

# **Donegall Masonic Club**

**FOUNDED 1878**

## **Rules and Constitution**

### **Policy Statement**

Enhancement of services to members and guests by promotion of the Masonic Order in Freemasons' Hall, Arthur Square, Belfast.

*NB - Those sections in italics are the rules reflecting Schedule 1 of The Registration of Clubs (NI) Order 1996. While some of them may be amended they may not be deleted.*

### **1 Name and Objects**

- 1.1 The name of the Club is Donegall Masonic Club (hereinafter called "the Club")
- 1.2 The objects of the Club shall be to promote social and recreational activities amongst the members and their guests and to support Masonic Charities.

### **2 Governing Body**

- 2.1 *The business and affairs of the Club shall be under the management of a Governing Body known as the Management Committee who shall be Full Members of the Club and shall consist of six Full members and the Officers of the Club, being President , Chairman, Secretary, and Treasure.*
- 2.2 *Notwithstanding clause 2.1 and Section 5, any three of the Trustees of Freemasons Hall, Arthur Square ("the Hall Trustees") and all of the Trustees of Donegall Masonic Club ("the Club Trustees") shall be ex-officio members of the*

*Management Committee. Members of the Management Committee, other than the Hall Trustees and the Club Trustees shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting of Full Members and their period of office shall be one year.*

2.3 *At the Annual General Meeting each year two of the Full Members (not including the Hall Trustees, the Club Trustees or the President) shall retire in order of election or seniority. In the case of equal seniority the order of retirement shall, failing agreement between the members concerned, be determined by lot. Members retiring under the rule shall not be eligible for re-election to the Committee until the Annual General Meeting next following the meeting at which they retire. If the President has served in office for six consecutive years he shall retire and be subject for re-election at the same meeting.*

2.4 Candidates for election to the Committee (not being Officers of the Club) shall be those members of the retiring Committee eligible to offer themselves for re-election and such other Full Members whose nominations (duly proposed and seconded in writing by Full Members of the Club) with their consent shall have been received by the Secretary at least twenty one days before the date of the Annual General Meeting in each year. Such nominations, together with the names of the Proposer and Secunder shall be posted on the Club premises at least fourteen days prior to the date of the Annual General Meeting.

2.5 If the number of candidates for election is greater than the number of vacancies to be filled then there shall be a ballot.

2.6 If the number of candidates for election is equal to or less than the number of

vacancies to be filled then all candidates shall be deemed to be elected if two thirds of those present at the Annual General Meeting, and entitled to vote, vote in favour of such election.

- 2.7 In the event of the vote failing to determine the members of the Committee because of an equality of votes the candidate or candidates to be elected from those having an equal number of votes shall be determined by lot.
- 2.8 In the event of a vacancy arising during the term of Office of the Management Committee it shall have the power to co-opt at its discretion a Full Member who shall act until the next following Annual General Meeting.
- 2.9 The President, Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer shall be ex-officio members of all Sub Committees of the Management Committee.
- 2.10 *The Management Committee shall hold periodical meetings not less than three times a year.*
- 2.11 A quorum shall consist of five members, two of whom shall be officers of the Club being the President, the Chairman, Secretary or Treasurer and at least one of the Club Trustees.
- 2.12 Voting (except in the case of a resolution relating to the expulsion of a member) shall be by show of hands. In the case of equality of votes the Chairman shall have a second or casting vote.
- 2.13 A vacancy in the Management Committee may arise:

- (a) By resignation or death, or
- (b) By cessation of Club membership, or
- (c) By a Resolution of the Management Committee removing one of the members (not including the Hall Trustees) who in their opinion had failed to carry out his duties satisfactorily without reasonable excuse.

### **3 Powers and duties of the Management Committee**

- 3.1 The Management Committee shall have all such powers as may be necessary for the Management of the property, business and affairs of the Club and for carrying out the objects of the Club contained in current legislation and without prejudice to the generality hereof including the following powers:
- 3.2 To make such bye-laws, not inconsistent with these Rules, as it may from time to time consider necessary for the wellbeing of the Club.
- 3.3 To control the finances of the Club and all monies accruing from the activities of the Club.
- 3.4 To be the sole interpreters of the Rules of the Club.
- 3.5 To suspend from the Club any member deemed guilty of misconduct, and such member shall thereupon forfeit all privileges of the Club provided always that the suspended member shall have the right of appeal to the next Annual General Meeting.

- 3.6 The Committee may appoint such sub-committees as it may deem necessary and may delegate such of its powers as it may think fit upon such terms and conditions as shall be deemed expedient and/or required by the law. Such sub-committees shall consist of such members of the Committee or of the Club as the Committees may think fit. Officers of the Club shall be ex officio members of all such sub-committees.
- 3.7 A member of the Committee, of a sub-committee or any officer of the Club, in transacting business for the Club, shall disclose to third parties that he is so acting.
- 3.8 The Committee, or any person or sub-committee delegated by the Committee to act as agent for the Club or its members, shall enter into contract only as far as expressly authorised, or authorised by implication, by the members. No one shall, without the express authority of the membership in General Meeting, pledge the credit of the membership.
- 3.9 To appoint a Bar Manager and Bar Stewards.
- 3.10 In pursuance of the authority vested in the Committee by members of the Club, members of the Committee are entitled to be indemnified by the members of the Club against any liabilities properly incurred by them or any one of them on behalf of the Club wherever the contract is of a duly authorised nature or could be assumed to be of a duly authorised nature and entered into on behalf of the Club.

3.11 The limit of any individual member's indemnity in this respect shall be a sum equal to one year's subscription at the then current rate of that category of membership unless the committee has been authorised to exceed such limit by a General Meeting of the Club.

#### **4 Duties of Secretary and Treasurer**

4.1 The Secretary shall:

- (a) Keep a register of Club members' names addresses and membership numbers;
- (b) Conduct the correspondence of the Club;
- (c) Keep custody of all Club documents;
- (d) Keep full minutes of all meetings of the Club, the Committee and all sub-committees which shall be confirmed and signed by the appropriate Chairman upon the agreement of the Club, the Committee or all sub-committees at the next following meeting of the Club, the Committee or all sub-committees;
- (e) Administer such insurance policy or policies as may be needed fully to protect the interests of the Club, its Officers and its Members;
- (f) Maintain contact with the Club's Legal Advisor to ensure that the Club's affairs are managed in accordance with current law.
- (g) Maintain any such certificates or registrations, and complete any such non-financial returns, as may be required by law.

4.2 The Treasurer shall:

- (a) Cause such books of account to be kept as are necessary to give a true and fair view of the state of finances of the Club.
- (b) Cause all returns as may be required by law in relation to such accounts to be rendered at the due time.
- (c) Prepare an Annual Balance Sheet as at 31 December in each year and cause such Balance Sheet (and accounts as necessary) to be audited at least once

annually and shall thereafter cause the same to be exhibited in the Club premises at least one calendar month before the date of the Annual General Meeting.

- (d) Arrange such investments as the Committee may decide.

## **5 Trustees of the Club**

5.1 There shall be at least two Trustees of the Club (previously and hereinafter referred to as “the Club Trustees”) who shall be appointed from time to time as necessary by the Committee of the Club from among Full Members who are willing to be so appointed. A Trustee shall hold office during his lifetime or until he shall resign, by notice in writing given to the Committee, or until a resolution removing him from office shall be passed at a meeting of the Committee by a majority comprising two-thirds of the members present and entitled to vote.

5.2 All the property of the Club, including land and investments, shall be held by the Trustees for the time being, so far as it is necessary and practicable, on trust for the use and benefit of the Club. In the event of the death, resignation, or removal from office of a Trustee, the Committee shall nominate a new Trustee in his place, and shall as soon as possible thereafter take all lawful and practicable steps to procure the vesting of all Club property into the names of the Trustees as constituted after such nomination. For the purpose of giving effect to any such nomination, the Secretary for the time being is hereby nominated as the person to appoint new Trustees of the Club within the meaning of Section 35 of the Trustee Act (NI) 1958 and he shall by Deed duly appoint the person or persons so nominated by the committee.

5.3 The Trustees shall in all respects act, in regard to any property of the Club held by

them, in accordance with the directions of the Committee and shall have power to sell, lease, mortgage or pledge any Club property so held for the purpose of raising or borrowing money for the benefit of the Club in compliance with the Committee's directions (which shall be duly recorded in the Minutes of the proceedings of the Committee) but no purchaser, lessee or mortgagees shall be concerned to enquire whether any such direction has been given.

- 5.4 The Trustees shall be effectually indemnified by the Committee out of the assets of the Club from and against any liability, costs, expenses and payments whatsoever which may be properly incurred or made by them in the exercise of their duties or in relation to any property of the Club vested in them, or in relation to any legal proceedings, or which otherwise relate directly or indirectly to the performance of the functions of a Trustee of the Club.

## **6 Membership**

- 6.1 All Freemasons in good standing shall be eligible for membership. Any member who shall be suspended or expelled by Grand Lodge or who ceases to be a subscribing member of a Craft Lodge shall cease forthwith to be a member of the Club.
- 6.2 There shall be the following categories of membership with power to vote at all meetings of the Club as indicated hereunder. The rights and privileges of each category of members are as defined in the latest edition of the bye-laws of the Club.

**A FULL MEMBER** - being a person who, at the date of election, is a subscribing



member of a Craft Lodge sitting in Arthur Square, Belfast or was a member of The Donegall Masonic Club prior to 1 January 2002 who shall have one vote.

**AN ASSOCIATE MEMBER** – being a subscribing member of a Craft Lodge sitting elsewhere than Arthur Square who shall have no vote.

**A FAMILY MEMBER** – which expression shall include the wife of a Full, an Honorary or an Associate Member and all children of a Full, an Honorary or an Associate Member who are under eighteen years of age and shall have no vote and shall pay no membership fee. The membership of all family members shall only remain valid for so long as the Full Member remains a member of the Club. The membership of all children under the age of eighteen years is subject to the Club holding a valid Childrens Certificate under the terms of current legislation. Whether the Club holds such a certificate shall be at the sole discretion of the Management Committee.

**AN HONORARY MEMBER** - who shall be proposed by the Club Trustees only and shall have no vote and pay no membership fee.

6.3 Candidates for membership shall have no privileges whatsoever in relation to the use of the Club or premises.

6.4 Election of Members

(a) Every candidate for Full Membership (excepting Family, Honorary, or Associate Members) shall be proposed and seconded by a Full Member of the Club, both of whom must be personally acquainted with the candidate.

(b) *The names and addresses of persons proposed as Full Members of the Club*

*together with the names and addresses of their proposer and seconder shall be displayed in a conspicuous place in the Club premises for at least one week before their election and an interval of not less than two weeks shall lapse between the nomination and election of Full Members.*

*(c) Full Members shall be elected by the Management Committee and such election shall be notified to them by the Secretary.*

*(d) All classes of member other than a Full Member shall be admitted to membership at the sole discretion of the Management Committee. In the case of a Family Member their name must be proposed by the Member being their husband or father as the case may be.*

*(e) Persons shall not be admitted in such numbers to membership not carrying rights of voting in relation to the affairs of the Club as will result in the number of members not having such rights being more than three times the number of members having such rights.*

*(f) All Members shall, if requested by a Member of staff or Management Committee Member provide evidence of membership on request while on the premises of the Club.*

*(g) An alphabetical list of the names, addresses and membership numbers of every official and Member of the Club shall be kept on the premises of the Club.*

## 6.5 Period of Membership and Subscription

(a) The minimum period of membership shall be for one year.

*(b) The rate of Entrance and Subscription fee for each category of Membership shall be proposed by the Committee to the members at the Annual General Meeting in each year. Any proposed changes shall be approved by a majority of those present and entitled to vote and shall become operative on the first day of January in the year following. The current rate of Entrance and Subscription fee shall be prominently displayed in the Club premises.*

(c) Any Member failing to pay his Subscription for the current year before the last day of March shall be excluded from the rights of voting, proposing or seconding candidates and of introducing visitors into the Club until such subscription has been paid. Should the Subscription of any Member remain unpaid on the first day of March the Secretary shall send him a Notice in respect of same and if his subscription be still unpaid on the last day of April following, his name shall be removed from the list of Members but the Member shall in any event remain liable for the current year's Subscription.

(d) No new Member shall be entitled to admission and use of the Club or any of its privileges until his subscription has been paid to the Treasurer. If payment of the Subscription has not been made by a newly elected Member within two months of election that election shall be void unless satisfactory reasons be given to the Management Committee.

(e) Any Member desiring to resign from Membership shall signify his intention to do so in writing to the Secretary not later than 30 November in each year otherwise

he shall be liable to pay his Subscription for the ensuing year.

(f) Every Member shall furnish the Secretary with an up-to-date address which shall be recorded in the Register of Members and any notice sent to such address shall be deemed to have been duly delivered.

## 6.6 Guests

*(a) The same person except where that person is a parent, wife or child of a Member shall not be admitted as a guest of a Member to the Club premises on more than 2 days in any period of 12 months.*

*(b) A guest of a Member shall not be admitted to the Club premises except in the company of a Member. The Member shall immediately on the admission of the guest to the Club premises enter his own name and membership number and the name and address of his guest in a book which shall be kept for that purpose and which shall show the date of each visit.*

*(c) A Member shall be responsible for his guest strictly observing the Rules and shall not leave the Club premises before his guest, and the guest of the Member shall not be supplied with intoxicating liquor in the Club premises unless upon the invitation and in the company of the Member.*

(d) Always subject to the provisions of current legislation or any subsequent legislation, in the case of a group of persons who are members of another club, society or organisation visiting the Club for the purposes of taking part in or in the organisation of any event, meeting or other function at the Club it shall be sufficient for the Secretary or other officer of the Donegall Masonic Club to enter in the

visitors book the name of such club, society or organisation and the number of such visitors and thereafter on the occasion of such visit intoxicating liquor may be supplied to such visitors at the request and in the presence of any officer or the Bar Manager of Donegall Masonic Club.

## **7 Annual General Meeting**

7.1 The Annual General Meeting shall be held not later than 1 June at such time and place as the Management Committee shall decide. Six weeks notice of the Meeting posted in a conspicuous place in the Club premises and circulated to the Secretary of each lodge sitting in Arthur Square Masonic Hall shall be deemed to be sufficient notice to members.

7.2 A quorum shall consist of at least ten Full Members and must include the Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and at least one Club Trustee.

7.3 The Agenda of the Annual General Meeting shall make provision:

- (a) To receive reports from the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer.
- (b) To elect from the members a President, Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and six members of the Management Committee.
- (c) To transact general business and any special business of which due notice shall have been given to the Secretary in writing at least fourteen days before the date of the Annual General Meeting.

## **8 Special Meetings**

8.1 A Special Meeting shall be held within six weeks of receipt in writing by the Secretary of a requisition stating the purposes of the Meeting and signed by at least

twenty-four Full Members of which there must be two members from each of the craft lodges sitting in Arthur Square. The Secretary shall give Notice in writing to all Full Members not less than fourteen days before the date of the Meeting. No business other than that specified in the Notice shall be considered at this Meeting and no Resolution shall be valid unless at least twenty-four Full Members are present.

## **9 Permitted Hours**

9.1 A Statement, printed in plain type, of the hours during which intoxicating liquor may be supplied on the premises of the Club shall be exhibited in a conspicuous part of the Club premises. Subject to current legislation these hours shall be set at the sole discretion of the Management Committee.

## **10 Extension of Hours**

10.1 The Management Committee may apply under the Provisions of The Registration of Clubs (NI) Order 1996 to the Sub-Divisional Commander for the Police Sub-Division in which the premises are situate for authority to extend the permitted hours for the supply of intoxicating liquor up to 1.00am except Saturday 12 midnight during any one period specified in the authorisation, provided that not more than fifty two applications shall be made in any year.

## **11 Drinking up Time**

11.1 Consumption of intoxicating liquor shall not be prohibited during the first thirty minutes after the conclusion of the permitted hours.

## **12 Intoxicating Liquor**

- 12.1 Intoxicating liquor shall not be supplied to, or obtained or consumed by, any person other than a Member or a guest of a Member or an employee of the Club.
- 12.2 *Intoxicating liquor shall not be supplied for consumption outside the premises of the Club.*
- 12.3 *No member of the Management Committee, and no manager or servant employed by the Club, shall have any personal interest in the supply of intoxicating liquor in the Club or in the profits arising from such supply.*
- 12.4 *No persons shall be paid at the expense of the Club any commission, percentage or similar payment on or with references to purchases of intoxicating liquor by the Club.*
- 12.5 *No person shall, directly or indirectly, derive any pecuniary benefit from the supply of intoxicating liquor by or on behalf of the Club or Members or guests, apart from any benefit accruing to the Club as a whole. Any profit deriving from the sale of such goods shall (after deduction of the costs of providing such goods for the benefit of the Club) be applied to the provision of additional amenities or the purchase of property to be held in trust for the benefit of the Club.*
- 12.6 Intoxicating liquor shall not be provided for consumption by a drunken person and the Club may refuse admittance to or may expel from the Club premises any person who is drunken or is acting in a disorderly manner. The decision of the bar manager as to whether a person is drunk shall be final.

12.7 During the permitted hours no person under the age of eighteen years shall be permitted in the Club Bar or other parts of the Club Premises which are used exclusively or mainly for the supply, consumption or storage of intoxicating liquor, and intoxicating liquor shall not be supplied to or consumed by a person under the age of eighteen years in the Club Premises.

### **13 Accounts and Financial Year**

13.1 The Treasurer shall:

- (a) Cause to be kept proper books of account with respect to the Club's transactions and its assets and liabilities; and
- (b) Establish and maintain a satisfactory system of control of Club accounts, cash holdings and all receipts and remittances; and
- (c) Cause those accounts to be audited annually by a qualified Accountant; and
- (d) Send a copy of those accounts to the District Commander of the Police District Command Unit in which the premises of the Club are situated within three months of the date of the end of the financial year of the Club to which they relate; and
- (e) Provide the District Commander with such information, particulars or documents relating to those accounts as he may require within two weeks of the date on which he requests that information or those particulars or documents.



13.2 *The date of the end of the financial year of the Club shall be 31 December.*

#### **14 Alteration of Rules**

14.1 Subject to the powers of the Management Committee under Rule 3.2 no new Rule or alteration to these Rules shall be made except by a Resolution passed by a two-thirds majority of those present and entitled to vote at an Annual General or Special Meeting, and a Notice in writing of every proposed alteration or addition shall be given to the Secretary and shall subsequently be posted by him on the Club Notice Board fourteen days before the date of the said Annual General or Special Meeting. Notices of proposed alterations or additions to the Rules for consideration at the Annual General Meeting must be left with the Honorary Secretary not later than four weeks before the date of this Meeting . Notwithstanding the Management Committee shall have power to amend any Rule necessary to comply with the Registration of Clubs (NI) Order 1996 or any subsequent legislation.

#### **15 Restrictions on Advertisements**

15.1 No person shall issue or cause to be issued any advertisement drawing attention to any function to be held on the Club premises save for the publication or display of a Notice inside the premises or where it relates to a function involving any sport, game or physical recreation except with the permission of the Management Committee

#### **16 Suggestions and Complaints**

16.1 Any member having a suggestion or complaint to make shall do so in writing to the

Secretary. The conduct of a servant of the Club should not be made a matter of personal reprimand by a Member and such complaint should be made in writing to the Secretary.

## **17 Damage to Property**

17.1 Any Member damaging or destroying any property of the Club by accident or otherwise shall promptly make good such loss or damage to the satisfaction of the Management Committee. Any Member who introduces a visitor shall be liable for any damage caused by that visitor.

## **18 Conduct**

18.1 Any discreditable, ungentlemanly, or unmasonlike conduct, either in or out of the Club premises, or any breach of the Rules by a Member, shall be immediately reported to the Management Committee who shall investigate the same and apply Rule 19 as necessary.

18.2 Members and their guests must wear smart casual or more formal dress.

## **19 Suspension or Expulsion of Members**

19.1 The Management Committee shall have the power to suspend or expel any Member by ballot at a Special Meeting called for that purpose. A Member shall not be suspended or expelled without the opportunity of appearing before the Management Committee and two-thirds of the Management Committee present must vote in favour of his or her suspension or expulsion. All Members of the Management Committee present will be required to vote. A Member so expelled shall forfeit his

Subscription.

## **20 Removal of Club Property**

20.1 No Member, Members Guests or Club servant shall remove any property of the Club from the Club premises without the approval of the Management Committee and any person contravening this Rule shall be under such penalty as the Management Committee may consider proper.

## **21 Right of Appeal**

21.1 Any Member who feels unjustly treated by a decision of the Management Committee may request in writing a Special Meeting to hear his case. To rescind the Management Committee's ruling a majority of two-thirds of the Members present at such Special Meeting shall be required.

## **22 Dissolution of the Club**

22.1 If at any Annual General Meeting or Special Meeting a Resolution for dissolution of the Club shall be passed by a majority of at least two-thirds of the Members present, subsequently testified by their signatures, the Management Committee shall thereupon or at such future date as shall be specified in such Resolutions, proceed to realise the property of the Club and after the discharge of all liabilities, the surplus (if any) shall be paid to the Trustees of Arthur Square Masonic Hall to be used for such Masonic purposes and Masonic Charities as they in their absolute discretion shall from time to time decide.

