that 2022 Convention would be cancelled.

Telephone Service: The mobile telephone was passed between groups for a period of 1 month for each group. The service worked well as 12th Step calls were all followed up on and resulted in newcomers coming to closed meetings. Telephone Convener questioned why calls from suffering alcoholics to GSO were not passed to Area phones.

MIG Intergroup Representatives: Four Representatives attended all MIG Meetings and visited most of the 45 groups over the year.

MIG Conference Delegate. Attended Conference, all Area Meetings and MIG Meetings.

Group Insurance: 27 groups availed of the Group Insurance Scheme and a single point of contact dealt with the Insurance Company. It was estimated that a saving of €150 per group was achieved resulting in a saving of €4,050 to the area.

All Area Meetings were held in Lough Parish Community Centre.

Literature Bank: Area moved from Rutland Street to Lough Community premises and has a room where our Literature Committee operates out of.

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Literature is available from 6pm on the night of Area or on order from groups to the Literature Secretary.

Finance: Area forwarded monies to MIG all year and have monies in the bank which will be forwarded to GSO.

Yours in Fellowship Mick McG.

Munster GSCD Report to Conference West Cork Area Report 2021

West Cork Area had a challenging year due to Covid-19. There are 13 Groups in the Area and had very good attendance at Area Meetings. Six meetings in January, February, July, August, October, and December were held. Unfortunately, due to restrictions Area had to cancel some meetings.

Most groups managed to stay open in fact some didn't close. Some meetings moved to bigger venues to ensure Social Distancing. Area did its best to keep members informed of guidelines, but it was emphasised that every group was autonomous.

Area has 3 Intergroup Delegates and new GSRs which is good. Some GSRs were not able to attend Area Meetings due to health issues.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Finances are doing well, with all groups contributing.

P.I. REPORT

There has been less activity on Public Information this year due to the Covid Virus. Posters have been placed and replaced around the Area. Attempts to put posters on recycling bins was unsuccessful, mainly due to inclement weather.

MOBILE PHONE REPORT

The mobile phone was terribly busy with people looking for help and meeting information.

The phone has been passed around Area during the year.

MIG REPORT

There are 3 Intergroup Delegates, who attended the Munster Intergroup Meetings throughout the year. There were not a lot of Group visits due to restrictions.

CONFERENCE DELEGATE

Attended all Area and MIG Meetings

AOB

2021 was a difficult year but West Cork Area did the best to keep in touch with members, keeping them informed attending meetings and continuing to carry the AA message.

Yours in Fellowship
Mick McGrath

**Munster GSCD Report to Conference
Limerick City Area Conference Report 2022**

Limerick City Area meets on the Third Monday of each month and is attended by approximately 50% of the 15 groups in the Area.

Those in attendance are well informed and are assisting Area to carry the message to the groups as well as the business of Limerick Area.

The current Chairperson (Mark) will be retiring in January and a new Chairperson will be voted into office in February, aided by a new Treasurer (Ruth) alongside the current Secretary (Anne) and meetings are conducted in a balanced, business manner where all voices are heard, and discussion is encouraged with respect for all points.

As of the January 2022 meeting of Munster Intergroup, Limerick City Area does not have any Intergroup Representatives, but it is hoped that in the absence of members coming forward.

It has been explained to the Area that as per page 43 of the Service Handbook, officers of Area can attend M.I.G. and not only assist in the business of AA in Munster but to give Limerick City Area a voice within the Structure, without impinging on their Area positions.

A suggestion of a Service Day(s) was brought and is being considered as to how best to approach this matter.

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Phone Service is active with a rota of volunteering groups and this service has been invaluable throughout the difficulties the fellowship has faced for nearly two years.

Calls to this service are steady and queries are dealt with in an informed and sensitive manner.

New Group Information Sheets have been distributed to all groups in the Area and current details should hopefully be updated soon.

Donations to Area through the Structure are steady and improving considering that physical meetings were effectively closed for a long period as mandated by the Government due to the Pandemic.

To ease the concern of an absence of physical meetings, some groups began online meetings and successfully "kept the door open" for the suffering alcoholic.

The legitimacy of these meetings was discussed by Conference 2021, and it was overwhelmingly resolved that they are as per the 4th edition of The Big Book.

Whilst some online meetings are continuing, the return to physical meetings by members is increasing week by week.

Limerick City Area has unfortunately had to cancel their Convention, due to be held from the 17th of February 2022, in respect of the Health Guidelines at the time the decision was made.

I would like to thank Limerick City Area for their support and assistance and look forward to continuing to work with them in the future.

This report was brought, read, and passed by Limerick City Area before being submitted to Conference.

Tom K.

Munster GSCD Report to Conference Limerick County Area Conference Report 2022

Limerick County Area is scheduled to meet on the 2nd Monday of each month with 21 Groups that are open for meetings.

Limerick County Area at the time of this report being submitted to Conference is unfortunately not a working subdivision of Alcoholics Anonymous.

It has no Chairperson, no Secretary, and no Treasurer and despite numerous attempts to the groups, these positions are still unfilled.

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Only for the heroics of 6 to 7 members travelling the length and breadth of the County in trying to keep the Area viable and informing the groups of the severity of the situation, the Limerick County Area may well have already folded. This situation is ongoing and hopefully a positive outcome will be achieved.

The Phone Service is currently being operated and whilst calls to it are infrequent, it's nevertheless an important service that can literally be a lifeline to the suffering alcoholic.

The difficulties of Limerick County Area should be a forewarning to all of us that profess our love and gratitude to an organisation that has literally saved innumerable amounts of lives.

Service within the Fellowship has always been and should always be cherished, lest we find ourselves just a gathering of people without structure.

It should be promoted to all members that without it our future will become uncertain. Narratives and perceptions should never take the place of facts in order that our Fellowship can make "well informed decisions"

I wish to thank those in Limerick County Area who have endeavoured to keep their Area open and encourage "the grateful alcoholic" into service and look forward to assisting them wherever it's possible.

Tom K.

Munster GSCD Report to Conference Kerry Area and North and East Cork Area (NaEC) Report March 2022

Conference Delegate - John T.

North and East Cork Area (NaEC) Overview

NaEC consists of 22 Groups that cover meetings ranging from Youghal on the Cork Waterford border to meetings in Ballydesmond on the Cork Kerry border not far from Killarney.

Area traditionally met 10 times per year in two venues. Mallow in the centre of the County, and Castlemartyr in the Southeast of the County. This arrangement of using two venues was introduced in 2018 and proved to be successful in attracting more participation and Service by G.S.R.s. Members cited convenience and inclusion as

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motivating factors in the increase in Service commitment. These physical meetings were suspended in 2020 in response to Covid concerns and Area Meetings were moved online. Area has not met in person since; however, discussions were held in November/December of last year (2021) and arrangements were made to find another venue for the East Cork Meetings as Castlemartyr was deemed unsuitable because of size. The Youghal Group has offered to facilitate the Area meetings when the decision is made to return to in room meetings.

Unfortunately, we still notice that there is a high level of absenteeism among groups, especially in the North-Western part of the County

Service at Area and Intergroup

We had a change of Officers in 2021 and we would like to thank Ellen M. (Youghal) Outgoing Secretary, and Marie O'K. (Midleton Morning) Outgoing Treasurer, for the service to the Fellowship over the last two years. Our Incoming Secretary is Aidan H. (Midleton), and Incoming Treasurer is Willie O'R. (Mallow Mercy). We would also like to thank June E. (Castlemartyr) who was acting as Interim Chairperson. June has had to step back from this Service position due to work commitments. At the time of writing, we are still looking for a Chairperson for Area.

We would also like to thank Margaret McD. (Carrigtwohill), who is rotating out of Service as an Intergroup Representative after her service term is complete. We discussed the need to fill vacant service positions at Area and in line with the Green Service Handbook: page 43 (composition of Intergroup Committee), we took a Group Conscience decision to ask the Area Officers to attend the quarterly Intergroup Meetings as Representatives of our Area.

Group Inventory for Area

A Group Inventory had been discussed at previous Area Meetings and this was brought up again in January 22. It was noted Aidan (Secretary) will try to get a Chair for the meeting from outside the Area and a proposed Agenda. Date for Inventory to be arranged as early as possible in 2022.

Communicating with our 22 Groups

We lost one of our Groups in 2021 as the Garryvoe/Ballybutler has decided to suspend group activities indefinitely. Our secretaries and other volunteers have endeavoured throughout the year to keep the groups up to date with fellowship business and to pass on any suggestions and guidelines. As per 2020 we had difficulties with compiling lists of meetings, both physical in-room meetings and online meetings. We direct members looking for meeting information to the National Website and encourage all groups to

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monitor email traffic to their Group Email and to also set an Automatic Response for email enquiries to contain a phone number for contact with the Group. Member's avail

of WhatsApp and Telegram to publish (twice daily) a list of online meetings in and around Cork County and some from the rest of Ireland and further afield. Over 350 users are subscribed to these WhatsApp and Telegram Chats.

Difficulties in communication still exist because of the inability of groups to send G.S.R.'s to Area Meetings and the lack of up-to-date meeting information, change of address, renaming of groups etc. However, Groups have been taking responsibility to update information on a monthly basis. Usually sharing the responsibility between several group members.

Phone Service

Area is 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 A.A. 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, and we used our contact information to inform as many groups as possible.

As we were meeting online, we used the share screen function to look at the contact information on the National Website and discuss if any extra information needed to be forwarded to G.S.O.

It is noticeable that the number of contacts could be directly related to the amount of P.I. work that Area does. More information raises public awareness of the solution we offer and subsequently more phone service contact. We need to work smarter to remain anonymous but not invisible.

Public Information

At Area Meetings during the latter stages of 2021, Members discussed the possibilities for Public Information Initiatives going forward. It was acknowledged that P.I. had been particularly challenging during the height of Covid and that as the Pandemic and its restrictions eased, we would be able to refocus on Public Information. Our P.I. Committee Members were in contact with the Cork Local Drug Task Force by mail, updating contact details.

<https://www.corkdrugandalcohol.ie>

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A suggestion was made to consider more positive images on the AA Posters (highlighting the Solution), where this might resonate better with younger people. P.I. and Area will discuss this again going forward.

P.I. Members have been using the recording of Daniel C., Public Information Liaison Officer for East Lancashire Intergroup of A.A. U.K. Daniel was invited by the Carrigtwohill Group to deliver a presentation on Public Information Initiatives in the U.K. and on mainland Europe as part of their Founders Day celebrations in June. This was a thought provoking and motivating presentation, particularly the initiatives on carrying the message in the digital era.

The Presentation also touches on the following

- Presentations to H.S.E. Staff, Doctors, and other Medical Staff.
- Billboards/Posters at Train Stations and Public Transport.
- Airport Arrivals and Departures.
- Sports Facilities.
- Shopping Centres and Motorway Facilities (Particularly in Public Toilets).
- Use of YouTube Video clips to carry the message in a local context (use link information to access Conference Approved messages).
- Use of Podcasts with Conference Approved Material (directly downloadable from the AA.ie website), SoberCast, Buzzsprout, Castbox etc.
- Use of Social Media to better inform Professionals.

I have consulted with several members to look at the possibility of bringing together a Service group who would volunteer in the P.I. Committee to carry our message of hope via digital media and to avail of the power of the technology.

Group Insurance

NaEC has operated a Group Insurance Scheme, and last year 21 of 22 Groups availed of this Opt-In Scheme at a cost of €50. The Scheme is considered to be good value by groups. Previous to the introduction of the Scheme, groups were reporting policy prices of €200 plus per year.

The operation of the scheme has not been without some expressions of unease as some members consider it to be in contravention of the Traditions and may create a barrier to entry to A.A.

We are monitoring the feedback from groups as the renewal date for the Group Policy is early April.

Motions

The Mallow Mercy Group has submitted a Motion for Conference. This has been discussed and passed by Munster Intergroup.

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 usually in Tralee.

When possible, Area Meetings took place in person and both the Brandon Hotel, and the Rose Hotel were used as venues.

John K. was elected as Kerry Area Chairperson in April, and throughout the year Area has filled all vacancies for Service Positions both for Service at Area and Munster Intergroup and as part of the Mini-Convention Committee. Kerry Area welcomes the decision to print a reference booklet for new G.S.R.'s. This is seen as an upgrade to the welcome pack that Kerry Area has issued to all new G.S.R.'s over the past few years.

Area Committee report that the business of A.A. 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 had been a total of 7 Open Public Meetings held in various parts of the County and more were planned for rest of 2020. The restrictions of the Pandemic are hopefully easing, and Kerry Area Members are keen to continue to carry the message to the General Public and the still suffering alcoholic. The Listry-Faha Group are hosting an Open Public Meeting on March 25th. which will be the first of 2022.

Venue:

Listry-Faha Grass Roots Group

Community Centre

Faha

Co. Kerry

V93 PX08

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 A.A., Area is asking Munster Intergroup Representatives to visit groups in

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the County to ask for their continued support in the running of A.A. and its effort to carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic.

During a discussion on Service in the Fellowship, it was noted that at Kerry Area there were only 9 groups out of 32 represented on that evening, and that this was the norm.

Area discussed how this could be changed. Area works better when it is better supported. Only a small number of the same individuals are doing Service and finding new members to rotate into positions is a continuing struggle for Groups and Area alike. During an AA Meeting we are all in Service - not just the Secretary.

Area wonders are groups holding too many meetings.

Does this cause disharmony within the groups? Is there a general lack of focus on Traditions?

Suggestions to Groups from Area included:

- Having a 'Greeter' - Someone who could greet Newcomers, Visitors, Members and welcome them.
- Regular discussion and active encouragement of Service particularly with Newcomers; observing meeting etiquette, (that is, participating in Fellowship) arriving early for meetings and staying for a time after the meeting to engage with newcomers.
- Undertaking a Group Review/Inventory of Service within the group; asking questions like "what would you do if the group closed?" or "have you ever been in service?" or "what would stop you doing service?"

Phone Service

Area are highly engaged in Phone Service and constantly work to improve the quality and effectiveness of the Service. In April of 2021, Listry/Faha gave the phone report. There were a number of calls mostly about meetings, and group members called all of the Groups in Kerry Area to check with them and made a list which they brought into Area, and it was passed on to the next group with the phone. As the Covid situation was unclear, members on phone duty kept the list of meetings up to date on a monthly basis.

They also looked to see if the A.A. National Directory Listings were accurate and if 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 and we used our contact information to inform as many groups as possible.

Public Information

Stuart S., Killarney, from the P.I. Committee reported that members attended a Zoom Meeting on Thursday March 25th at 9.45pm. The meeting was hosted by Bernadette

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Murphy of Kerry College and was attended by an all-female class. The topic of the Zoom Meeting was "Alcoholics Anonymous and How it Works". Representing P.I. were Sean D. Killarney Into Action, and Stuart P.I. Secretary, as well as two female members who shared their personal experiences. Sean opened the meeting, read the Preamble, the 12 Steps, and then spoke about the History of AA. He told the group about A.A.'s Primary Purpose and the importance of anonymity. Stuart explained about the Traditions of AA and the two members shared their stories. The feedback afterwards from Kerry College was very positive. This was the only P.I. event in Kerry Area until the Kerry Mini-Convention in November.

Kerry Area Mini-Convention

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 2021. Hard work paid off and the turnout was a record for recent times.

The Convention Committee met before Area and the Convention was blessed that a window of opportunity opened in the Pandemic restrictions. The decision to go ahead with the Convention was not taken lightly and Area were well aware that it may have had to be cancelled at very short notice. The Committee worked on the details with the venue staff and tried to maximise the benefits of the Mini-Convention while maintaining as safe an environment as possible. To this end there was no dance on the Saturday and entertainment and get togethers were left to individuals. The Convention was very well attended by local, national, and international visitors. In all 382 members registered to support the Committee for the weekend. The Convention operated at a surplus of €508.79.

In a review of the Mini-Convention, it was mentioned that the Kerry Fellowship were disappointed that the 2022 All-Ireland Convention would not be held in Kerry in what they see as a far more suitable venue. Those at Intergroup who were involved in the selection process gave feedback that some groups are considering a Motion to have the All-Ireland selection process for the venue reviewed to avoid what they see as significant shortcomings.

They considered the following points to be relevant:

- The Venue was eventually decided on cost rather than suitability.
- The Objectives/Purpose of the Convention was unclear.
- Decisions were made along parochial lines.
- Number of Intergroup Representatives present on the day will influence the outcome.
-

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- A need for the Fellowship as a whole to discuss what was “usually/traditionally” done.
- What will happen if there is a cost over-run in staging the National Convention.

On a personal note, I would like to thank all those who put their hand up when a request for help goes out to the Fellowship from the Structure of our great Fellowship. Long may it continue in these challenging and extreme times. *“up to now AA seems to have taken the right turning at each new crossroad. This could scarcely have been our doing alone. Our Fellowship has afforded a convincing proof of that wise old adage which declares that “man’s extremity is God’s opportunity” Bill W 1961”*

John T. Kerry and North and East Cork Conference Delegate

ULSTER

Ulster GSCD Report to Conference

Armagh, Antrim, Belfast, Derry, Donegal and Down Areas

GSCD Report - Brian G. (for year 2021)

In the past year I have attended meetings in Armagh, Antrim, Belfast, Derry, Donegal 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. On average only 35% to 40% of groups in some Areas attended meetings. However, there are members and groups who do not and have never, attended Area, and do not see the importance of this type of service.

This perception needs to be changed with the message that Area is open for all GSR’s to have their say in matters concerning their group, and AA as a whole. It is a vital part of the communication line between Group and Conference, and vice-versa.

It is also sad to see that Cavan Area has closed at this present time, because no one is available to attend. We should do all we can to avoid this happening in any other Area. During the Pandemic, a number of Group and Area Meetings continued to take place on the ‘Zoom Platform’, and this ensured that AA continued to function, and give protection to its more vulnerable members. Those who wished to hold physical meetings were able to do so, by maintaining the necessary ‘Government Guidelines’

I continued to be a member of the Ulster Intergroup Action Committee, which I found very beneficial, because the tasks carried out were done in an atmosphere of genuine co-operation, between the Conference Delegates and the Office Management Committee in the interests of all our members. This Committee fulfilled its function, hence the need disappeared, and it was stood down by Intergroup.

I also attended the Annual General Service Conference on 5/3/21 & 6/3/21 on Zoom, and the further Conference on Zoom on 04/9/21, which was held to discuss the findings

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of 4 sub-committees established in March to review Literature, YPLO, Service, and Digital Meetings. Both meetings were well run, conclusions were arrived at after discussions and I found them to be beneficial.

I and the other Conference Delegates met with the Board on 5/11/21, and a full discussion was held over a two-hour meeting.

We are still in a period of uncertainty due the Pandemic, and I feel that lessons should be learned from the past, and AA has to respond quickly to changes that are imposed by Government Regulations. (e.g.: changes in rules for physical meetings)

Thus, I feel it is so important for the AA Website to be kept in line with what is actually happening, and the Ulster Web Page to reflect the current NI rules at any time.

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.

Ulster GSCD Report to Conference March 2022

GSCD Report – Billy I.

This report covers the period from January 2021 to December 2021 reflecting some of the major issues in this uncertain period with regard to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Groups

Online meetings have enabled many members and Groups to stay in touch and some groups have been able to hold Face-to-Face Meetings. There was an increase in face-to-face when restrictions were eased but the latest Omicron has reduced the face-to-face meetings again. Group attendance at Areas has been in the region of 35%. This is a disappointing figure given the amount of hard work put in by many of the Officers in the various Areas in very trying circumstances to keep the doors open. Groups have attempted to keep members informed and have succeeded with 12th Step work as well as organising Days of Gratitude, Public Information Meetings and 75th Anniversary Meetings.

Areas

GSCDs visit the various Areas and there is an attempt to rotate Area visits except when a GSCD is close to an Area, particularly if the Area meeting is physical. GSCDs meet two weeks after Ulster Intergroup and two weeks before when each GSCD rotates to Chair these meetings

Attendance at Intergroup has fluctuated out of maximum attendance of 40 figures were as follows Jan. 25th, Mar 25th, May 18th, July 12th, Sept 17th. The figures for July reflect a

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face-to-face Intergroup when Areas voted with their feet not to attend. Area attendance at Intergroup is about 50 %.

Visits to the various Areas were organised by Brian GSCD and other GSCDs fulfilled their roles in attending Area Meetings. As could be expected, there was the odd slip-up, but GSCD commitment was sound. GSCDs advise Areas where necessary and try to emphasise GIS forms and the use of Mailboxes without being too dogmatic. Two Areas, Derry and Donegal commented on the effectiveness and efficiency of Hybrid and Online Meetings when GSCDS did not have to physically travel to attend these.

This year has seen the absence of County Cavan who no longer attend Ulster Intergroup. This is something which needs to be addressed urgently to see if the situation can be retrieved by support from other Groups, Areas, GSCDs and the incoming Trustee. This and the move to bi-monthly meetings may impact on keeping Groups adequately informed. Four out of nine Areas now hold bi-monthly meetings and Derry Area are considering doing the same. This may impact on the following section.

Communication

The biggest problem I have encountered this year has been the lack of communication. This has been a recurring problem in Ulster as highlighted in past reports. I see one of my responsibilities to keep Intergroup Representatives informed so they can keep Groups informed. Lack of Leadership by Trustee was highlighted in his Sub-Committee report to Conference when he neglected to express the views of other members on the Sub-Committee. He also failed to respond to emails that I sent to him. My nomination as GSCD to Intergroup by Antrim Area was also challenged by him.

The most outstanding lack of communication however was best seen in the attempted appointment of a new Trustee. The procedures for the appointment of a Trustee showed a consistent lack of communication and a litany of self-motivated decisions.

The facts as I see them are as follows, the Trustee Brian F. was given a list of potential candidates by the Board 7 months ago. Six months later, on 21st of October 2021, there was a meeting of GSCDs and the Trustee. Two days before the meeting I had a phone call from the Trustee who told me who the new Trustee was to be.

This ignored all the guidance and suggestions in the GHB. One of the requirements is that the retiring Trustee will consult with his GSCDs, and they should try to reach a consensus. Consult is the Key word. We were told. Consult does not seem to be in the Trustee vocabulary as outlined in Concept 9.

No shortlist was drawn up.

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Seven months had elapsed whilst the matter was put on the backburner. A GSCD meeting was held on 21st of October 2021, 2 weeks prior to the meeting with the Board. Again, only one name was presented to the GSCDs.

At the GSCDs meeting with the Board on 5th November these matters were brought up and the proposed nomination was not accepted by the Board. Subsequently, a representative from the Board met with the GSCDs and a new nomination was accepted.

The debacle with regard to the appointment of a new Trustee was followed up by the incumbent Trustee attending a Tyrone Area Meeting held in Cookstown on 13th of December. Tyrone Area is an Area struggling with attendance. The Officers in the Area are doing a very good job and are very committed but attendance at Area Meetings is in the 35% range.

At this meeting, the Trustee proposed that Tyrone Area change its meeting from December to January. He then went on to propose a Motion to Conference from his group. No one from his Group was in attendance and no apology given. The Trustee stated the Motion was in regard to the WSD position rotating round the Provinces. He said the Motion had been emailed to mailbox of Tyrone Secretary. This is a new way of presenting a Motion to Conference.

Hospital and Prisons

Both of these areas have been impacted severely by COVID-19. The Prison authorities set up a Webex system but so far, the Prison Committee have not been able to avail of this system.

The Hospital has been able to make some headway, but conditions are not back to pre-COVID-19 conditions. Members are in post in both Committees and when conditions change, they will be able to practice the principles and carry the message to these institutions.

P.I.

Most Areas have P.I. Organisers in place, and they are being proactive in difficult circumstances. Belfast, Antrim, Derry, Down, Donegal and Tyrone are examples where representatives are doing their best to keep the Public and Members informed through Days of Gratitude, Anniversary celebrations and Public Information events.

In conclusion, the last 2 months has seen a sharp fall in attendance at Areas. Out of 7 Areas, 5 have attendance figures of 30% or less, 1 Area had 40% and 1 Area had 50%. It is only to be hoped that the lifting of COVID-19 regulations and a fresh input by the incoming Trustee Seamus, GSCDs, Intergroup Officers and Intergroup Representatives that this situation can be turned around.

Billy Ingram
GSCD Ulster

**Ulster GSCD Report to Conference March 2022
GSCD Report – John McC.**

My name is John, and I am an Alcoholic.

I have had the privilege of being one of four General Service Conference Delegates in the Province of Ulster. I have just completed my first year as GSCD, and boy what a year it has been. A year in which we had many different trials and tribulations. A year, which was our second year in this worldwide Covid-19 Pandemic. An unfortunate thing with which we have had to cope with in our day to day lives.

For Alcoholics Anonymous, it was a year that saw a lot of uncertainty and especially for our much-loved groups some of whom asked for guidance on many similar questions such as:

- Could we open or not?
- What were the regulations and controls?
- Do I wear a mask or not?
- What are the current social distance requirements?
- How many can we allow in?
- Something Ulster Intergroup had the wisdom to address through the formation of a small Sub-Committee. The role of the Sub-Committee was to address these issues and provide easy access to guidelines and direction, this was achieved through creation of a temporary website that our members could use. Following our return to our new norm, I have noticed two things that would concern me. The first is that there are some groups which have not reopened and have not been confirmed as permanently closed or reopening. Secondly a disunity appeared to be creeping in between face2facers and on-liners, a lot of times fuelled by misinformation and personal agendas, a thing which is not good for the fellowship or individuals alike. Thankfully, this seems to have settled down and past. Regarding the website, this has now been closed down at the behest of this Intergroup.

Through the year I attended Conference twice, once in March and then again in September. Due to ongoing restrictions these meetings were held online.

The first meeting to be held was the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous (GSBAA) Annual General Meeting, this was followed by the GSBAA & General Service Conference. I do not intend to go through it verbatim as there are a number of detailed reports produced by the Company Secretary/Secretary GSBAA which are readily available to everyone.

Instead, I will just mention the key points as they impacted on me.

1. Observers to GB Conference April 2021.
I had the privilege of being elected as an Observer to the GB Conference following a proposal from Brian F. (Ulster Trustee) which was seconded by Rory H. (Connaught Trustee). Unfortunately, the event was cancelled due to Covid regulations.
2. A proposal was made stating "Conference establishes a Sub-Committee of members who have experience in relation to all aspects of online meetings with emphasis on our AA Traditions". I was proposed on to that Sub-Committee along with Emmet O'H. (Trustee), Audrey McD. (MIG Secretary), Sean C. (Connaught), Moira S. (WSD) and John T. (Munster).

In September, Conference met to deal with the work of the four Sub-Committees and their recommendations. As stated, I was elected on to the above Sub-Committee whose recommendation was as follows: "We recommend to Conference that as Online Meetings are not outside the Structure, we don't need to bring them into the Structure. We further recommend that this clarification is communicated to all Groups."

After discussion, this recommendation was carried 100% by those attending the September Conference.

Throughout the year I visited all areas of Ulster (with the exception of Cavan, Fermanagh, and Monaghan whom I plan to visit in the incoming year). I have no intention of distinguishing whether an Area held an online or a physical meeting to conduct business, that is their decision and was always taken in line with the Covid restrictions in force at the time. I was received well at all the Areas. In most cases the Officer posts were all filled, and the business of Area was conducted in an efficient manner. The attendance of groups at Area was in general poor, with a small core of groups in regular attendance. Surplus monies have been passed on and that item will be dealt with by the Treasurer in his report.

However, at the AGM's I attended, there was some reluctance to enter into Service, leaving it to people that had previously done the Service or were rotating out of another post. In terms of groups that were attending Area, the percentage tended to be rather low. The Officers of all Areas should be commended for the work that they have done to encourage groups to attend Area.

Some points that I had raised and drew Area's attention to were as follows, and I will be mentioning to the new Officers when I visit Areas, are:

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- Group Information Sheets\Area Officer Forms completion
- Mailboxes
- Group\Areas should be forwarding surplus through Structure quickly
- New Service Handbook
- Conference\Motions to Conference
- Upcoming All-Ireland to be held in Ulster

Finally, Telephone Duty throughout the year; I have worked with most Areas on this very important service. I would like to extend my thanks to all the people from the different Areas that helped throughout the year.

Also, our Office Administrator who would set the users up on the Horizon Telephone System and get them the Telephone Packs ready for each Area.

At the start there was some teething problems and things were not just as smooth as we would have liked. However, we have it well sussed and setup now. Following training that we had from our system provider, we have a further improvement to make to simplify the process from the point of view of the person answering the calls.

All in All, it is working well but, (and it is a big BUT) the information that is in the Contact Directory is badly in need of being updated through the GIS Sheets. I would ask all Areas to try and get their groups to complete a new Group Information Sheet as soon as possible. The correct information could ultimately save someone's life. That is how important this information is.

Folks, that is it from me.

Ulster GSCD Report to Conference March 2022 GSCD Report – Kenny P.

Over the last year I have been involved with Tyrone, Monaghan, Fermanagh and Cavan Areas therefore my experience is based on the visits to these Areas.

Tyrone is functioning well, all positions filled at AGM.

Tyrone held a successful Day of Gratitude on Saturday 22nd Jan 2022. This event was held online, Fermanagh and Monaghan like Tyrone ensure contributions from groups is passed through the Structure.

All Areas are encouraging groups to fill in GIS, so members are available for 12th Step work and meetings are listed on the website. PI work in Monaghan and Fermanagh is ensuring posters are available to the relevant places so the public know where to find AA.

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Fermanagh has a long running advert with two local newspapers which is cost effective, and feedback would suggest new members cite the newspaper was the source of finding AA.

Cavan Area has had two meetings since the beginning of Covid and a statement to the Groups and Intergroup is available and accompanies this report.

There has been a lot of work by Committees and is available in the September 4th Conference Draft Minutes.

KENNY P., G.S.C.D.

This is the statement from Cavan Area (Vivian and Nial 24 Nov 2021)

The AGM of Cavan Area was held on Tuesday 23rd November 2021, there were three members in attendance; the Outgoing Chairman, the Outgoing Secretary and the GSCD (who travelled from Tyrone to support the AA Structure in Co. Cavan).

The two local members concluded they could not continue to bear the responsibility of service alone, so due to the complete lack of interest of members of Alcoholics Anonymous, Cavan Area is no more. It seems apparent that members attending meetings have no understanding of the service structure of AA, and the huge obligation that each of them have to pass on what has freely been given them "so that others may survive and rediscover life". The collapse of Area means that alcoholics in Cavan who have no idea that there is "a way out", will continue to plod on the bitter end of "insanity and death". There will be no Public Information Service to let the public know "the answer to the alcoholic problem" found in AA.

There will be no Hospital Service to carry the vital message to those who seek medical treatment as a result of their drink problem, neither will there be a Prison Service to bring hope to those already incarcerated as a result of alcoholic behaviour.

The Structure of AA, hammered out on the anvil of experience, has existed in Ireland since 1946 and in Cavan since 1968, it is somewhat ironic that this should come to a head in the same year John O'C. passed away, the man that started the first meeting in Cavan. It is surely a sad reflection on the state of ingratitude among members who owe the fellowship their lives.

Arrangements are being made to send any money held by Area to Intergroup and close the bank account.

Our prayer is that those who yearn to recover realise the role Service and the AA Structure play in the process, that Cavan will be resurrected, and should anyone reach out for help that the hand of AA be there to help them.

Signed Nial O'R. Cavan Area Secretary
Vivian B. Cavan Area Chair

LEINSTER

Leinster GSCD Report to Conference Report on Areas to Conference – March 2022

Leinster Intergroup consists of 14 Areas (Areas 3&4 operate as one body), representing a total of approximately 400 Groups. It is extremely difficult to have an exact number of Groups operating at present, due to the huge impact of the Covid Pandemic on how, when and where Groups are able to meet – whether they are in-person meetings or online. Many Groups have reported to their Areas, that they are operating successfully in both capacities. Indeed, some Groups are running successful hybrid meetings whereby members attend in person, but the Secretary has also set a device so that online participants can also attend.

During this last year, with restrictions and Covid determining how most Groups meet, most Areas report that those Groups which have met, have reported good attendance either in-person or online. Many Groups, however, have experienced difficulties with regard to Service positions being rotated, with some members remaining in Service positions for long periods of time. This is mainly due to a general lack of willingness within the fellowship to take up Service roles. As we all know, this lack of willingness to do Service is a situation which had already become a serious issue, before Covid hit, and Groups had to adapt. However, in the main, Secretaries have been appointed and GS/Treasurer positions have found ways to operate within Group Conscience.

The vast majority of Groups have kept in close contact with their Areas, Intergroups and GSO for updates on restrictions pertinent to AA and attempted to closely adhere to all Guidelines. However, it is noted that a small number of Groups did “their own thing” and made decisions that were not always safe. To a large degree it appears that members have “voted with their feet” on this, and generally avoided any involvement with this type of practice.

Unfortunately, it is reported that many Groups and Area Meetings would appear to have lost their meeting rooms during the Covid crisis, as many meet in Schools, HSE venues, etc. Many Groups have successfully moved to more Covid-suitable premises and have listed these new meetings and venues on the AA website.

Only two of the 13 Area Meetings are being held in-person. All other Areas report that their online Area Meetings have been very successful, with Area business being carried out, Officers being elected and rotated, and better-than-normal attendance from GSRs.

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Many Areas have also implemented "WhatsApp" Groups to assist with the flow of information between Area Secretary and other Officers and GSRs, in conjunction with using Group Secretary emails.

It is hoped, generally throughout Leinster, that those Groups who have not been able to come together in some format during Covid restrictions, will be able to regroup whenever some semblance of normality is restored.

The operation of funds coming through the Structure, through Areas, Groups and Meetings, has been evolving during the past year. Many Groups and Areas have successfully moved their bank accounts to online banking and are able to produce IBANs so that Members and Treasurers can send funds directly, without having to move about. Where Groups cannot implement a Tradition 7 at their specific Meeting,

members have been encouraged to contribute directly through our AA Website and, in more recent times with more Groups opening up again, to contribute to a "basket" elsewhere. It has not been reported that Tradition 7 has been omitted at meetings.

New Guidelines for online meetings to be incorporated within the Green Handbook, as a result of the recent Sub-Committee on Literature, has been generally welcomed by all Areas.

Twelve of the Areas between them share the 6 Afterhours Telephones (with the exception of Area 11). The phones are reported to be busy. Members who handle the After-Hours Phone Service, state the importance of all Groups registering their meeting times and venues immediately with GSO, so that an updated Directory is available to them when answering enquiries.

The Prison Service, always such an active part of Leinster Intergroup service, has been effectively closed during the Covid crisis. The Prison Convenor for LIG remains in close contact with the Prison management, and all of the AA members who are cleared for Prison Service. AA Literature has been provided to all of the Prisons during this time. Hopefully, this service can get back to normal business when we emerge from this period, as all of its elements have been carefully managed during this time.

Leinster PI/CPC Report to Conference 2022

This year, despite the Pandemic, we have managed to hold Schools Talks for the following Schools. We held a mixture of Zoom talks and some live talks, depending on which option the school preferred.

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- Scoil Dara, Kilcock. 34 Students at Talk.
- Cross and Passion College, Kilcullen. 11 Students.
- Malahide Community College, 2 classes of 50 Students per class.
- Mount Seskin Community College.
- Requested a copy of the DVD. We were able to facilitate them.
- Colaiste De Ide, Tallaght. 50 Students aged 15/16 years.
- Skerries. 2 classes. 50 Students per class. 17/18 years of age.
- Colaiste Cill Mhantain. 15 Students aged 15/16 years.
- Mount Anville Secondary School, Dublin 14. 123 Pupils aged 17/18 years.
- St Mary's College, Arklow. 90 Students aged 17/18.
- St Dominic's College. 24 Pupils aged 17/18.
- Monkstown CBC. 160 Pupils aged 16/17 years.
- St Mac Dara's, Dublin 6 W. 50 Pupils aged 17/18 years.
- I.T. Carlow. 11 Students.
- Woodbrook College, Bray. 3 Talks. About 25 Pupils at each Talk. Appendix 3

We also held Talks in Bloomfield Health Services, A Specialised Rehabilitation Unit. The residents are long term. All seemed to have issues with alcohol. They are aged between 25 to 52 years of age. About 8 attended our talk.

We also held a talk in Laytown/Bettystown Youthreach. About 10 attended. Aged 16/18. Again, this was very productive. Speakers were kept back for over an hour following the talk, answering questions.

I was invited to attend Areas 10 and 14 during the year to give a short presentation on Public Information and CPC.

Regarding CPC

UCD were in contact with us to invite members to speak to a group of 70/100 Student Nurses. CPC aimed at informing the student nurses of how alcoholics might present at their Practices. They also advised them on the availability of AA and the solution it offered.

Charlie F.
LICPC

**Attendance at GB Conference (CAAGB)
Report to Conference
16th to 18th April 2021 – Online**

Barbara (LIG), John T. (MIG)

Barbara A. (LIG) and John T. (MIG) attended the GB Conference in April 2021, as Observers from General Conference of AA Ireland.

The Conference, which is usually held in York in England, was held online as Covid restrictions on travel and movement, were in place Internationally.

There was an informal Welcome Meeting held on Thursday evening 15th April 2021, which was attended by Delegates and the invited Observers from other countries. As well as the 2 Delegates from Ireland, Observers were also present from Romania, Portugal, Iceland, Bulgaria, and Poland.

The Conference opened on Friday 16th April 2021. Observers were introduced to the various Committee Chairpersons. The Committees are made up of an equal number of geographically diverse GB Delegates – with each Committee having a Chairperson and a Secretary.

Each of the Observers were allocated to a specific Committee for the duration of the Conference.

Questions and Motions are compiled during the year from the Groups in GB, and they are put as a series of “Questions” to the GB Conference for debate and decision. Each Committee is given 2 to 3 Questions which they dissect, discuss, and debate during the Friday/Saturday - the Committees present their initial findings and recommendations to the full Conference for a decision on the Saturday afternoon. GB Conference then decides whether to adopt the Committees recommendations or ask for amendments. On the Sunday morning, the Committee Reports are formally presented to the GB Conference, and the decision is recorded and reported to the Fellowship in GB.

As Observers, we were fully integrated into the Committees we were allocated to, we were invited to speak, to offer our opinion, and allowed participation in the recommendations process.

Conclusion

It is a well worth-while exercise, for an AA Ireland GSCD to attend the GB Conference as an Observer. It is an opportunity to learn from others and also to reach out within the Fellowship to our neighbours.

Barbara and John were just sorry we didn't get to York and to see it all work in person – we sincerely hope that the 2 Delegates nominated in March 2022 to represent AA Ireland, get to experience the full impact of attending GB Conference.

Appendix 4

In GB Conference, the use of Committees to debate the individual Motions (Questions), is a very simple and productive way of conducting Conference business in a time-effective manner. Each member of each Committee has every opportunity to express their opinion and to represent the views of their Intergroup which includes all of the Delegates from that region. Everybody is heard and all views are respected. The Committees all come to their conclusions/recommendations by consensus only. Perhaps this is something AA Ireland Conference could consider for future debates on Motions to Conference. We have already, with great success, adopted this type of practice during 2021/22 with the use of the 4 x Sub-Committees we appointed to discuss, debate and arrive at recommendations which were then put to full Conference for decision.

21st European Service Meeting

22nd – 24th October 2021

Theme: *Love and Service*

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. It represents an expression of the Group Conscience throughout Europe. The European Service Meeting encourages the planning of the sound structures 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 (extract from the Statement of Purpose).

Summary

Due to the ongoing Covid-19 Pandemic after consultation with all Delegates it was decided that the 21st European Service Meeting (ESM) should be held for the first time virtually in Zoom in 2021. The European Information Centre at York issued invitations to European Service Offices and as the meeting was held online Observers were also able to attend.

The ESM was excellently run from York, and it was a privilege and honour to represent Ireland. There were very moving opening and closing sessions and presentations with pertinent themes such as 'Adapting & Adjusting to the Pandemic'. There were almost thirty countries represented from all over with two Delegates from most. We all presented our respective Country Reports which offer a valuable insight into how AA is evolving in European countries and particularly how they are responding to the Pandemic. Some countries have had AA Meetings and Structures for as long as Ireland while others have only commenced recently. Listed below are the countries which attended this 21st ESM.

Austria

Belarus

Belgium (Flemish Speaking)

Bulgaria

Croatia

Czech Republic

Denmark

Finland

**French Speaking Europe –
(France, Belgium, Switzerland)**

Germany

Great Britain

Ireland

Italy

Latvia

Lithuania

Netherlands

Norway

Poland

Portugal

Romania

Russia

Slovakia

Slovenia

Greece
Hungary
Iceland

Sweden
Turkey
Ukraine

There were also a number of Speakers and Observers from US and Canada who were up in the middle of the night to attend and hear from Europe and offer their Experience, Strength and Hope. Almost 30 years sober, Bob W. the General Manger of the General Service Office in New York, gave a moving keynote address on *Love and Service* and said that it is 'incumbent upon all of us here, to do our part to participate in the World Service to Alcoholics Anonymous. This European Service Meeting, and certainly all of us individually, can take an active role to carry out ideas and plans generated from our zonal and World Service Meetings. As leaders in service, it is my hope that as we participate here this weekend, we keep those in mind who are not here'.

Publications and Literature

David Rosen, the Publications Director from GSO US/Canada reported that there has been a huge increase in online literature sales because of the Pandemic. This was already happening but has been accentuated and there has consequently been an increase in expressed interest in digital formats (PDFs, eBooks. Audiobooks among them). There are consequently literature shortages globally partially due to paper shortages and delivery issues. The 5th Edition of the Big Book will take two or three years to complete, and the stories will change. There is a 4th Edition of the Spanish version of the Big Book. Many new licenses including those for electronic exchanges have been granted to countries such as counties in German, French, Denmark, Iceland and Ireland. Licenses for new literature have been provided for multiple countries.

At the closing meeting on Saturday and the surplus of the ESM fund was discussed. It was agreed by a simple majority that €25,000 be transferred to the International Literature Fund.

Committee Meetings

On Friday afternoon and Saturday, the Committees and Workshops went into action, with Delegates sharing their wide and varied experiences as it applied to their individual structures. Each Committee and Workshop Chair reported back on the discussions held within their meetings to the full meeting on Saturday afternoon (Committees) and Sunday morning (Workshops). All the Committee Reports were approved unanimously.

Appendix 5

We broke down into three Committees to discuss *An Unchanged Message in a Changing World* under the Themes ***Service, Recovery and Unity***:

Service

The Service Committee Meeting was composed of Ireland, Ukraine, Belarus, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Lithuania, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Russia, Denmark, Iceland and Italy.

We addressed:

- The process of translation in our countries and staying true to the originals.
- How we decide on the price of literature. Lots of variety here. In Ireland our literature makes up about 20% of our income whereas in Ukraine it is 80%
- Co-operation with Professional and participation in events was discussed. Countries were interested in the evolution of the Irish CPC PI Committee and the local PI Information Pack.

Recovery

Most countries opened online meetings during lockdown when face-to-face meetings were forced to close. In some countries the number of online meetings were now higher than face-to-face meetings and in addition the attendance at these online meetings was greater than previous physical meetings.

- Some countries have not agreed that online meetings fit into Structure of AA.
- Some interesting new online Service Positions have been created Troll Patrol, Wash-up (stay behind to help) and Meeting Etiquette.
- Ways to encourage new members such as asking for their help in technical matters, translating literature for young people, using online for PI Schools.

Unity

Country Delegates shared the challenges of maintaining unity with the proliferation of online groups. All countries reported significant challenges but that was balanced with the realisation of the opportunities and possibilities that online platforms offered. The perceived challenges included fear of the unknown, such as adapting to new technology, dealing with difficult behaviour online and questions of how meetings and groups would integrate into the structure and receive tradition 7 contributions.

Workshops

We broke into three groups for these Workshops. Responses arising from discussions included:

Allowing group conscience to guide our service work

- It is a hard process and takes a long time.

Appendix 5

- It is a two-way process from the Structure to the Fellowship, and from the Fellowship to the Structure.
- Be well-informed with Service Manuals, Workshops on Steps, Traditions, and Concepts.
- We know we have a Higher Power to guide us.

Spiritual freedom

- Unity across the Fellowship with helping each other locally and nationally during the Pandemic.
- Freedom to change and adapt.
- Personal religious views are not forced on members.

How to make the newcomer part of the group

- The newcomer is the most important person.
- Make them feel safe, welcome, and part of group.
- Encourage them to come back.
- Sponsorship advice/ You are not alone.

The Full Report available from GSO upon request.

In Love and Service, Moira S.

**64th All Ireland Convention Report
Via Zoom Clayton Hotel, Sligo
23rd-25th April 2021**

2021 was Connaught Intergroups year to host the 64th All Ireland Convention and though they were looking forward to doing this, they would be doing it in extraordinary times due to the Covid 19 Pandemic. Their planning began in July 2020 at the venue chosen, The Clayton Hotel Sligo and the dates of April 23rd-25th were picked and the Convention theme "A New Freedom". The four GSCDs Connaught were present at the first meeting and other members of CIG that were interested in being on the Convention Committee. In the absence of a Connaught Trustee at this time, Marilyn K. was elected as Chairperson and the core Committee members were the following: James O'S., Joe B., Sean C., John G. and Monica McE. Other members were drafted on to the Committee over the course of the following months.

From the outset, planning was for a live Convention, though the Committee were aware that because of the Covid 19 situation, plans may have to change at short notice. Viewing of the hotel, meeting with the hotel manager and discussion of what was expected of the hotel for the Convention weekend were all gone into. The Convention programme was also discussed in detail as well as the design of the Convention poster. All Anon were invited to participate. Planning progressed well with duties and responsibilities given to members. In 2021, correspondence was received from the Clayton Hotel, and this outlined how the hotel could see it managing its business at the time of the Convention due to restrictions and lockdowns. There would have to be a cap put on the number of members attending meetings, there would be no entertainment allowed, no socialising around the hotel/foyer areas. This information received was discussed at the next Committee meeting and it was agreed that what the hotel had communicated to the Committee about the management of hotel business would have a great impact on the holding of a live Convention. It was decided to email the GSBAA telling them of the situation that CIG found themselves in and could they give some guidance and direction, they also gave three recommendations that they felt were open to them, one of them to hold the Convention online.

In the reply back to the Committee, GSBAA stated that they did not have the authority to direct CIG further in their Convention planning, but that the issue would have to be discussed at the General Service Conference of Ireland by its members. However, if CIG wished to explore the possibility of holding the Convention online, then this could be done, and a proposal forwarded for discussion at Conference.

It was decided to forward a proposal and a Sub-Committee was formed to examine in detail what technology, security etc. would be needed to hold the Convention online.

Appendix 6

The proposal was forwarded for mention at the General Service Conference of Ireland in March 2021. It was voted for in favour of unanimously and given its support by members of Conference.

So, the hard work began just six weeks out from the Convention date. In preparation, the Convention programme was looked at again and adjusted and amended. It was agreed to include Entertainment on the Saturday night where members would be invited to sing, dance, play a musical instrument. Security was discussed and the need for a coded number system to be put in place for all members partaking in the Convention. Members who had the experience and knowledge of online security were added to the Committee and this proved to be vital in the running of the Convention. Members from Groups in Ireland were invited to participate in the Marathon Meetings and there was a great response. Q&A sessions were held regularly online outlining the security measures that would be in place for members speaking and co-hosting at the Marathon Meetings. Guided Meditation meetings were added to the programme, the topics of the workshops decided, and the History of AA in Ireland included. The Convention poster was amended for posting online and IDs for the various events on the Convention programme. The PI Officer contacted various AA publications, Box 4-9-5, the Roadback magazine and radio stations and the media. Speakers for meetings were sourced and it was agreed that the Sunday Closing meeting would be an International Forum. Registration fee was set at €5. The platform chosen for online registration was iDonate, but this had to be taken down after the Leinster Trustee contacted iDonate querying who had authorised this and allowed the AA charity number be used. It was explained that the Convention treasurer had done this after agreement at a Committee Meeting. After it being brought to the Committees' attention, they admitted it was an oversight on their behalf and would ask for it to be taken down. This was done and iDonate was replaced by Njuko. It was decided to send out an e-registration badge to all those who registered. It was agreed to use the Clayton Hotel Sligo as a base for some of the Committee on the Convention weekend and that all of the accommodation and food bill would be included in the Convention expenses. Two Committee members remained in their homes in Galway. A Covid-19 Officer was appointed and a travel letter provided for those members who had to travel from another county. A Committee Rota was drawn up. Al Anon ran their Convention programme on the Saturday. On the Convention weekend, three meeting rooms were taken up by the Committee. One room was used for the guided Meditation Meetings. Members of the Committee being together worked very well, if there were any decisions to be made at short notice they could be done so collectively. Any figures given as attendance at meetings are "observations" as it was not possible to determine exact numbers due to the Convention being online. The Convention concluded with a sobriety countdown and two members sang "One Day at A Time".

Appendix 6

Registration total was 336 iDonate 64 and Njuko 272. There were 3,761 logins by members over the weekend. A total of 294 members gave service for the weekend. CIG had got a loan of €7,000 for the Convention at the beginning of planning. The Convention ran at a loss of €1,038.25 and CIG agreed to cover this deficit.

To conclude, the Convention was a great success and feedback afterwards was very positive. The Committee were dedicated and hardworking and from once the Convention was changed to online, they wanted it to match a live one and were confident that this could be achieved. Without the Committee members James O'S., Mossie O'M. and Sean C., the Convention would not have been able to take place. They had the technology knowledge required. Mossie O'M. and his team did trojan work for the weekend on security. A huge thank you to all the members that attended meetings from Ireland and abroad. It was fantastic to hear from members all over the world and the bringing together of the Fellowship. All of what the Committee set out to do was done except for the e-badges not being sent out to the members who registered, because of the ill health of a Committee Member.

I would like to thank all of the Committee for their support to me in my role as Chairperson. It was a pleasure to work with them and an honour to be Chairperson of the Convention Committee. They would gladly share their experience in holding an All-Ireland Convention online with any other IG.

Marilyn K Chairperson All Ireland Convention Committee 2021

FRIDAY

- MEDITATION MEETINGS 40
- HISTORY OF AA 50
- ROADBACK WORKSHOP 25
- OPM 300

SATURDAY

- MEDITATION MEETINGS 85
- MEET THE BOARD 60
- HISTORY OF AA 50
- SERVICE WORKSHOP/PI 25
- WORKSHOP GETTING SOBER THROUGH ZOOM DURING COVID 60
- ENTERTAINMENT 200

Appendix 6

SUNDAY

- MEDITATION MEETING 20
- HISTORY OF AA 20
- CLOSING MEETING 165

MARATHON MEETINGS THROUGHOUT THE WEEKEND 300 attendees.

Above attendee numbers are "observations". There were 3,761 logins at meetings over the weekend. However, a proportion of this number would have logged out again.

All Ireland Convention 2021 April 23rd to 25th Treasurers Report Zoom. Clayton Hotel Sligo.

Date	Transaction	Money In	Money Out	Balance
04/10/20	Loan from Connaught Intergroup			€7,000.00
18/11/20	Cheque book		€25.00	€6,975.00
27/01/21	Gov stamp duty		0.12	€6,974.88
26/03/21	Gov Stamp Duty		0.12	€6,974.76
12/04/21	Idonate Fees €11	€52.53		€7,027.29
13/04/21	Zoom update (M)		€107.00	€6,920.29
25/04/21	Clayton Hotel Bill		€2,870.50	€4,049.79
04/05/21	Zoom Update (J)		€96.00	€3,953.79
04/05/21	Middle of the bed (P)		€100.00	€3,853.79
10/05/21	Idonate Fees €44	€694.96		€4,548.75
12/05/21	Petrol exp +Ribb. (J)		€200.00	€4,348.75
12/05/21	Njuko	€1,613.00		€5,961.75
18/05/21	Totals	€2,360.49	€3,398.74	€5,961.75 Bal.

Convention ran at a loss of €1038.25

Convention Treasurer: John G.

Preamble

Conference March 2022
AA Preamble

item 1



Memo

To: General Service Conference
From: Josh Eggleston, A.A. Grapevine Board Chair
Re: Preamble Revision
Date: May 24, 2021

Dear Conference Members:

Several people have asked when the revised Preamble will be seen in print. In keeping with the final advisory action of the 71st General Service Conference, the A.A. Preamble revision replacing the words "men and women" with "people" will appear in the July issue of Grapevine, and its translation will be in the July/August issue of La Viña. Both of these issues will be mailed, and posted online, on June 15, 2021. After June 15, as new Grapevine, La Viña and A.A.W.S. literature or reprints go to press, and as web pages are updated, the language will change wherever the A.A. Preamble appears.

The June issue of Grapevine was on press when the Conference requested the change, so this is the first opportunity to make the adjustment in the magazines.

We've also received a number of inquiries about whether this negatively impacts the editorial independence of Grapevine. Please remember that the Grapevine Board, Publisher and Editors discussed this topic for an entire year over a series of board meetings. Ultimately it was agreed that Grapevine has the right of decision and foundational editorial independence. We felt that such a change would affect the groups as a whole and in keeping with Tradition 4, we sought the input from those it might affect by sending the discussion to the General Service Conference.

Appendix 7

The topic was actively discussed in groups across the United States and Canada for two years over both the 70th and 71st General Service conference panels. As a result of those conversations the Delegates of the General Service Conference passed a series of votes, in a sequence of events that culminated with the final advisory action requesting:

"The Preamble revision replacing the words "men and women" with the word "people" be presented to the General Service Board for approval as the new revised A.A. Preamble.

Having been accepted by the General Service Board and forward to Grapevine for fulfilment, the Publisher and editorial staff at A.A. Grapevine went to work to carry out the will of the Conference with love and service.

I hope you are all having a wonderful experience reporting out the results of the 71st General Service Conference and thank each of you so very much for your dedicated service.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Eggleston', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Josh Eggleston
General Service Trustee
A.A. Grapevine Board Chair

Response from AA Grapevine

From: Christopher Cavanaugh
Date: Monday 28 June 2021 at 11:39
To: leinstertrustee <leinstertrustee@alcoholicsanonymous.ie>

Subject: Preamble change

item 2

Dear Emmet:

Yes, the Preamble is changing here in the US and Canada.

Here's some background concerning the updated AA Preamble, please keep in mind that the Grapevine Board, publisher and editors discussed this topic for an entire year over a series of board meetings. Ultimately we agreed that Grapevine has the right of decision and foundational editorial independence. Even so, we felt that such a change would affect the groups as a whole and in keeping with Tradition Four, we sought input from those it might affect by sending the discussion to the General Service Conference.

The topic was actively discussed in groups across the United States and Canada for two years over both the 70th and 71st General Service conference panels. As a result of those conversations the Delegates of the General Service Conference passed a series of votes, in a sequence of events that culminated with the final advisory action requesting:

"The Preamble revision replacing the words 'men and women' with the word 'people' be presented to the General Service Board for approval as the new revised A.A. Preamble."

Having been accepted by the General Service Board and forwarded to Grapevine for fulfillment, the publisher and editorial staff at A.A. Grapevine went to work to carry out the Conference action.

This is the group conscience of the US and Canada, as expressed by our Conference. Other countries will have to form their own group conscience about the change.

Chris Cavanaugh
Acting Publisher, AA Grapevine, Inc.

From
Sen:
To:
Cc:
Subject:

Response from AA Great Britain

From: leinstertrustee <leinstertrustee@alcoholicsanonymous.ie>
Sent: Thursday, July 8, 2021 6:10:41 PM
To: AA Great Britain
Subject: Re: Changes to preamble

Hi Clive,
That's great to know. It's a very similar view to what we have.

Thanks for such a speedy reply.
Emmet

item 5

Hi Emmet thanks for your email regarding the above. There are no plans for AAGB to change the preamble in any way. Conference may want to do so in the future. This would however need to be authorised by a substantial unanimity or two thirds majority vote at least.

While some groups may exercise their autonomy by using the modernist version, this is not the current policy of AAGB.

I hope this helps and that you're keeping well.

Love in Fellowship.

Clive

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: leinstertrustee <leinstertrustee@alcoholicsanonymous.ie>
Sent: Thursday, July 8, 2021 15:34
To: AA Great Britain
Subject: ~~Changes to preamble~~

Hi Clive,
Have you any idea what the plan in the UK is for the changes that were approved in USA/Canada to change men & women to people?

item 4

item 3

**ROLL CALL AND MINUTES
OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE
GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2022**

**Online
15th July 2022**

1. Opening of Conference by Chairperson

Breda F. (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. Breda F. read from page 48 of the General Service Handbook 'Why Do We Need a Conference?'

Breda then ran through some housekeeping items about how the meeting should proceed and following this, she asked Anthony McN to perform the roll call.

2. Roll Call

Connaught		Munster	
Trustee	Rory H.	Trustee	Martin C.
Delegate	Joe B.	Delegate	John T.
Delegate	Marilyn K.	Delegate	Michael McG.
Delegate	Hubert J.	Delegate	Thomas K.
		Delegate	David E
IG Secretary	Monica McE.	IG Secretary	Audrey McD.
Leinster		Ulster	
Trustee	Emmet O'H.	Trustee	Seamus B. (Incoming)
Delegate	Philip McG.	Delegate	John McC.
Delegate	Robbie McM.	Delegate	Billy I.
Delegate	Barbara A.	Delegate	Brian G.
Delegate	Deirdre S.	Delegate	Kenny P.
IG Secretary	Andy D.	IG Secretary	James McK.
Other		Observers	
Board Secretary	Anthony McN.		
WSD's	Tom D Moiria S.		
Non-AA Member Director/Trustee	Liz Cullen		
Non-AA Member Director/Trustee	Cindy O'Shea		
Chairperson	Breda F.		

See Appendix 1 for Agenda.

3. Procedure

Breda then asked Anthony to give an introduction to the sole item on the agenda. Anthony then gave a description of the proposed document, the thinking behind it, the reasons for it. The document was intended to be preventative, not punitive. It was to be used to outline to delegates what is expected of them. He told the meeting that this was a draft document, a starting point. It was up to conference to decide on a final document.

4. Discussion on Proposal regarding behaviour/conduct of Conference Members (Appendix 2)

A lengthy discussion followed. Here are some of the points/views raised:

Philip McG (Leinster) :- Had read the document. It's particularly positive. It reminds us of our responsibilities. Would have no issue in signing it.

Marilyn K (Connaught) :- Questioned who drafted the document. Anthony responded that it was drafted by the board in conjunction with an external consultant. Marilyn felt that the document was punitive. There was no need for it.

Tom K (Munster) :- Asked what would happen if someone refused, or doesn't, sign the document.

Audrey McD (Munster) :- Bill W and Dr. Bob would be turning in their graves. This document breaks numerous Traditions.

Michael McG (Munster) :- It's good to have heated discussions at Conference. That's a healthy thing. There's a hint of the document being punitive. All Conference members are trusted servants.

Robbie McG (Leinster) :- Has no problem signing it. It's a good and purposeful document.

Barbara A (Leinster) :- Agreed with everything said so far. We are all trusted servants, who have come through the Structure. However, she feels that this document refers to us more in our positions as company members. We have obligations as such, as part of a charity. This document can be changed, if necessary, in the future. Future conference delegates will understand their responsibilities in advance of taking up the role.

Brian G (Ulster) :- No chance of this document being finalised today. However, there will be paragraphs that everyone can agree on. We should concentrate on those, drop what we can't agree on today, then come back another day to try to reach agreement on those sections.

Tom K (Munster) :- There is some very practical stuff in the document which nobody could disagree with. Agreed with Brian's proposal to go through the document paragraph by paragraph.

Hubert J (Connaught) :- The founding fathers and those who came after them gave us a tremendous framework for protecting AA

Andy D (Leinster) :- Thanked the Board for all of their hard work. He had an issue with an email sent by Hubert, the previous day, to most members of conference, sent from a private email address. This email should not have been sent. Andy felt that the proposed document needs a little bit of work, but that it was almost there. He would be supporting it.

Billy I (Ulster) :- Had difficulty with the confidentiality section of the document. His job as a conference delegate is to keep members informed about what is going on. He also questioned the voting requirement contained in the document. He felt that this meeting should have been a physical meeting rather than online.

Hubert J (Connaught) :- Apologised for sending the email the previous day. He had difficulty with his AA email account. He had identified 60 offences or transgressions in the document. He had a problem with practically everything in the document, it was badly prepared and it was atrocious. We can't introduce a code of conduct for legislation which may or may not be coming down the line.

Moira S (WSD) :- This is just the start. We need to go through each sentence and get the wording correct. It can be changed again in the future if needed. 3 or 4 serious incidents of misconduct have occurred over the last few years which has prompted the Board to bring forward this document.

James McK (Ulster) :- Agreed with Moira. It's obvious that there is a problem. Let's deal with positive solutions.

Philip McG (Leinster) :- The ethos of this document is common courtesy, behaviour and fulfilling the positions we hold in the Fellowship, to the best of our ability. He had no issue with the document.

Tom D (WSD) :- There is a problem with perception with this document. It needs to be reworded and the wording changed. He has never had an experience at Conference where he felt intimidated or abused.

Cindy (NAT) :- Feels that there is a general consensus that the Code of Conduct is necessary. We have an obligation to protect staff members, members of Conference, and the Board from inappropriate behaviours, which have happened quite a lot over recent years. We have an obligation to protect staff, members of conference and others from inappropriate behaviour, which there has been a lot of over recent years. It's in the minority but it does happen. Different people will have different ideas about what constitutes inappropriate behaviour. This document will give clearer guidance on that.

Moira (WSD) :- Agreed with Cindy that inappropriate behaviour is in the minority but it is still happening and we need to find a way to deal with it. Possibly have a physical workshop to break into groups, to break down the document line by line and see where we can reach agreement.

John T (Munster) :- Members in his areas are concerned about unity and endorsed Moira's suggestion for a workshop.

Emmet O'H (Leinster) :- There is currently nothing in our handbook to deal with inappropriate behaviour. Emmet gave an example whereby a treasurer could misappropriate funds, be charged by the Gardai but remain in place as treasurer as there is currently no mechanism for him to be removed. The board would like for Conference to make decisions on this rather than the board make those decisions.

Rory H (Connaught) :- Feels that AA is changing, Conference delegates are behaving differently than in the past. He questioned why former Delegates/Trustees were attending Intergroup meetings, exerting influence, when they shouldn't.

Seamus B (Ulster) :- We need to protect ourselves and others. This document is not punitive, it's meant to be protective. What we are really looking for is for Conference members to have respect for others.

Joe B (Connaught) :- If there is to be further discussions it should be done by all Conference members, not a subcommittee.

Martin C (Munster) :- Delighted with the open discussion – let's consider our next course of action.

It was then agreed by consensus that Conference would hold a physical meeting, as early as was practicable, in order that all members of Conference could go through the document line by line and try to reach agreement on the wording. It was also agreed that the Board Secretary would distribute, to all Conference members, a copy of the Charities Regulator's Governance Code. This should be distributed in advance of the proposed Conference meeting.

The meeting ended with the Serenity Prayer.



DRAFT AGENDA

General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous in Ireland

Friday, 15th July 2022

Online via Zoom Platform

Friday 15th July 2022 8.00pm – 10.00pm

1	Opening of Conference by Chairperson	8.00pm - 8.05pm
2	Roll Call	8.05pm – 8.10pm
3	Procedure	8.10pm – 8.15pm
4	Discussion on proposal regarding behaviour/conduct of Conference members	8.20pm – 9.30pm
5	Close Conference	9.30pm – 9.45pm

Code of Conduct for General Service Conference

Purpose

The purpose of this code is to set out for members of the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous (Ireland) the conduct that is expected of them as nominated/appointed/elected members of Conference. Incoming members are required to sign the Code acknowledging their obligations on being nominated/appointed/elected and all members are encouraged to read the Code from time to time to remind themselves of the commitments they have made.

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.

General Conduct

- I understand my role and duties as a Member of Conference as set out in the Service Handbook.
- I understand that the primary objective of Conference is Third Legacy Service and the operation in principle of the Twelve Traditions.
- I will uphold the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions which are central to the mission of Alcoholics Anonymous and to helping our fellow alcoholics to recover.
- I will ensure to the best of my ability that everything done by Conference will stand the test of ethics and scrutiny by all relevant stakeholders especially members of the AA Fellowship, staff, service providers and the general public.
- I will act in what I consider to be the best interests of Alcoholics Anonymous at all times.
- I will act honestly and with integrity and trustworthiness when dealing with colleagues within Alcoholics Anonymous and equally when dealing with individuals and organisations outside it.
- I will strive to uphold the reputation of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Independence, Confidentiality and Judgement

- I will abide by Alcoholics Anonymous conflict of interest and conflict of loyalties policy and ensure that my interests are declared and updated as required.
- I will declare any conflict of interest, or any circumstance that might be perceived as such by others, as soon as it arises and I will absent myself from any discussion on any matter where a conflict of interest may arise.
- I will exercise independent judgement on all matters coming before Conference and will encourage my fellow members to seek professional advice on matters on which we do not have relevant expertise.
- I will respect the confidentiality of discussions that take place at Conference and with my fellow Conference Members.
- I will not put myself under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence me in the performance of my duties.
- I will not gain materially or financially from my role as a Member of Conference, beyond seeking reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses, nor will I seek to gain benefits for any persons connected to me such as my family, friends, or any organisation that I own, manage or work for.
- I will submit claims, if any, for out-of-pocket expenses only in accordance with agreed procedures.

Attendance, Participation and Development

- I will dedicate adequate time and commitment to fulfil my role as a Member of Conference, prepare adequately for meetings and participate in committees and special events when required.
- I will strive to attend all Conference meetings (and other relevant meetings) punctually giving apologies ahead of time to the Board Secretary if unable to attend. I note that Article 6.3.1 of the Service Handbook states that any Delegate who is absent from two consecutive Annual Meetings of Conference renders him or herself ineligible and automatically retires from Conference.
- I will study the agenda and other information sent to me prior to the meeting and be prepared to engage in debate, and if necessary vote, on agenda items during the meeting.
- I will respect the authority of the Chairperson.
- I will accept a majority Conference vote on an issue as decisive and final.

Appendix 2

- I will strive to establish open, respectful, supportive and courteous relationships with all those with whom I come into contact in my role as a member of Conference and to cultivate a positive atmosphere at meetings.
- I will bring a fair and open-minded view to all discussions, maintain a respectful balance between speaking and listening, treating different views and experiences with respect, and ensuring that all decisions are made in the best interests of Alcoholics Anonymous.
- I will participate in induction, training and development activities for Conference members and in processes to evaluate and improve the performance of Conference as a support to the Fellowship.
- I will strive to attend Area and Intergroup meetings in my area in order to become familiar with the issues and problems experienced by those Groups and offer support to find solutions within AA traditions.
- I will strive to act with tolerance, humility, patience and forbearance in my dealings with colleagues throughout the Fellowship Relationship with Employees
- I will support employees in carrying out their duties and serve as an example of how everyone associated with Alcoholics Anonymous should conduct themselves.
- I will work considerately and fairly with everyone in a way that respects diversity, different roles and boundaries and avoids giving offence.
- I will recognise and respect the difference in roles between the Conference, the General Services Board and employees, respect management arrangements and avoid any actions that might undermine such arrangements, and not interfere in the performance by employees of their duties.

Legal Requirements and Policies

- I will uphold the law in all aspects of my role as a member of the General Services Conference and will do everything in my power to ensure Alcoholics Anonymous complies with all relevant legislation.
- I will act in accordance with Alcoholics Anonymous Service Handbook and ensure that AA complies with all applicable laws including charity law, company law, data protection law and employment law.
- I will abide by any equality, diversity, safeguarding, health and safety, bullying and harassment policies and any other policies agreed by Conference.

Resignation and Termination of Appointment

- Should any member express concern that my behaviour is not consistent with the standards set out in this Code (such concerns to be communicated to the Board Secretary), I accept that I will be expected to meet with representatives delegated by Conference to discuss my suitability for and interest in the role.
- I understand that, should those representatives conclude that my behaviour constitutes a substantial breach and/or consistent breaches of this Code, this may result in my being requested to resign from Conference or a recommendation being brought to Conference seeking my removal.
- Should I decide to resign from Conference, I will inform the Board Secretary in advance in writing, stating my reasons for resigning.
- Should Conference accept a recommendation to remove me I acknowledge that I have the right to appeal such decision.

Signed _____

Name _____

Date _____

The Conference representatives will include three people drawn from a panel of six former Trustees approved by Conference. Should it be necessary to assemble three representatives, the Provincial Trustee from the province of the member in question along with the Board Secretary will select three representatives from this panel who will be charged with discussing the member's interest in and suitability for the role and concluding whether the member's behaviour constitutes a substantial breach and/or consistent breaches of this Code.

**ROLL CALL AND MINUTES
OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE
GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2022**

**Tullamore Court Hotel
Co. Offaly**

16th October 2022

1. Opening of Conference

The Chairperson, Breda F, opened conference, and read the reasons why we have a Conference.

The Secretary to the Board, Anthony M performed a role call:

2. Roll Call

Connaught		Munster	
Trustee		Trustee	Martin C.
Delegate	Joe B.	Delegate	John T.
Delegate	Marilyn K.	Delegate	Michael D..
Delegate	Hubert J.	Delegate	Thomas K.
Delegate	Sean C.	Delegate	David E
IG Secretary	Enda H. Alternate	IG Secretary	Audrey McD.
Leinster		Ulster	
Trustee	Emmet O'H.	Trustee	Seamus B.
Delegate	Philip McG.	Delegate	John McC.
Delegate	Robbie McM.	Delegate	Joanne M. Alternate
Delegate	Barbara A.	Delegate	Brian D.
Delegate	Deirdre S.	Delegate	Brian G.
IG Secretary		IG Secretary	James McK.
Other		Observers	
Board Secretary	Anthony McN.		
WSD's	Moira S.		
Non-AA Member Director/Trustee	Liz Cullen		
Chairperson	Breda F.		

Connaught: Maryln K, Sean C, Joe B, Hubert J, Enda H (Alternate)

Leinster:

Munster:

Ulster: Joanne M (alternate) for Billy ?)

Apologies: Andy D (Leinster), Cindy O Shea & Tom D (WSD)

See Appendix 1 for Agenda

3. Procedure

The Board secretary explained that we would break into four working groups – Table A, B, C & D

After several questions it was clarified that:

Members of Conference are also Members of the Company.

Member of the company do have oversight into the finances of the company.

The Board had asked Breda F to Chair the meeting due to her knowledge of the fellowship and her ability to remain impartial.

The Board secretary explained, that currently under company law, the board could remove a company member itself, however they felt while this is legally possible, it is not something that it wished to pursue. It would prefer if conference could determine a code that members could follow.

It would be the intention that this process would help inform members as to what is appropriate and what is not appropriate behaviour.

The draft code of conduct document was produced under guidance from GSBAA by Gerry Egan who has worked with GSBAA for many years.

He also clarified that there are significant changes within the Charities Bill 2022.

Joe B wished to address to conference. Hubert made proposal that Joe would be allowed to address conference. The board secretary reminded Joe that as per a conference decision, no new material could be introduced to conference other than mater that had been submitted in advance and was on the agreed agenda.

The Chair called for a vote on this. A vote was taken, and the majority of conference decided not to permit Joe to proceed with his presentation.

4. Break Out into Table Discussions

Conference continued with the following members in each break out group:

Table A - Members

Marin C, Marilyn K, Enda H, Deirdre S, Thomas K, John McC

Table B - Members

Emmet O H, Sean C, Joanne M, Audrey D, Robbie McM, Michael D

Table C - Members

Seamus B, Hubert J, Liz C, Philip McG, John T, Brian D,

Table D - Members

Moirá S, Joe B, James McK, Barbara A, David Roger E

Breda pulled groups & topics that each table will discuss from a hat, in the following order:

Table A: General Conduct

Table B: Relationship with Employees, Members & Volunteers
& Legal Requirements and Policies

Table C: Independence, Confidentiality and Judgement

Table D: Attendance, Participation and Development

Each of the four groups then gathered to discuss their topics.

It was clarified that when all of the groups have concluded their discussions, conference will then listen to all recommendations, then will then discuss and vote on each area.

During the morning, the board Secretary, Anthony McN had to leave for a family emergency. Emmet OH stood in as a stand in in his absence.

For each of the four topics, they were presented to conference, discussed and the following wording was agreed by all:

Suggested Guidelines for Personal Conduct and Appropriate Behaviour for members of the General Service Conference

Purpose

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Preamble

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General Conduct

- I understand my role and duties as a Member of Conference as set out in the Service Handbook.

- I understand that the primary objective of Conference is Third Legacy Service and the operation in principle of the Twelve Traditions.
- I will uphold the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions which are central to the mission of Alcoholics Anonymous and to helping our fellow alcoholics to recover.
- I will ensure to the best of my ability that as a member of conference that I will strive at all times to act with integrity with all stakeholders.
- I will act in what I consider to be the best interests of Alcoholics Anonymous at all times.
- I will act honestly and with integrity and trustworthiness when dealing with colleagues within Alcoholics Anonymous and equally when dealing with individuals and organisations outside it.
- I will strive to uphold the reputation of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Independence, Confidentiality and Judgement

- I will declare any conflict of interest or any circumstance that might be perceived as such by others as soon as it arises, and I will exclude myself from any discussion on any matter where a conflict of interest may arise.
- I will respect the confidentiality of my fellow conference members in discussions that take place at Conference while retaining the freedom to report back to my Intergroup.
- I will submit claims, if any, for legitimate out-of-pocket expenses only in accordance with agreed procedures, nor will I seek to gain benefits for any persons connected to me such as my family, friends, or any organisation that I own, manage, or work for.

Attendance, Participation and Development

- I will dedicate adequate time and commitment to fulfil my role as a Member of Conference, prepare adequately for meetings and participate in committees and special events when required. I will study the agenda and other information sent to me prior to the meeting and be prepared to engage in debate, and if necessary, vote, on agenda items during the meeting.
- I will strive to attend all Conference meetings (and other relevant meetings) punctually giving apologies ahead of time to the Board Secretary if unable to attend. I note that the paragraph "Retiring Delegates" on page 49/50 (Service Handbook for Ireland 2022) states that "Any Delegate who is absent from two consecutive Annual Meetings of Conference renders him or herself ineligible and automatically retires from Conference."

- I will respect the authority of the Chairperson.
- I will accept a majority Conference vote on an issue as decisive at that time. As per Concept 5, we acknowledge the right of the minority to be heard.
- I will strive to establish open, respectful, supportive and courteous relationships with all those with whom I come into contact in my role as a member of Conference and to cultivate a positive atmosphere at meetings.
- I will strive to bring a fair and open-minded view to all discussions, maintain a respectful balance between speaking and listening, treating different views and experiences with respect, and ensuring that all decisions are made in the best interests of Alcoholics Anonymous. I will strive to act with tolerance, humility, patience, and forbearance in my dealings with colleagues throughout the Fellowship
- I will participate in induction, training, and development activities for Conference members and in processes to evaluate and improve the performance of Conference as a support to the Fellowship.
- I will attend Area and Intergroup meetings in my area in order to become familiar with the issues and problems experienced by those Groups and to offer support and encouragement to find solutions within AA Traditions where required.

Relationship with Employees, Members & Volunteers

- I strive to support employees in carrying out their duties and serve as an example of how everyone associated with Alcoholics Anonymous should conduct themselves.
- I strive to work considerately and fairly with everyone in a way that respects individuals, different roles and boundaries and avoids giving offence.
- I strive to recognise and respect the difference in roles between the Conference, the General Services Board, and employees, respecting the process of administrative duties of employees, members & volunteers, and not interfering with the performance by employees of their duties.

Legal Requirements and Policies

- I strive to uphold the law in all aspects of my role as a member of the General Services Conference.
- I strive to act in accordance with the guidelines of the Alcoholics Anonymous Service Handbook

Subsequent to this discussion each group had gathered its thoughts on the section, named "**Resignation and Termination of Appointment**"

Below find the proposals brought forward by each Table:

Table A's feedback

Resignation and Termination of Appointment

Remove all strikethrough text.

- ~~• Should any member express concern that my behaviour is not consistent with the standards set out in this Code (such concerns to be communicated to the Board Secretary), I accept that I will be expected to meet with representatives¹ delegated by Conference to discuss my suitability for and interest in the role.~~
- ~~• I understand that, should those representatives conclude that my behaviour constitutes a substantial breach and/or consistent breaches of this Code, this may result in my being requested to resign from Conference or a recommendation being brought to Conference seeking my removal.~~
- Should I decide to resign from Conference, I will inform the Board Secretary in advance in writing, stating my reasons for resigning.
- ~~• Should Conference accept a recommendation to remove me I acknowledge that I have the right to appeal such decision.~~

Footnote:

~~The Conference representatives will include three people drawn from a panel of six former Trustees approved by Conference. Should it be necessary to assemble three representatives, the Provincial Trustee from the province of the member in question along with the Board Secretary will select three representatives from this panel who will be charged with discussing the member's interest in and suitability for the role and concluding whether the member's behaviour constitutes a substantial breach and/or consistent breaches of this Code.~~

And replaced the *footnote* text with:

That any written complaint received by the board be returned to the relevant Intergroup to have deliberations and decisions on the matter.

They also felt that the signing of the document is unwarranted because the expected behaviour of GCSD's needs to be outlined in our service handbook by a motion to conference.

Table B's feedback

The wording of our proposal is as follows; all other draft wording has been deleted as we felt it was unnecessary. Note, we believe that for cases of misconduct the panel should resolve the matter as trusted servants, we do not prescribe how they should do so. Finally, and most importantly, we do not believe that this document should be signed. As per the vote by Conference, the resulting document will be considered as suggested guidance (as per AA traditions) and therefore cannot be considered a contract.

Title should change to:

Members Conduct & Resolution

- Should there be concerns around the conduct of any member of General Service Conference, it expected that this be brought to the attention of the Board Secretary, in writing, and the member would be expected to meet with representatives delegated by conference.
- Should I decide to resign from Conference, I will inform the Board Secretary in advance in writing, stating my reasons for resigning.

They felt it was unnecessary to sign the document

Footnote text:

The Conference representatives will include three people drawn from a panel of six former Trustees approved by Conference. Should it be necessary to assemble three representatives, the Provincial Trustee from the province of the member in question along with the Board Secretary will select three representatives from this panel who will have responsibility for bringing the issue to resolution.

Table C's feedback

- Should a majority of conference express concern that my behaviour is not consistent with the standards set out in this Code (such concerns to be communicated to the Board Secretary), I accept that I will be expected to meet with representatives delegated by Conference to discuss my suitability for and interest in the role.
- I understand that, should those representatives conclude that my behaviour constitutes a substantial breach and/or consistent breaches of this Code, this

may result in my being requested to resign from Conference or a recommendation being brought to Conference seeking my removal.

- Should I decide to resign from Conference, I will inform the Board Secretary in advance in writing, stating my reasons for resigning.
- Should Conference accept a recommendation to remove me I acknowledge that I have the right to appeal such decision. **(To whom?)**

There was a discussion on the panel on whether or not it was in contravention of the constitution (section 50 page 23 of constitution)

Optics that former trustees if co-opted to a panel, they may be seen to be re-elected and that they may be an extension of the board may be seen as going against traditions in people's minds.

Table D's feedback

- I accept that as a member of Conference, I am also a member of the Company AA Ireland and as such strive to follow the above Suggested Guidelines. Therefore, should any member express concern that my behaviour is not consistent with these Guidelines (such concerns to be communicated to the Board Secretary), I accept that I will be expected to meet with representatives (1) delegated by Conference to discuss my commitment to the role for which I have been elected.
- I understand that these representatives may conclude that my behaviour constitutes a substantial breach and or consistent breaches of these guidelines that may result in my being invited to reconsider my role.
- Should I decide to resign from Conference, I will inform the Board Secretary in advance in writing, stating my reasons for resigning.
- The Conference representatives will include three people (a mixture of alcoholic and non-alcoholic) drawn from a panel of six former Trustees approved by Conference for the purposes of mediation and/or resolution.

Due to time constraints, a proposal was brought and after a vote, it was agreed by an overwhelming majority, that conference would meet again in the very short term to discuss the remaining points of this document. It was further agreed that the points made by each table would be distributed to each group for each member to digest before regrouping for a Zoom meeting with a view to concluding the discussion and document.

The Chair, Breda F, thanked everybody for making the day so productive and constructive.

Conference closed with the Serenity Prayer with thoughts to the family of Anthony McN.



DRAFT AGENDA

General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous in Ireland

Saturday 15th October 2022 @ 9.30am

in the

Tullamore Court Hotel

Saturday 15th October 2022 9.30am

1	Opening of Conference by Chairperson	9.30am – 9.40am
2	Roll Call	9.40am – 9.50am
3	Procedure	9.50am – 10.00am
4	Breakout into Discussion Tables	10.00am

**ROLL CALL AND MINUTES
OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE
GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE 2022**

**Online
8th December 2022**



AGENDA

General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous in Ireland

Thursday 8th December 2022 @ 8pm

Via Zoom

1	Opening of Conference by Chairperson	8.00pm – 8.05pm
2	Roll Call	8.05pm – 8.15pm
3	Procedure	8.15pm – 8.20mm
4	Breakout into Discussion Rooms re proposed document	8.20pm – 8.50pm
5	Conference discussion and vote on findings of sub committees	8.50pm
6	Close of Conference	

1. Opening of Conference by Chairperson

Breda F. (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. Breda F. read from page 48 of the General Service Handbook 'Why Do We Need a Conference?'

Breda then ran through some housekeeping items about how the meeting should proceed and following this, she asked Anthony McN to perform the roll call.

2. Roll Call

Connaught		Munster	
		Trustee	Martin C.
Delegate	Joe B.	Delegate	John T.
Delegate	Marilyn K.	Alt Delegate	Michael D
Delegate	Hubert J.	Delegate	Thomas K.
Delegate	Sean C	Delegate	David E
IG Secretary (Alternate)	Enda H		
Leinster		Ulster	
Trustee	Emmet O'H.	Trustee	Seamus B.
Delegate	Philip McG.	Delegate	John McC.
Delegate	Robbie McM.	Alt Delegate	Brian D
Delegate	Barbara A.	Delegate	Brian G.
Delegate	Deirdre S.	Alt Delegate	Joanne M
IG Secretary	Andy D.	IG Secretary	James McK.
Other		Observers	
Board Secretary	Anthony McN.		
WSD	Moira S.		
Non-AA Member Director/Trustee	Cindy O'Shea		
Chairperson	Breda F.		
Apologies	Elizabeth Cullen Non-AA Member Director/Trustee Tom D. WSD		

3. Procedure

Breda then asked Anthony to give an introduction to the sole item on the agenda. Anthony then gave a description of the proposed document, the thinking behind it, the reasons for it. The document was intended to be preventative, not punitive. It was to be used to outline to delegates what is expected of them. He told the meeting that this was a draft document, a starting point. It was up to conference to decide on a final document.

Anthony stated that the breakout tables would remain the same as the previous Conference, with a couple of minor changes. The breakout tables were expected discuss the agenda item for about 20/30 minutes, when everyone would return to try to finalise the wording.

*(Text already agreed (not for further discussion) is attached at Appendix 1)
(Text yet to be agreed is attached at Appendix 2)*

4. Breakout into Discussion Rooms re Proposed Document

The meeting then broke out to the various tables.

When the meeting reconvened, these were the findings of the various tables;

Table A :

Tom K presented the findings of table A. He said that the table didn't the document at all because someone on the table raised concerns. There was a good consensus (but not unanimous) that more discussion was required on the whole document. Answers previously received hadn't allayed concerns previously raised. There is a possibility that some Ulster Delegates may be dealing under a different law as they are resident in the UK. All changes to the Service Handbook should only come by a motion from a group. The Chairperson asked for clarification that the table hadn't discussed the topic that they were here to discuss, at all.

Tom confirmed that this was the case.

The Chairperson stated that the whole purpose of this meeting being held was to discuss the wording of the final section of the document and to try to reach agreement. She then stated that Table A has no contribution to make to that document as they had spent their allotted time discussing something else altogether. The Chairperson questioned the actions of Table A, that they had ignored what they were supposed to do.

Table B :

Joanne presented the findings of Table B. The conclusion of Table B is that they stand by their feedback with one amendment to the first bullet point. The table felt that the title of the section should change to "Members conduct and resolution", followed by * Should there be concerns around the conduct of any member of the General Service Conference, it is expected that this be brought to the attention of the Board secretary in writing. After consideration of the facts, should these concerns be found to be genuine, the member would be expected to meet with representatives delegated by Conference. These representatives will have responsibility for bringing the issue to resolution.

The rest of the original findings of Table B to remain the same.

Table C:

John T presented the findings of Table C. There was substantial unanimity but differences of opinion on how the Fellowship might view all of this document.

There was a strong feeling that a Conference Delegate represents an Intergroup and that any disciplinary process should be referred back to the Intergroup committee in the first instance. The decision making process should include a right to appeal, but by who? A lot more discussion is needed. If a panel is formed, it should include 2 Delegates and the Trustee from the Intergroup in question, as part of a 6 person panel. The Chairperson asked if the Table's wording was remaining the same or changing.

John replied that he wasn't sure that he could say that Table C were proposing changes, there was no clear consensus.

Philip clarified that Table C wished to retain most of what they had previously put forward but with the changes outlined by John. We have to know who the appeal would be made to.

Hubert was on Table C and wanted to make his position perfectly clear – any such process should be referred back to the relevant Intergroup committee. Any disciplinary goes against the Traditions, Concepts and Legacies. He questioned who decides if someone's behaviour is inappropriate.

Table D:

Moira presented the findings of Table D. The Table agreed that they were still happy with the original wording which they had put forward. They feel that they have come up with a pathway which isn't punitive, and which puts the member in question first. The Table felt that their language and content were appropriate.

Moira added that Table D agreed with Table B's proposed change of title to "Members Conduct & Resolution", and wished to support that proposed change to the document. She said that sending the matter to an Intergroup committee would be counterproductive.

The proposed panel should consist of 2 Trustees (alcoholic) and 1 non member Trustee. We need to be able to trust our Trustees and our Board.

There was one minority opinion on the Table, who was listened to, who felt that this document breached the Traditions.

The Table also agreed with not signing the document.

(Table feedback reports are attached at Appendix 3)

5. Conference discussion and vote on findings of sub committees

The Chairperson stated that after the tables had broken out, nothing much seemed to have changed. We were no closer to an agreement than we were at the start of the meeting.

A long discussion followed this about what should happen next. Moira suggested that we keep working until we find some common ground. Joe suggested that a subcommittee be formed to agree the wording. This subcommittee would consist of 2 members from each table.

There were suggestions from Joe and Hubert that this meeting was either a special meeting of Conference or a workshop, but it wasn't a meeting of Conference, so decisions couldn't be made.

The Board Secretary clarified that this was, in fact, a meeting of Conference, that that was clearly stated on the invitations distributed to all Conference members in advance of the meeting.

After further discussions, it was agreed to form a subcommittee consisting of

Tom D	Table A
Deirdre S	Table A
Joanne M	Table B
Michael D	Table B
John T	Table C
Hubert J	Table C
Moira S	Table D
Barbara A	Table D
Breda F	(Chairperson)
Anthony McN	(Secretary)

It was agreed by consensus that this meeting would be held via Zoom on Thursday 12th January @ 7.30pm. This committee would present their recommendations to the Conference meeting in March 2023.

6. Close of Conference

The meeting closed.

Suggested Guidelines for Personal Conduct and Appropriate Behaviour for members of the General Service Conference

Purpose

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- I will uphold the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions which are central to the mission of Alcoholics Anonymous and to helping our fellow alcoholics to recover.
- I will ensure to the best of my ability that as a member of conference that I will strive at all times to act with integrity with all stakeholders.
- I will act in what I consider to be the best interests of Alcoholics Anonymous at all times.
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Independence, Confidentiality and Judgement

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-

Appendix 1

□ I will respect the confidentiality of my fellow conference members in discussions that take place at Conference while retaining the freedom to report back to my Intergroup.

□ I will submit claims, if any, for legitimate out-of-pocket expenses only in accordance with agreed procedures, nor will I seek to gain benefits for any persons connected to me such as my family, friends, or any organisation that I own, manage, or work for.

Attendance, Participation and Development

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□ I will participate in induction, training, and development activities for Conference members and in processes to evaluate and improve the performance of Conference as a support to the Fellowship.

Appendix 1

□ I will attend Area and Intergroup meetings in my area in order to become familiar with the issues and problems experienced by those Groups and to offer support and encouragement to find solutions within AA Traditions where required.

Relationship with Employees, Members & Volunteers

□ I strive to support employees in carrying out their duties and serve as an example of how everyone associated with Alcoholics Anonymous should conduct themselves.

□ I strive to work considerately and fairly with everyone in a way that respects individuals, different roles and boundaries and avoids giving offence.

□ I strive to recognise and respect the difference in roles between the Conference, the General Services Board, and employees, respecting the process of administrative duties of employees, members & volunteers, and not interfering with the performance by employees of their duties.

Legal Requirements and Policies

□ I strive to uphold the law in all aspects of my role as a member of the General Services Conference.

□ I strive to act in accordance with the guidelines of the Alcoholics Anonymous Service Handbook

Text to be Finalised

The Following text was included in the original draft document, distributed prior to the Conference meeting, held on 15th October;

Resignation and Termination of Appointment

Should any member express concern that my behaviour is not consistent with the standards set out in this Code (such concerns to be communicated to the Board Secretary), I accept that I will be expected to meet with representatives¹ delegated by Conference to discuss my suitability for and interest in the role.

I understand that, should those representatives conclude that my behaviour constitutes a substantial breach and/or consistent breaches of this Code, this may result in my being requested to resign from Conference or a recommendation being brought to Conference seeking my removal.

Should I decide to resign from Conference, I will inform the Board Secretary in advance in writing, stating my reasons for resigning.

Should Conference accept a recommendation to remove me I acknowledge that I have the right to appeal such decision.

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

The Conference representatives will include three people drawn from a panel of six former Trustees approved by Conference. Should it be necessary to assemble three representatives, the Provincial Trustee from the province of the member in question along with the Board Secretary will select three representatives from this panel who will be charged with discussing the member's interest in and suitability for the role and concluding whether the member's behaviour constitutes a substantial breach and/or consistent breaches of this Code.

The following are the recommendations of the various discussion tables in relation to the above text;

Table A's feedback

Resignation and Termination of Appointment Remove

all strikethrough text.

- ~~Should any member express concern that my behaviour is not consistent with the standards set out in this Code (such concerns to be communicated to the Board Secretary), I accept that I will be expected to meet with representatives¹ delegated by Conference to discuss my suitability for and interest in the role.~~
- ~~I understand that, should those representatives conclude that my behaviour constitutes a substantial breach and/or consistent breaches of this Code, this may result in my being requested to resign from Conference or a recommendation being brought to Conference seeking my removal.~~
- Should I decide to resign from Conference, I will inform the Board Secretary in advance in writing, stating my reasons for resigning.
- ~~Should Conference accept a recommendation to remove me I acknowledge that I have the right to appeal such decision.~~

Footnote:

~~The Conference representatives will include three people drawn from a panel of six former Trustees approved by Conference. Should it be necessary to assemble three representatives, the Provincial Trustee from the province of the member in question along with the Board Secretary will select three representatives from this panel who will be charged with discussing the member's interest in and suitability for the role and concluding whether the member's behaviour constitutes a substantial breach and/or consistent breaches of this Code.~~

And replaced the footnote text with:

That any written complaint received by the board be returned to the relevant Intergroup to have deliberations and decisions on the matter.

They also felt that the signing of the document is unwarranted because the expected behaviour of GCSD's needs to be outlined in our service handbook by a motion to conference.

Table B's feedback

The wording of our proposal is as follows; all other draft wording has been deleted as we felt it was unnecessary. Note, we believe that for cases of misconduct the panel should resolve the matter as trusted servants, we do not prescribe how they should do so. Finally, and most importantly, we do not believe that this document should be signed. As per the vote by Conference, the resulting document will be considered as suggested guidance (as per AA traditions) and therefore cannot be considered a contract. Title should change to:

Members Conduct & Resolution

- Should there be concerns around the conduct of any member of General Service Conference, it expected that this be brought to the attention of the Board Secretary, in writing, and the member would be expected to meet with representatives delegated by conference.
- Should I decide to resign from Conference, I will inform the Board Secretary in advance in writing, stating my reasons for resigning. They felt it was unnecessary to sign the document Footnote text:

The Conference representatives will include three people drawn from a panel of six former Trustees approved by Conference. Should it be necessary to assemble three representatives, the Provincial Trustee from the province of the member in question along with the Board Secretary will select three representatives from this panel who will have responsibility for bringing the issue to resolution.

Table C's feedback

- Should a majority of conference express concern that my behaviour is not consistent with the standards set out in this Code (such concerns to be communicated to the Board Secretary), I accept that I will be expected to meet with representatives delegated by Conference to discuss my suitability for and interest in the role.
- I understand that, should those representatives conclude that my behaviour constitutes a substantial breach and/or consistent breaches of this Code, this may result in my being requested to resign from Conference or a recommendation being brought to Conference seeking my removal.
- Should I decide to resign from Conference, I will inform the Board Secretary in advance in writing, stating my reasons for resigning.
- Should Conference accept a recommendation to remove me I acknowledge that I have the right to appeal such decision. **(To whom?)**

Appendix 3

There was a discussion on the panel on whether or not it was in contravention of the constitution (section 50 page 23 of constitution)

Optics that former trustees if co-opted to a panel, they may be seen to be re-elected and that they may be an extension of the board may be seen as going against traditions in people's minds.

Table D's feedback

- I accept that as a member of Conference, I am also a member of the Company AA Ireland and as such strive to follow the above Suggested Guidelines. Therefore, should any member express concern that my behaviour is not consistent with these Guidelines (such concerns to be communicated to the Board Secretary), I accept that I will be expected to meet with representatives delegated by Conference to discuss my commitment to the role for which I have been elected
- I understand that these representatives may conclude that my behaviour constitutes a substantial breach and/or consistent breaches of these guidelines that may result in my being invited to reconsider my role
- Should I decide to resign from Conference, I will inform the Board Secretary, in advance in writing, stating my reasons for resigning.
- The Conference representatives will include three people (a mixture of alcoholic and non-alcoholic) drawn from a panel of six former trustees approved by Conference for the purposes of mediation and/or resolution.