



Chapter Two – Roles within the Club

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In Association with





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Chapter Two - Roles within the Club

1. Introduction

The GAA is a huge organisation with a wide range of activities run by voluntary workers. Voluntary effort is harnessed into action by means of committees. Committees have certain advantages:

- they give representation
- they provide group judgement, give collective decisions and accept collective responsibility
- they avoid personal bias
- they involve people and help to develop them as persons
- they stimulate people to think

Committees have disadvantages also:

- they can be slow, time-consuming and frustrating
- they are not good supervisors and decisions taken are not always followed up

Our Committees must be properly run. Otherwise we are wasting the most valuable resource we have - the spare time of voluntary workers. The effectiveness of the GAA depends on effective committees. To be effective, a Committee must have an effective Cathaoirleach.

2. Cathaoirleach

The Qualities of an Cathaoirleach

- An Cathaoirleach is a leader and a manager. He/She must have:
- Dedication - the G.A.A. and the Club must come high in his/her priorities
- Knowledge - He/She must prepare by knowing what the G.A.A. is all about. He/she must become familiar with An Treoraí Oifigiúil.
- Power of Persuasion - He/she is not a dictator. He/she must be able to motivate and handle people.
- Integrity - He/she is the symbol of the Club and has a good standing in the community.

We will not always get the ideal Cathaoirleach. We may even find it difficult sometimes to get one at all! But we should do our best to get someone.

- who has time to do the job
- who is a genuine interest in the Association and the necessary background knowledge
- who has a good standing in the community
- who has leadership qualities.

General Duties

The duties of an Cathaoirleach may be summed up as follows:



- To uphold the constitution of the Association. This of course means that he/she must know it thoroughly. He/she
- To act as Cathaoirleach at certain committee and other meetings.
- To strive continuously to improve the club; this involves full co-operation with the other office holders.
- To represent the club at various functions
- To act on behalf of the club in the interval between meetings.

Meetings

We will now move on to the role of the Cathaoirleach at meetings. This begins in advance of the meeting when an Cathaoirleach should prepare or obtain an agenda; certainly he/she should know what will be on the agenda for the meeting (very often he/she will draft the agenda with the Club Secretary). He/she will decide what the priorities of the meeting are with the intention of getting those matters finalised, leaving unimportant matters to be decided at a later date if necessary. He/she ensures to be at the venue of the meeting before the appointed time so that he/she and the Secretary can discuss the agenda.

The Cathaoirleach role at the meeting is by far the most important of his/her functions. Most of the essentials are referred to in the Club Manual.

The efficient transaction of committee business calls for set procedures. The extent to which these are put into force varies a good deal. Generally, the contributions of individual members are limited by rules which are interpreted and applied by the Cathaoirleach. These rules of procedure are designed to help keep order and to enable sound and acceptable decisions to be reached quickly and with least effort.

Broadly speaking, the rules of procedure will ensure:

- That, for practical purposes, the majority decision is the right one
- That at a committee meeting the majority vote will represent the committee's opinion
- That the minority will agree with the majority ruling

A Few Important Points:

The Cathaoirleach has more authority than any other member of the committee; An Cathaoirleach should ensure that the meeting is effective. He/she must guide but not lead.

- The responsibility for seeing that the meeting achieves its purpose rests with the Cathaoirleach. He/she must decide priorities to see that the important things are dealt with.
- He/she must keep to the point and see that others do likewise. He/she must not allow talkative members to dominate the meeting.
- He/she must close discussion on a subject when it has gone on long enough: summarise the points made and make sure that members understand the decision/s they are taking.
- He/she should see that all speakers address the Chair and do not engage in cross-talk with each other. This formality should be followed even at small committee meetings.
- He/she should be tolerant to reasonable interjections but prevent excess heckling.
- He/she should adopt a neutral attitude and remain impartial especially where a matter is contentious.



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Some Techniques of Chairmanship

The technique of handling groups of people comes with experience, though some of it can be acquired by training. An important technique of Chairmanship is the use of questions. Instead of making a statement beginning with "I think . . ." or "Yes but don't you see . . ." or "I don't agree with you", the skilled Cathaoirleach uses phrases such as "What do you think about . . ."? "Do you feel strongly . . ."? "Can we turn to this aspect . . .?" "Can we take point A first?" "Tom, can we hear your views?" Sometimes these questions will be directed to a whole group, sometimes to a particular individual. Searching questions from the Chair can uncover information, facts and opinions, call attention to problems or ideas or to another phase of the subject.

Another important technique is summarising e.g. "We have agreed to do . . .", "Our solution seems to be . . .", "We are still disagreeing about . . ."

Summaries can help a committee to confirm or modify their decisions; they help the Cathaoirleach to keep control and ascertain that he/she is interpreting views correctly, and the Secretary recording decisions accurately.

However, one could go on for a long time trying to cover all the situations that arise at meetings and, for example, discussing how to deal with difficult "challenging" characters one meets at meetings. The "Rambler" who talks about everything but the subject; The "Show-off" who loves to talk; The "Heckler" who is always on for an argument; The "Smart Alec" who tries to put you on the spot with tricky procedural questions; The "Silent" one says nothing until he get outside after the meeting; The "Obstinate" member who won't budge from his view; The perennial "Griper" who blames everybody else; The "Talker" who wants his own private meeting in a corner; The "Hogger" who wants to talk at length about everything, and so on.

One or Two Other Points

The Cathaoirleach of a GAA Club has an obligation to promote the use of Irish if he/she is able, though over-enthusiasm has its dangers also. An Cathaoirleach should at least use occasional phrases in Irish. An important guide for all GAA Club Officers is the Club Manual, every Officer should read it.

The post of Vice-Chairman should be regarded as a training post of a future Cathaoirleach. The Vice-Chairman should be given specific duties apart from the obvious one of taking the place of an absent Cathaoirleach, such as being nominated Cathaoirleach of a Sub-Committee.

3. An Leas Cathaoirleach

The position of Leas Cathaoirleach is usually filled to make up the numbers by somebody with no role or responsibilities assigned to them at an AGM. This should not be the case as this post holder should ideally be seen as the "Cathaoirleach in waiting".

A good Cathaoirleach will see the Leas Cathaoirleach as an able deputy and not just a convenient substitute. This post holder should be assigned to chair a high profile/busy subcommittee in order to gain as much experience of Club Administration as possible.



4. An Rúnaí

The post of Secretary is one of the vital links in any organisation and this is true of the GAA Secretary also. His/Her duties are many and varied and call for a high degree of dedication. These duties dovetail with those of the Cathaoirleach and it is essential that they work as a team of which the Secretary will very often be the more active one. The Secretary has more to do with the practical running of the Club than any other member; he/she must therefore be carefully chosen. He/she should be a good organiser, tidy and methodical, tactful and friendly and above all reliable.

A good Club Secretary means there is good management of administration of the Club. Club management is not an end in itself. Our job is to enable people to enjoy and play our games, to develop the games and to further the social and community aims of the Association. The level of administration should therefore be the minimum to achieve these aims.

The great difference in size and range of activities of Clubs, and between rural and urban areas make it impossible to impose standard methods; that would not be desirable in any event. Flexibility in the local situation is important. These notes may not always be relevant to your situation but the general principles will apply no matter what the size of your Club.

Even in amateur organisations, the members and the general public now demand professional standards of administration by voluntary officials.

- Meetings: Work before, during and arising out of meetings, including the Annual General Meeting.
- Records: Keeping records and files of Club activities, including membership
- Correspondence: Match notices, letters, filling in forms etc

Meetings

A Club should hold regular committee meetings even if at times there appears to be little to be done. Coming together may spark off some needed activity ! It is helpful to specify a night say, last Thursday of the month or Thursday of each week.

At the first Club meeting of the season, all should agree on a time and meetings should begin at that time. Punctuality is merely a habit. Meetings should also close formally so that everyone, including the Secretary, is quite clear when the business is concluded. Essential business should be transacted first. A good deal can usually be left over for the "chat" after the meeting. This enables those who want to leave to do so.

The secretary usually calls a meeting. If held weekly, no notices are necessary unless there is something special on the agenda. In that case, members should be told about it in advance so they can think it over. For monthly meetings, written notices with an agenda should be issued.

There should always be an agenda for a meeting, though not necessarily distributed to all members. Unless the members are very familiar with it, the Cathaoirleach should read the agenda; this prevents members raising matters at the wrong time.



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The Cathaoirleach and Secretary should meet before the meeting and go through the agenda. An agenda could be on the following lines:

- Minutes
- Matters Arising
- Correspondence (for letters, etc. not relevant elsewhere on the agenda)
- Report from County Committee or Divisional Committee
- Fixtures and Transport (to decide on ...regarding fixtures , to discussregarding transport)
- Finance
- Fund-Raising
- Other activities
- Other Business (only matters of minor importance to be dealt with here)

It is always helpful to members to give an indication of the exact business to be dealt with under common headings such as Fixtures, Finance and Transport etc. - this way members come to a meeting better prepared to participate. The Secretary must prepare the business for the meeting, i.e. get together any information that may be needed. He/She should also check back on the minutes of the last meeting to see that action has been taken as required. The Secretary should make all the physical arrangements for the meeting.

During the meeting, the Secretary must record the attendance of each member and apologies for absence. The Secretary takes a note of decisions reached. He/She should not try to write everything down, but should follow the sense of the discussion, listening for key points. If in doubt about decisions, the Secretary should ask for clarification. The Secretary may have to assist the Cathaoirleach in the conduct of the meeting and ideally both officers should work together to get the meeting over quickly.

One of the problem areas at GAA Club committee meetings is that of match reports as the games tend to be played all over again! This trend must be resisted but meetings should end in good time to enable "informal" discussion to take place afterwards.

After the meeting, the Secretary must write the minutes. This should be done as soon as possible. Usually minutes should only record what was dealt with and what decisions were taken. But sometimes the main points raised in a discussion may need to be recorded. Do not give a verbatim account. Minutes should be written in a proper Minute book.

The special requirements of the Club Annual General Meeting are dealt with in the Club Manual.

Records

The Club Secretary is responsible for keeping records of matches, venues, dates and winners. He/She should also arrange for membership records, unless there is a separate Membership Secretary. Simple files about various Club activities should be kept as all such items will be sought for the compilation of a Club History or a Centenary Year Book etc. A petty cash book is also necessary for recording payments of small cash amounts, i.e. postage, telephone calls, etc.



Correspondence

The Club Secretary will be the main link with the Divisional Board or County Committee. He/She should deal expeditiously with all correspondence, if necessary after consulting with the Cathaoirleach. He should use a well designed Club letter heading and keep copies of all important letters.

Úsáid na Gaeilge

Caithefear glacadh leis gurb é an Béarla an ghnátheanga ag formhór mór na mball agus gurb é fós an ghnáthmhéan cumarsáide sa Chumann. Ba é an aidhm cheart againn staid dháttheangach a thabairt ann, trí glacadh leis an nGaeilge ar ócáidí airthe agus méadú ortha san do réir a chéile. Ba cheart leis an nós a chothú cora cainte agus abairtí i nGaeilge d'úsáid ag cruinnithe. Ba cheart freisin Gaeilge a usáid ar chomharthaí, fógraí cruinnithe agus litreacha.

The Club Secretary, if he/she has a good knowledge of Irish, can do a great deal to promote it in simple ways, both oral and written. The booklet "An Sloinnteoir Gaeilge agus an t-Ainmneoir" is an essential booklet for the Club Secretary. A good source book for GAA terminology is the Report of the Commission on the GAA which was printed bilingually.

Treoraí Oifigiúil

The Club Secretary must always have a current copy of the Official Guide. He/She should be familiar with the provisions dealing with Club activities.

5. An Cisteoir

An Cisteoir has responsibility for the safe-keeping of the funds of the Club. He/she is in a position to seek and to give advice on the best management of funds. Through his/her dealings with financial and other institutions on behalf of the Club, he/she has the opportunity to portray a good image of Cumann Lúthchleas Gael.

Duties of the Club Treasurer

- Receive money on behalf of the Club
- Lodge all monies to the Club accounts
- Keep a record of all transactions
- enter transactions in Income and Expenditure Books
- give receipts for money received
- get receipts for money paid out
- keep receipts on file
- make payments by cheque
- use a lodgement book for lodgements
- retain bank statements and cheque stubs
- Collect all fees due to the Club
- Forward through An Rúnaí, appropriate fees to appropriate bodies



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- Present an up-to-date Financial Statement to each meeting of the Club
- Prepare Annual Financial Statement and Balance Sheet and present it to the Annual
- Ideally the bank statement should be sent to a committee member other than the signatories on the club cheque book account
- General Meeting of the Club. Annual Accounts should be audited.

General

Have a Deposit and a Current Account in the name of the Club. Retain as much money as possible on deposit, but keep the current account in credit.

Signatories of cheques and withdrawals are authorised by the Club, usually any two of An Cathaoirleach, An Rúnaí and An Cisteoir. An Cisteoir should sign all cheques and withdrawals.

Have the following books:

- Income Analysis book
- Expenditure Analysis book
- Invoice Book
- Receipt Book
- Note book in which to enter monies received at such as matches, meetings, functions.

As far as possible, insist on payment in advance or on delivery in all transactions, e.g. sales of stock. Do not commit the Club to any expenditure for which prior approval has not been given. Give ample warning to the Club should funds be dwindling. If taking over the Books from a previous Cisteoir, or handing on to a new Cisteoir, seek or give any clarification necessary and ensure that the Books are in order.

The following could be undertaken by a Finance Sub- Committee, of which An Cisteoir would be a member:

Drawing up a Budget for the coming year:

- Examine income/expenditure in all areas over the previous 2/3 years and identify the trends
- Estimate income/expenditure in those areas during the coming year
- Make provision for expenditure in new areas
- Make proposals in relation to income/expenditure for the coming year
- Initiate Fund-raising Schemes
- Identify financial needs
- Set targets
- Decide on fund-raising methods
- Appoint personnel to undertake the schemes.

Investing funds

- Invest a certain percentage of annual income in a Savings Account.



6. Club Development Officer

The work of a County Development Officer or a Development Committee will be more effective if there is liaison with each club through a person appointed to look after development in the Club.

It is recommended that all Clubs appoint a Development Officer to allow for improved communication and better coordination of development matters between County Development Officer/Committee and the Clubs.

It is suggested that the Club Development Officer be appointed from within the Club Executive or Management Committee after the Annual General Meeting i.e. the first Executive Meeting. Because it is rarely possible for an officer responsible for immediate day-to-day activities to devote time to planning and development, the person appointed should not already hold office, particularly the office of Chairman, Secretary or Treasurer.

There are unlimited opportunities for development in every Club. The checklist in the Club Manual provides pointers/suggestions to what could be done. The Club Development Officer will not be able to tackle all of these and should therefore select certain projects and concentrate on them.

Duties of The Development Officer

Priority areas:

- (a) Club Development & Administration - To improve the general organisation and efficiency of the Club unit. The Club Development Officer should make proposals for development in club structures to suit present needs.
- (b) Physical Facilities - The Development Officer should supplement the services of the grounds development committee. He/she should ensure that all Club Property is vested.
- (c) Community - The Development Officer should avail of opportunities for assistance by units of the G.A.A. in appropriate community activities especially those aimed at improving the quality of life for persons who are disadvantaged by virtue of age, health or social or economic circumstances.
- (d) Resource Centre - The Development Officer should be known within the club to be the person who can provide "development" information, reference material, guidelines (which can be sourced at Central Office).

General

The Club Development Officer would:

- work with other officers for the general good of the Club
- encourage and support officers & committees which are working effectively already
- liaise closely with the County Parks/Grounds Committee and ensure that the Club's affairs in that area are in order
- ensure that the Club assists with the development of the games in local schools e.g. by providing playing gear/equipment, footballs, hurleys etc., and by assisting with finance, transport for teams etc.
- seek and maintain up-to-date literature such as the Club Manual, Comhairle information leaflets, coaching publications etc.
- assess the needs and plan for the future development of the Club
- work closely with the County Development Committee and the County Development Officer



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Note: The County Development Officer and members of the County Development Committee would be available to assist by way of further explanation etc. They would visit clubs if necessary and discuss the role of Development Officer, answer queries etc.

7. Club Youth Officer

The Club Youth Officer would ensure that there are regular games for all under-age club members in internal club leagues and competitions. See that responsible personnel are in charge of youth activities. Ensure the club has in operation a Code of Best Practice for Dealing with Youth in Sport and parents and mentors are made aware of this. Delegate specific jobs to youth members in club - encourage them to:

- provide first-aid kit and service
- send match results and notes to local newspapers
- compile scrap-book for year
- look after club notice board line and flag pitches
- keep footballs serviceable
- care for jerseys-distribution / collection
- act as referees, umpires and linesmen

By involving youth they will be more interested in the games and, later, in administration.

Ask parents to help club by:

- attending Coaching Courses
- assisting with coaching of players
- assisting in training young referees
- providing transport
- banding hurleys
- caring for jerseys and other equipment

Parents are not always involved in the running of a club and may wish to become involved.

Organising coaching sessions with star players to attend on occasions.

Promote the games by:

- showing films/videos
- distributing promotional items, All-Stars Charts etc.
- arranging visits to County Finals and other important local games
- Organise exchange visits with other clubs in the county and in other counties

Enter Club teams in special competitions such as Feile na nGael (under 14 hurling) and Feile Peile na nOg.

Develop high standards of presentation, sportsmanship and discipline among youth.



Encourage the Youth Section to plan out the year ahead. Examine how they could improve matters within the club in relation to: Coaching, Games, Promotion of Games, Social/Cultural Activities, Special Projects

8. PRO

The PRO communicates with the general public on behalf of the Club. He/she is in a position to present, in a attractive manner, a good image of the Club and Cumann Lúthchleas Gael. The level and quality of publicity given to the Club and Cumann Lúthchleas Gael depends to a great extent on the Club PRO.

Duties of the Club PRO - Newspapers

- Arrange with the editors of the local newspapers to have a weekly Cumann Luthchleas Gael column published.
- Submit an article and a fixture list on a weekly basis by the stated deadline.
- Submit the results of matches on a weekly basis.
- In the absence of fixtures, submit articles on other Cumann Lúthchleas Gael activities or player/personnel, i.e. Social events, Presentation of trophies, Features on Club History, Present position, Features on individual players Inter County, Colleges, Promising Juveniles
- Submit photographs of a quality suitable for the printing purposes
- Submit a report on the AGM, listing the newly elected Officers of the Club
- Publicise material on matters such as fund-raising activities, special development projects, cooperation with other organisations in community projects
- Prepare an Annual Report and present it to the Club AGM

Publications

Arrange with the editors of local publications to include articles on the Club on a regular basis e.g.

- GAA County Yearbook and other publications
- Sports Annuals
- Church Newsletters
- Youth Club Brochures
- Tourist Brochures

Local Radio

Arrange to have Club events included in sports programmes on a regular basis e.g.

- Advance notice of fixtures and match results.
- Notice of other activities and reports and interviews on them.

Other types of Publicity

- Display CLG posters and leaflets in Schools, Community Halls etc.
- Display Cumann Lúthchleas Gael car-stickers



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- Circulate Cumann Lúthchleas Gael literature to Schools
- Have forthcoming Cumann Lúthchleas Gael Club events announced at matches, church services etc.

General - Articles

Articles for publications should be in the following format:

- Typewritten where possible, or legibly written
- On one side only of a page
- Set out in paragraphs
- Of length required by editors
- Written in such a way that, if cut for publication, continuity is not affected
- Be objective when writing reports.

General - Work Methods

- Operate a system whereby the Club PRO or Rúnaí supplies the County PRO with information on a regular basis.
- Provide the National PRO with information on a regular basis.
- Work as a member of a team with the other Club Officers.
- All information for publication should come through the PRO.

History

Retain press cuttings, published articles and photographs on file as the history of Cumann Lúthchleas Gael would be compiled from them.

Presentation

- Encourage the Club to have a high standard in its presentation of games, functions and other events.
- Give timely notice to media personnel regarding events, invite them to attend and ensure that the required facilities are available to them.
- Establish good working relations with the media personnel and with other organisations.
- Present Cumann Lúthchleas Gael in the best possible light.
- Use An Ghaeilge when possible.
- Have an understanding of the ideals and aims of Cumann Lúthchleas Gael

9. Club/School Coordinator

Responsibilities:

- Coordinate organisation of Go Games at School/Village/Street/Estate and Town level
- Coordinate organisation of Ú-Can Awards
- Coordinate organisation of Summer Camps
- Liaise with Local School Principals
- Promote maximum participation



- Assist with Coaching of Pupils-Form Workgroup to visit Schools
- Monitor development of Club Players at Primary/Post Primary Level

10. Club Registrar

The Club Registrar is in charge of Club Registrations. His/her effectiveness in ensuring that initial and subsequent registrations are in order is of vital importance to the smooth running of the Club.

Duties of the Club Registrar

- Receive from the County Secretary - the annual Club Membership Registration Forms
- Registrations must be on Official Registration Forms and should be signed by the Club Rúnaí
- Registrations must be in triplicate and must state the club colours and the full names, in Irish of all Officials, Players and non-players (i.e. full members)
- Through an Rúnaí, submit annually to An Coiste Contae, a list of full members registered with the Club. This list must be on the official Registration Forms
- Additions/alterations to the initial Club lists must be properly submitted to An Coiste Contae. This must be done electronically in accordance with the Official Guide.
- Check Team Lists to ensure that all players are properly registered
- Inform the Club if players have been properly registered
- Where County Bye-Laws allow a player to play a number of matches in a higher grade without affecting his status, An Clárthoír must keep a record of the players names, and number of games played.

As statistics are required annually by Ard-Chomhairle for various purposes, it would be helpful to keep a separate Membership Record Book containing the following membership analysis:

- YEAR: Under 12, 12-15, 16-18, 19-30, Over 30
- NUMBER OF TEAMS
- TOTAL FEMALES
- TOTAL NON-PAYING MEMBERSHIP
- TOTAL MEMBERSHIP

11. Culture and Language Officer

The Culture & Language Officer position should be filled by someone who has a working knowledge of Gaelige. Tact and perseverance are vital attributes for success in this position.

Duties of The Culture & Language Officer

- The duties assigned to this position can include the following:
- Providing a back-up service in the use of Gaelige for all Officers and Members



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- Ensuring that all rules regarding the use of Gaelige are adhered to
- Organising Scor Teams
- Running Irish Nights
- Providing for and organising a Gaeltacht Scholarship Scheme
- Running Irish classes and Set Dancing classes
- Liaise closely with the County Irish Officer and any relevant Committee
- Encourage and promote the use of Irish phrases and greetings among members
- Liaise and co-operate with other Irish/cultural organisations in the area
- Liaise with other Clubs regarding Irish Language Promotion initiatives

12. Code of Conduct for GAA Officials/Officers

An Coiste Bainistí established a subcommittee to examine the above during 1992. The following recommendations were approved by An Coiste Bainistí and Ard- Chomhairle. This document covers Officials / Officers elected, appointed or employed by :Clubs (Plus committees and sub-committees).

Structure

The structure of the Association is based on the democratic principle. The role and function is clearly defined in Rule 6 of the Official Guide. There is adequate opportunity within the structure to have relevant issues debated. The best control of Officials/Officers and members can be effected by the respective units. There is need to encourage the proper use of the existing structures and procedures so that the decisions when arrived at are accepted and understood by members. When matters of policy are to be discussed, adequate time should be allowed for proper consultation and debate within all relevant units of Cumann Lúthchleas Gael. Care should be taken to avoid the creation of pressure groups or short circuits as this could be detrimental to the democratic structures of Cumann Lúthchleas Gael.

Officials/Officers

An Official/Officer is a person who by virtue of office has responsibilities, as the Club Manual and County and Provincial Manual outlines, in addition to those applying to full members of the Association. An Official/Officer can be elected, appointed or employed. To have effective control of Officials/Officers, such persons should be full members of Cumann Lúthchleas Gael and be deemed to have full knowledge of the Rules and Regulations of the association and be bound by them. In line with the Manuals, the desirable qualities of Officials/Officers should be:

- Knowledge and acceptance of GAA ideals
- Good community standing
- Integrity
- Capacity to work
- High standards of organisation
- Moral courage and willingness to devote time



Officials/Officers Should:

- Act within the law and rules of Cumann Lúthchleas Gael
- Have the highest standards of integrity, sportsmanship and discipline
- Uphold the constitution of Cumann Lúthchleas Gael in the spirit as well as in the law
- Provide leadership and motivate people to work for the aims and ideals of Cumann Lúthchleas Gael
- Understand his/her exact role in relation to other Officials/Officers and Units within Cumann Lúthchleas Gael
- Accept that he/she should be subject to the authority of the relevant Committee/Council

The terms of employment of GAA Officials/Officers should cover their role and function. Their contract and conduct should also cover commitment to Cumann Lúthchleas Gael and allegiance to their employer. A detailed job specification (including grievance and disciplinary procedures) should be provided for all employees prior to their taking up employment with Cumann Lúthchleas Gael or any unit of Cumann Lúthchleas Gael.

Code

The committee decided that a code should be a basic set of principles establishing acceptable standards of behaviour for Officials/Officers in addition to the requirements of Rule applying to members. It was also decided that the conduct of an individual Official/Officer must be viewed as relevant to the status of the Office as well as to the status of Cumann Lúthchleas Gael at any or all levels.

Communications

Communications is one of the most serious issues for Cumann Lúthchleas Gael. The success of all units depends to some degree on the National image of the Association. It must be stressed that Committees of Councils cannot communicate. It is the people connected with them who communicate; everyone in the GAA who deals with, talks to, or writes to any other member of the public practices - or should practice - Public Relations. Nevertheless, it is clear that when there is a major, consistent and general breakdown in communications, it may be that the system is as likely to be at fault as the individuals. There is need for a proper flow of information upwards, sideways and downwards so that everyone understands our decisions and why they were made. This should ensure that when statements are issued they are from a position of knowledge. Bona fide comments by elected Officials/Officers on matters pertaining to Cumann Lúthchleas Gael is acceptable, but criticism of agreed/approved GAA policy is not acceptable.

The media assist in conveying information from units of the Association to its members and to the public. It is important that when the media attend meetings or press conferences, a briefing should be considered on the major issues. If the media are not in attendance, they should be given the maximum amount of information possible so that reports when written or spoken are from a position of knowledge. It may be necessary on occasions to hold meetings "in camera". When this happens the media should be informed of the requirement in advance. It should be understood that a person who is an Official/Officer of Cumann Lúthchleas Gael and who works for or assists the media, is bound by the same level of confidentiality as any other Official/Officer. It should be pointed out that their involvement in GAA administration is by virtue of Office and not as a member of the media. Care should be taken to



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ensure that a person in this category is not in a position of privilege in relation to other media personnel. The use of audio recording equipment at any meeting shall only be with the expressed authority of the person chairing the meeting.

Statement

Public statements should only be issued on matters directly relevant to the Unit concerned. Such statements should be made only by the respective Chairman or Secretary or PRO. (where practical) and only after all issues have been discussed. Care should be taken to ensure that the views expressed represent accurately the position of the Unit involved. Other Officials/Officers should remember that they represent the views of their Club, Committee or Council, as it is by virtue of office and not as individuals that their views are sought or statements by them are made. It should also be stated that decisions can be appealed and that a member has the right to have matters raised through the Club. (Refer to Club Constitution). Members also have the right to enact, amend or rescind Rules or Bye-laws by submitting motions to their Clubs' Annual General Meeting. The Public Relations Officer at the relevant level (if practical), should be responsible for the flow of information to the media as approved by his/her unit.

Youth

The conduct of Officials/Officers who as their primary function are involved with Youth was given a very thorough examination by the committee. Given that these Officials/Officers are exercising a very important leadership role for Cumann Lúthchleas Gael, only the highest level of conduct should be accepted. This is necessary to gain the confidence and trust of the young people, their parents and the wider community. Misconduct should be dealt with severely as this may inhibit the healthy development of Cumann Lúthchleas Gael among our youth.

The Club

GAA Clubs should ensure that:

- Officer posts are filled by the best people available, who are motivated and have the essential qualities of leadership and integrity.
- Officials/Officers endeavour to earn the respect of the community.
- Officials/Officers have a positive commitment to general discipline and insist on loyalty to the Club.
- The Club Executive agree a code of conduct dealing with such issues as sportsmanship, behaviour/tactics of team mentors, observance of age regulations, guidelines on teenage drinking and respect for the club and its
- The Club should decide on its policy in relation to other games and to insistence on full allegiance on the part of all its Officials/Officers and players to club teams and activities.