



# Governance Guide



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## UACHTARÁN



Tá áthas orm failtiú a chur roimh foilsiú an leabhrán tabhachtach seo a bhaineann le dea-chleactais don Chumann Luthcleas Gael agus ár riaracháin féin.

We in the GAA rightly believe our games to be among the finest in the world. But we know too that the GAA is about more than just what happens on the field of play. Indeed our games can only continue to flourish if we strive to apply the same high standards to everything that we do behind the scenes as well. We should pride ourselves not just on what we do, but on doing things the right way. That is governance in a GAA context.

Our units, be they province, county or club, operate today in a very complex and exacting world. The demands placed upon us are many and varied. We have a responsibility to our members and to the wider community to make sure that the GAA continues to be held in the highest esteem. That burden is shouldered for the most part by our volunteers throughout the Association.

We, in turn, have a responsibility to those volunteers to ensure that they are aware of the standards expected of them, and have a well-defined structure within which to perform their duties, and upon which they can rely. I believe that this guide will serve as a useful reference point for officers at all levels in the Association as they continue their invaluable work.

I thus welcome its publication, and I hope that its importance will be recognised by all, and its spirit embraced.

*Aogán Ó Fearghail*

Aogán Ó Fearghail  
Uachtarán  
Cumann Lúthchleas Gael



## CEATHAOIRLEACH



Tá áthas orm an reamhrá seo a scríobh don Chód tabhtach seo.

One of the primary objectives of the National Audit Committee in its current term has been the furtherance of good governance throughout the Association. Our brief in this regard is to inform, to educate and to assist. Our units are typically well run. We can take pride in this, but we cannot be complacent. There is always considerable scope for improvement.

We thus set out to document a set of standards for how we in the GAA should conduct our affairs. In the process we quickly came to recognise that many of these practices are already established and observed, albeit perhaps not documented. So although not new, many of our policies are assembled here in one document for the first time. However the following pages also set out a number of concepts that are indeed new to the GAA, and I hope these will be embraced with enthusiasm.

I expect the governance agenda to be one of continuous improvement over the coming years. Indeed I don't envisage the job will ever be complete. Similarly this publication doesn't represent the conclusion of our work but the start of it.

We envisage convening a series of meetings and workshops in the near future to explain and explore the concepts herein. We hope to answer your questions, to perhaps pose some questions of our own, and to hopefully provide some guidance in the area of governance.

I would like to acknowledge the work of my committee colleagues in preparing this publication, Cormac O'Toole, Paul Hennessy, Pat Costello, Eugene McKenna, Lauri Quinn and Tom Ryan.

I hope that you will find the guide to be of value to you in your GAA life, whatever your role.

*Fearghal Mac Chormaic*

Fearghal Mac Chormaic  
Ceathaoirleach  
An Coiste Iniúchoireachta Náisiunta

## 1. CORE PRINCIPLES OF THE GAA

The GAA is a community based volunteer organisation promoting Gaelic games, culture and life-long participation.

We are dedicated to ensuring that our family of games and our values enrich the lives of our members, our families and the communities we serve.

We welcome everybody to be a part of our Association, and we strive to listen to and respect the views of all and to operate with integrity at all times. We are accountable in all matters and at all times to our membership.



**VALUE****ACTIONS****COMMUNITY IDENTITY**

- Community is at the heart of our Association.
- Everything we do helps to enrich the communities we serve.
- We foster a clear sense of identity and place.

**AMATEUR STATUS**

- We are a volunteer led organisation.
- All our members play and engage in our games as amateurs.
- We provide a games programme at all levels to meet the needs of all our players.

**INCLUSIVENESS**

- We welcome everybody to be part of our Association.
- We are anti-sectarian.
- We are anti-racist.

**RESPECT**

- We respect each other on and off the playing fields.
- We operate with integrity at all levels. We listen and respect the views of all.

**PLAYER WELFARE**

- We provide the best playing experience for all our players.
- We structure our games to allow players of all abilities reach their potential.

**TEAMWORK**

- Effective teamwork on and off the field is the cornerstone of our Association.
- Ní neart go cur le chéile (There is no strength without working together).

## 2. THE SCOPE OF THIS GUIDE

### WHAT IS GOVERNANCE AND WHY DO WE NEED IT?

Governance is the system of rules, practices and processes by which the Association and all of its Units are directed and controlled. Our rules are defined in the GAA Official Guide and the process for updating and amending those rules is well established and understood.

This document will not address the rules of the Association. Instead it will focus on the standards that we should strive to achieve in our practices and our processes in order to ensure that we continuously live by, and observe, our core principles.

It is intended that this Guide will help our units to perform to the highest standards and to offer confidence and reassurance to all who are involved in our units and who deal with them. This Guide sets our standards to be achieved under the five main principles of Governance – leading, controlling, being accountable, working effectively and behaving with integrity.

**This document is not a management or operating Guide.** It should however be considered in the context of the various operating guides published by the Association, some of which are included as appendices for information.





## WHO DOES THIS GUIDE APPLY TO?

This Guide applies to all Units of the Association and to all its members, volunteers, officials, and employees who are charged with administration at national, provincial, county or club level.

Units for the purposes of this Guide are as defined in Section 1.9 of the Official Guide.

In some instances terminologies may be used which do not apply universally to all units. Nevertheless the principles espoused are universally valid and units are asked to apply those principles to their own structures where practicable.

The Guide is intended to provide assistance in establishing and operating the structures within Units at all levels.

Each Unit is expected to formally adopt this code, and to observe it in all regards. Units who do not do so will be required to record and rationalise their position.

This Guide augments and does not replace any of the provisions of the Code of Conduct, which sets out appropriate behaviours and practices for Officers and Members of the Association.

This Guide should be considered in the context of the legal and regulatory framework within which we operate – the laws and regulations that apply to us, as to any other organisation when it comes to administering our affairs. Clearly these provisions must also be observed and may take precedence over our own regulatory framework.



### 3. LEADERSHIP

#### Leadership in your unit of the GAA involves the following:

1. Ensuring that your particular club/county etc has a clear vision, purpose and values. These should be consistent with the Association nationally, and should be clearly communicated and evident to all members.
2. Developing appropriate strategic plans to ensure that the unit is working toward achieving its aims. The plan should be properly resourced and regularly monitored and evaluated. It may evolve over time.
3. Managing and overseeing those resources, including all of the units, volunteers and members who comprise the GAA in the county.

Individual officers are assigned specific roles and responsibilities in order to achieve this. Foremost among these is the Chairperson, who occupies the most visible leadership role and sets the tone for how the Unit will operate.

The other elected officers are also required to embody the principles of good leadership, both as members of the executive team and as leaders within their own sphere.

The various individual roles and responsibilities of GAA officers are set out in Appendix I of this Guide.

#### Below is a checklist of some specific action points to be undertaken:

- Agree a stated vision for the unit
- Prepare a strategic plan setting out how those goals will be pursued
- Review and refresh the plan every three years
- Establish Committees to deliver in key areas and clearly define their terms of reference
- Appoint appropriately skilled people to these groups
- Ensure each person has a clearly defined role and knows what is expected of them
- Set out a yearly work plan for each Committee
- Set goals and targets e.g. number of teams fielded, player retention etc.
- Measure performance and report progress regularly

The governance documents, and policies and procedures that should be in place in each unit are set out in Appendix II of this Guide.



## 4. EXERCISING CONTROL

The Management Committee (or Club Executive Committee) should control all GAA activities within its jurisdiction.

All Units and members of the Association must comply with all relevant legal and regulatory requirements, and with the rules of the Association.

The Management Committee must ensure that appropriate internal financial and management controls are in place, and must identify and manage the principle risks facing the Association in the county.

This includes the identification of the major risks facing the unit, and appropriately managing these risks.

**This is best achieved by a management system that encompasses all of the following:**

- Regular and comprehensive management and financial reporting
- Effective budgetary control, with periodic reporting of variances
- Clearly understood and observed decision making procedures
- A clear and documented policy regarding delegated authorities
- Effective risk management including maintenance of a risk register

**The following is a checklist of measures which characterise a good control environment**

- Management Committees should meet monthly, with the agenda, supporting documentation and minutes of previous meeting circulated five working days in advance of all meetings.
- The required quorum should be defined, and accurate minutes of each meeting be recorded.
- The finance sub-Committee should meet annually with the auditors to review the accounts.
- Effective sub-Committees should be appointed (not elected) to exercise control over specific areas e.g. Strategic goal setting and implementation.

- Clear authority levels should be set out for each of these Committees. They should not exercise powers which are the preserve of the management Committee.
- A member of the Management Committee should be a member of each sub-Committee.
- Delegated authorities should be agreed for each Committee/sub-Committee.
- Officers are elected at the Annual County Convention or Club AGM in line with the Official Guide.
- Finite terms for officer-ships should be established (for those positions not covered by rule).
- Formal process should be adopted for awarding contracts, agreeing sponsorships etc.
- Trustee structure should be kept up to date.
- Risk awareness should be prioritised – a register should be prepared and regularly reviewed.
- Members of the Unit should receive appropriate training in the use of Association equipment e.g. Boscas machines.
- The Unit should have appropriate insurance in place e.g. public liability, buildings etc. and should comply with the association's insurance policies and provisions.
- The Unit complies with the terms and conditions of all grants received (from the GAA, Provincial Council and other grant awarding bodies).
- Budgets are prepared and approved prior to 31 October annually.
- The Unit has documented financial procedures for the performance of financial processes. The financial procedures should include details of key financial processes including, (but not limited to) the following:
  - Match day and ticketing income;
  - The receipt of monies – including cash handling processes;
  - Debtor management and reporting;
  - Operation of bank accounts including online accounts;

#### 4. EXERCISING CONTROL (CONTINUED)

- The purchasing and procurement of goods and services, including the requirement to conduct a tender process for goods and services above an agreed threshold;
- Invoice approval and creditor payments, including Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) payments;
- Capital expenditure;
- Expenditure authorisation limits;
- Travel & subsistence claims; and
- Payroll processing.
- A periodic income statement and balance sheet should be prepared for each meeting
- An up to date schedule of outstanding liabilities should be presented at each meeting
- A budget should be established for each key operating area – e.g. each team
- Budget variances should be reported on a timely basis
- Unusual or exceptional patterns of income and expenditure are identified, reported and monitored.
- Annual accounts should be prepared in a timely manner which, if required are audited (as set out in the Official Guide).
- Appropriate asset management policies should be in place which provide for the security and development of GAA property within its jurisdiction.
- A procurement policy should require formal tenders for expenditure in excess of defined limits.
- That policy should also include protocols regarding buying goods/services from connected parties.
- Expenditure approval authority should be limited to a small number of officers and limits defined.
- Bank mandates should be similarly defined, and up to date.
- Cash transactions should be kept to a minimum and procedures put in place to govern them.



## 5. TRANSPARENCY & ACCOUNTABILITY

The inclusive nature of our Association and the high profile of our games means that a wide variety of interest groups and sections of society have a valid interest in the affairs of the GAA and of the county.

It is important the affairs of the Association at all levels are (and are perceived to be), managed in a transparent fashion. This means that those affected by or interested in the affairs and decisions of the Management Committee are aware not just of decisions and outcomes, but also have an understanding of the process by which those decisions were taken.

Accountability in a GAA context means that all Units of the Association and its members are held accountable for their actions. Our actions should stand up to scrutiny by members of the Association or other various stakeholders having an interest in the activities of the Association.

These principles are particularly important in our context as a democratic and volunteer-led organisation.

**People and groups who have an interest in the fortunes and affairs of the Association are set out on the following pages.**

Specific Actions to be undertaken by Committee members include (but are not limited to):

- Appoint, by open tender, a qualified auditor to report on the county's accounts.
- Appoint a designated person to act as public spokesperson (typically PRO).
- Ensure website and social media are actively managed and utilised.
- Ensure that the Unit has an appropriate communication procedure in place including the use of social media.
- Produce and publish regular activity updates.
- Ensure, as a minimum, that the unit meets the information requirements of lenders, funders and regulators.
- Publish the unit's commitment to this governance code.
- Set out annually any intended steps to be taken in the coming year to achieve compliance in areas where the unit is not currently in compliance.
- Convene information meetings apart from the formal convention.
- Engage fully with members.
- Ask for feedback from interested parties or groups.
- Establish a procedure for dealing with complaints.
- Hold an Annual Convention or AGM before the date specified in rule.



5. TRANSPARENCY & ACCOUNTABILITY (CONTINUED)

**MATCH OFFICIALS**

SOME OF THE PEOPLE AND GROUPS WHO HAVE AN INTEREST IN THE FORTUNES AND AFFAIRS OF THE ASSOCIATION

**PLAYERS**

**SPORT NI**

**CLUBS**

**GENERAL PUBLIC**

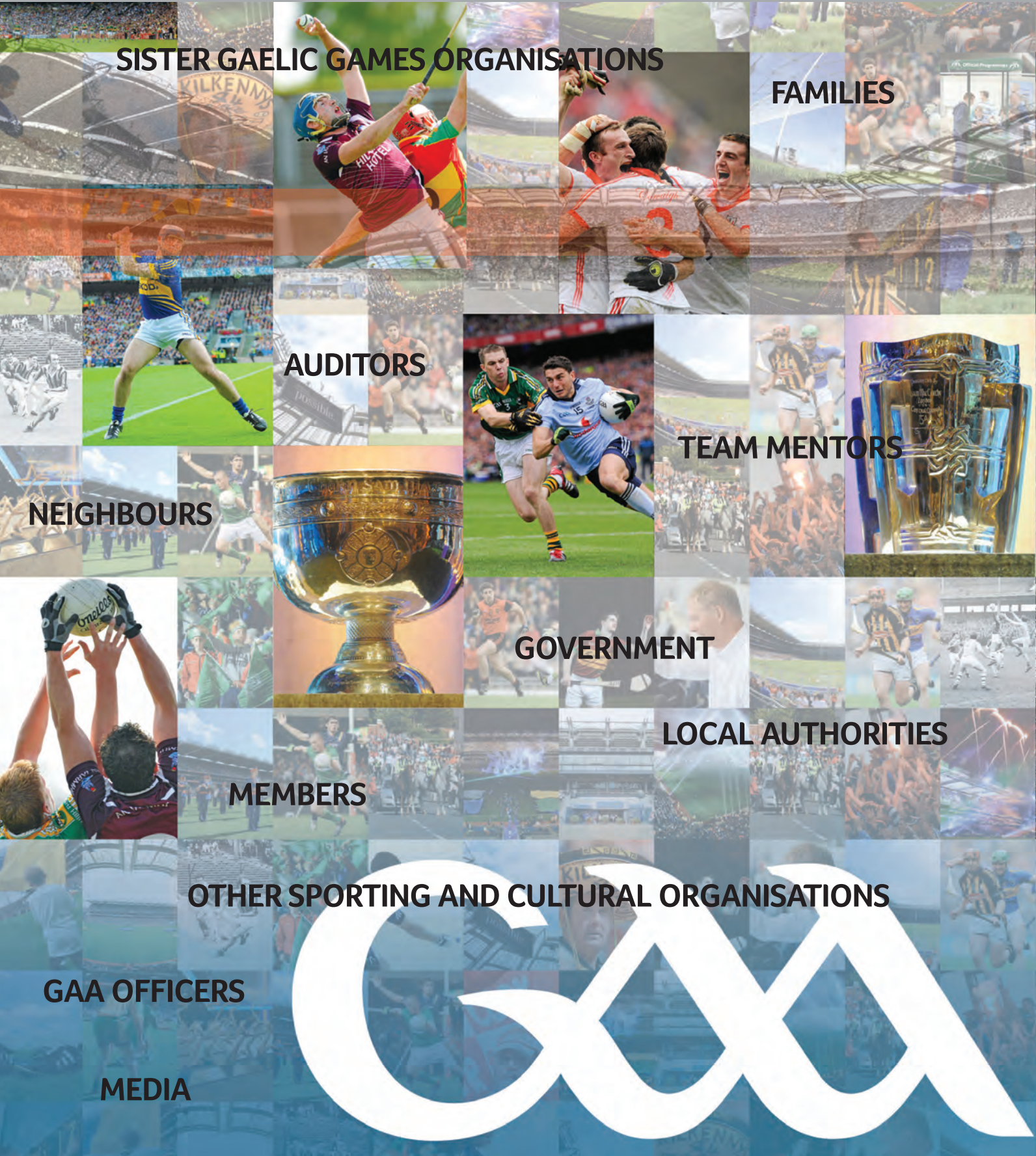
**OTHER GAA UNITS**

**SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES**

**SPORT IRELAND**

**SUPPORTERS**

**SPONSORS**



**SISTER GAEILIC GAMES ORGANISATIONS**

**FAMILIES**

**AUDITORS**

**TEAM MENTORS**

**NEIGHBOURS**

**GOVERNMENT**

**LOCAL AUTHORITIES**

**MEMBERS**

**OTHER SPORTING AND CULTURAL ORGANISATIONS**

**GAA OFFICERS**

**MEDIA**



## 6. OPERATING EFFECTIVELY

As a voluntary organisation we owe it to our volunteers to make sure that they are asked to operate in an efficient and effective organisation. Anything less is effectively poor use of their time.

This is best achieved by making sure that Management Committees, individual Committee members, Committees, staff and volunteers understand their role, legal duties and delegated responsibility for decision-making.

Management Committees should exercise collective responsibility through Committee meetings that are efficient and effective.

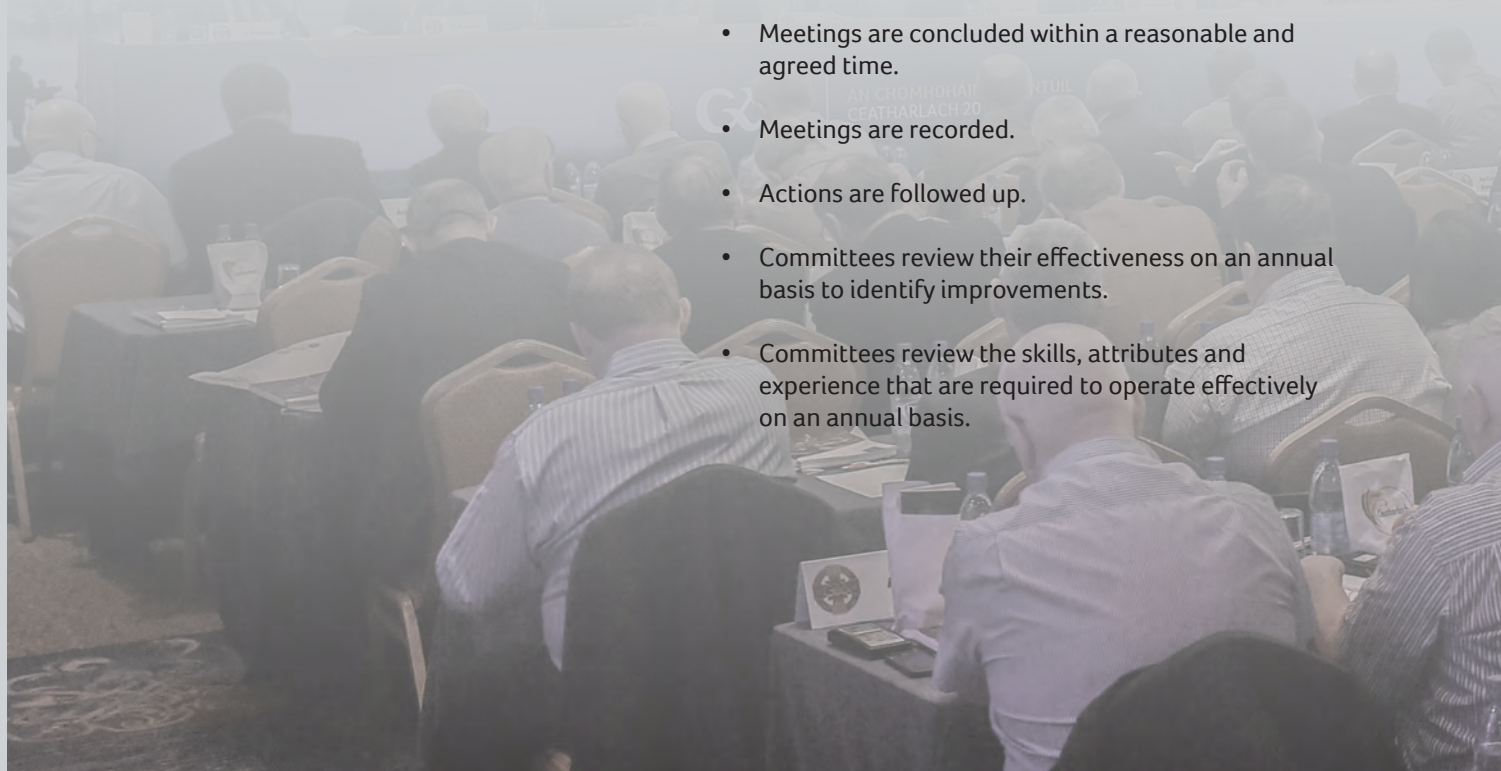
Furthermore the Management Committee has a duty to ensure that these people and groups are provided with an effective management and operating structure within which to carry out their duties. In order to operate effectively it is essential that appropriate Committee structures are put in place.

Management Committees must ensure that each sub-Committee and each individual member clearly understands their role, their responsibilities and their brief.

It is important that there are suitable Committee appointment, development and training processes in place.

### The characteristics of an effectively managed Committee are set out below

- Terms of Reference are in place for all Committees setting out the purpose and nature of the Committee.
- Where Committees/sub-Committees are mandated under the Official Guide, the unit adopts the Terms of Reference provided by Croke Park.
- Where Committees/sub-Committees are not mandated under the Official Guide, Terms of Reference are in place.
- Terms of reference are updated at least every three years.
- Clear roles and responsibilities are set out for each officer.
- Effective Officer training and succession planning processes are in place.
- The “place of business” of a Committee is the Club/ County/Provincial office, not an officer’s home.
- All Committees meet regularly – in line with their Terms of Reference.
- Meetings are orderly, efficient and effective, with a pre-defined agenda.
- Meetings are concluded within a reasonable and agreed time.
- Meetings are recorded.
- Actions are followed up.
- Committees review their effectiveness on an annual basis to identify improvements.
- Committees review the skills, attributes and experience that are required to operate effectively on an annual basis.





**An induction or handover process for newly elected officers should be put in place which covers (but is not limited to) the following:**

- The role and remit of the Committee/sub-Committee;
- Documented roles and responsibilities of specific Officers e.g. Treasurer, Secretary etc.
- Members duty to act independently in the best interest of the Unit;
- Provision of Committee minutes for the preceding 12 months;
- Roles and responsibilities of Committee members;
- Members' responsibility to maintain confidentiality of Committee meetings;
- A clear explanation of the time commitment and level of involvement required to operate as an effective Committee member; and
- Emphasising the importance of reviewing meeting agendas and documentation in advance of attendance at the Committee meeting for reasons of meeting efficiency.

**Here are some specific effectiveness actions to be implemented:**

- Agree and document terms of reference and scope for all sub-Committees.
- Agree "rules of engagement" regarding meetings.
- Delegate specific responsibilities and tasks, but not roles.
- Agree hand-over procedures for incoming officers.
- Ensure attendance/representation at all county/provincial training events, and ensure that delegates report back.
- Ensure that provincial council delegates / central council delegates report back to the Committee after each meeting attended.
- Ensure delegates attend such meetings with a defined and informed mandate.
- Adopt a pre-defined meeting schedule at the start of each year.



## 7. BEHAVING WITH INTEGRITY

Individual and collective integrity is fundamental to the protection and promotion of the GAA's reputation. Any person holding a position in the GAA at any level is expected to carry out their role in a manner that is fair, honest and independent.

All Association members must ensure that their actions do not bring the Association into disrepute.

It is essential that officers recognise conflicts of interest (or conflicts of loyalties) when they arise and have the necessary skills and framework to deal with such conflicts appropriately.

**The key principals of integrity are:**

- **Being honest, fair and independent.**
- **Understanding, declaring and managing conflicts of interest and conflicts of loyalties.**
- **Protecting and promoting our organisation's reputation.**

Management Committees/Club Executives should seek to establish an ethical culture consistent with the general ethos of the GAA, and should be expected to apply the same ethical standards to every person and situation.

Management Committee members should recognise that although they may be elected or appointed by a particular unit their role on the Committee is not merely to represent the interests of that unit. They have a duty to serve as a leader and to promote the aims of the Association.

The Committee should adopt the GAA Code of Conduct which is updated annually, or as appropriate.

**All Committee members should ensure that they:**

- Strive to attend all meetings, sending apologies to the chair for necessary absences.
- Prepare for the meeting by reading the agenda, papers and any emails before the meeting.
- Respect the confidentiality of all Committee meetings.
- Talk to the chair before the meeting if you need to clarify anything.
- Arrive on time. Stay to the end.
- Participate fully in the meeting;
- Listen to what others have to say and keep an open mind.
- Contribute positively to the discussions.
- Try to be concise and avoid verbose contributions.
- Help others concentrate on the meeting. Discourage side conversations.
- Have the best interests of the organisation in mind at all times
- Draw attention to any potential conflicts of interest that may arise in the meeting.
- Fulfil any responsibilities assigned to you at the meeting and be prepared to report back on your progress at the next meeting.



## Conflicts of Interest

All staff, volunteers, and management Committee members of the Management Committee should strive to avoid any conflict between the interests of their Unit and the Association on the one hand, and their own personal, professional, and business interests on the other. This includes avoiding actual conflicts of interest as well as the perception of conflicts of interest.

A conflict of interest is a situation in which a person has multiple interests, (personal, financial, commercial or otherwise), one of which could possibly alter the motivation of the individual in their actions or decisions.

Conflicts of interest may arise in such instances as:

- Games/Fixtures planning;
- Disciplinary decisions;
- Appointment decisions (paid and voluntary); and
- Financial decisions.

A detailed examination of this issue together with the policy to be adopted by counties is set out in Appendix V.

## Register of Committee Members Interests

A register of members' interest should be compiled, and a policy established for dealing with any conflicts of interest.

Similarly the Committee should adopt a data protection policy to govern what information is collected and maintained in the name of the county, how it is maintained and stored, and who should have access to it.

Allied to this is the need for a confidentiality policy, and the concept of collective responsibility. For the Committee to operate effectively it is essential that open and honest debate can occur. This is only possible if the views expressed in meetings are kept confidential. Once a decision is arrived at it is essential that a united front is presented and collective responsibility taken.

A template for registering interests is included at Appendix VI of this Code.

## Speaking Up

The GAA aims to promote an open and accountable environment in which malpractice is deterred, stakeholders' interests are protected and the good reputation of the organisation is maintained.

In most situations conventional internal reporting lines are sufficient to prevent malpractice. However where suspected fraud, corruption or other malpractice has undermined the Association's internal controls and lines of reporting, whistle-blowing can be an effective safeguard. The Association's procedures for facilitating and responding to such "speaking up" are set out at Appendix VII.



## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX I: KEY ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

#### CHAIRPERSON

- Manage – get people together to accomplish agreed goals and objectives.
- Provide leadership – motivate/encourage/mobilise people towards agreed goals
- Hold effective club meetings – guide but don't dominate; facilitate and manage discussion; assign actions; promote decision making
- Uphold constitution
- Plan – club should have a 5 year plan; where it is/ where it wants to get to and how
- Delegate – utilise skills, distribute work load, increase motivation / buy-in, develop successors
- Uphold mission and values of GAA – integrity
- Represent the club

#### SECRETARY

- Administration – correspondence, membership, registration, affiliation, insurance, property, county Committee, discipline
- Communication – club members, club officers, county
- Club Meetings – schedule and arrange, record and minute, follow up actions and manage outcomes, AGM
- Club Planning – as above
- Single point of contact

#### TREASURER

- Manage Financial affairs – receipts and payments, collect debtors, lodgements,
- Keep records
- Financial controls – sign offs, bank mandates
- Prepare financial statements – monthly and annual, manage investments, liabilities

- Budget – target, monitor, report variances, manage
- Fundraising – set targets, co-ordinate, prioritise
- Allocate resources – teams, codes, ages, playing and non-playing
- Report and inform
- Promote financial discipline

#### PRO

- Internal communication – officers, players, mentors, volunteers, parents
- External communication – local media, sponsors, schools, supporters, community
- Promote the club – website, social media
- Keep records – club archive, publications
- Project Club image
- Operating message – fixtures, results
- Work with county PRO – programmes
- Manage and utilise IT in the unit

## APPENDIX II – GOVERNANCE POLICIES TO BE IMPLEMENTED BY GAA UNITS

**The Unit should have in place formal governance policies in respect of, or dealing with (but not limited to) the following:**

1. Code of conduct
2. Conflict of interests/conflict of loyalty
3. The election, appointment and induction of new Committee members
4. Term limits
5. Powers reserved for Management and other sub-Committees
6. Delegated authority levels
7. Grievance and disciplinary procedures
8. Communication Policy (including the use of social media)
9. Health & safety statement
10. Data Protection & information security
11. Diversity and Equality
12. Speaking-up

**The Unit should have in place formal documented policies and procedures covering (but not limited to) the following:**

1. Financial procedures
2. Fraud prevention
3. Performance evaluation (for Committees/sub-Committees and Officers);
4. Risk management

These policies must not be in conflict with the rules of the Association. The unit should adopt the standard governance policies drafted by Central Council for that purpose, where available.

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX III: DATA & CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

#### General principles

The county committee may gain information about individual members and units during the course of carrying out its activities. Committee members and other designated officers may from time to time require or may have access to such information

In most cases such information will not be stated as confidential and committee members may have to exercise common sense and discretion in identifying whether information is expected to be confidential.

#### Commitment

For the avoidance of doubt, officers will not disclose personal information about individual members unless authorised to do so.

Officers will not disclose financial or other sensitive information relating to the unit either within or outside the GAA.

Officers will not disclose financial or other sensitive information relating to any other third party either within or outside the GAA.

Where there is a legal duty on the county committee to disclose information, the person to whom the confidentiality is owed will be informed that disclosure has or will be made.

#### Control of Data

GAA information is GAA property and may only be stored physically and electronically on the unit's premises. Access to GAA information will be restricted to specific officers. Data may not be taken elsewhere in electronic form without permission of the chairman.

#### Data is collected and stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act. Thus personal data must be:

- Obtained and processed fairly and lawfully.
- Held only for specified purposes.
- Adequate, relevant and not excessive.
- Accurate and up to date.
- Not kept longer than necessary.
- Kept secure and protected.

#### Breach of confidentiality

Any member who breaches confidentiality may be subject to the GAA disciplinary procedures.

## APPENDIX IV: CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

All staff, volunteers, and management committee members will strive to avoid any conflict of interest between the interests of the unit or the Association on the one hand, and personal, professional, and business interests on the other. This includes avoiding actual conflicts of interest as well as the perception of conflicts of interest.

The purpose of this policy is to protect the integrity of the county's decision-making process, to enable our stakeholders to have confidence in our integrity, and to protect the integrity and reputation of volunteers, staff and committee members.

### Examples of conflicts of interest include:

1. A committee member who is employed by, or otherwise interested in, a business that may be awarded a contract to do work or provide services for the unit
2. A committee member who is related to a member of staff and party to a decision to be taken on staff pay and/or conditions
3. A committee member who is related to a GAA member who is the subject of a disciplinary issue
4. A committee member who is also a member of or in a position of influence in another community organisation or club that is competing for the same funding
5. A committee member who owns property or other assets the value of which may be affected by a decision of the unit

If the committee member is not directly in any of the situations above, but has a direct family member who is, that will also constitute a conflict.

Upon appointment each committee member will make a full, written disclosure of interests, such as relationships, and posts held, that could potentially result in a conflict of interest. This written disclosure will be kept on file by the Secretary and will be kept updated.

Every meeting agenda should provide for declaration of any conflicts of interest. In the course of meetings or activities, committee members should themselves disclose any interest in a transaction or decision where there may be a conflict

between the organisations best interests and the committee members best interests or a conflict between the best interests of two organisations that the committee member is involved with.

After disclosure, the member may be asked to leave the room for the discussion and may not be able to take part in the decision depending on the judgement of the other committee members present at the time.

Any such disclosure and the subsequent actions taken will be noted in the minutes.

This policy is meant to supplement good judgment, and staff, volunteers and management committee members should respect its spirit as well as its wording.

# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX V: REGISTER OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

**Declaration of Interest**

**Name** .....

**Position** .....

**Connected person or organization**

**Nature of relationship and/or nature of conflict of interest**

.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....

**Signed** .....

**Date** .....

One form to be completed for each member of the committee annually and filed with the minutes. The register to be compiled and maintained by the County Secretary.



## APPENDIX VI: SPEAKING UP POLICY

### Background

The GAA aims to promote an open and accountable environment in which malpractice is deterred, stakeholders' interests are protected and the good reputation of the organisation is maintained.

In most situations conventional internal reporting lines are sufficient to prevent malpractice. However where suspected fraud, corruption or other malpractice has undermined the Association's internal controls and lines of reporting, whistleblowing can be an effective safeguard. This policy sets out the Association's procedures for facilitating and responding to such "speaking up".

The intention is to provide an independent, confidential, external channel for early and impartial reporting of concerns. This will help us to identify a potential problem, and deal with it, before it causes significant damage to the Association's operations and/or reputation.

### Scope

This policy covers suspected cases of illegal or unethical conduct by members or units of the GAA. It does not cover employment grievances or consumer complaints. Commitment

Matters, raised by members in the context of this policy will be taken seriously, will be investigated appropriately and, where so requested, can be raised in confidence

### Process

In the first instance the member should raise their concern with an executive officer of the county committee. If unable to raise the matter with a county officer for any reason the member should raise the matter with the CEO of the Provincial Council.

**If unable to raise their concern in the above manner, or if the risk or wrongdoing has been reported but has not been addressed, a member can contact the GAA "Speaking Up" service at 1800 848902 (from the 26 counties) or 0800 445033 (from the 6 counties and Britain)**

**A person making a report should be prepared to explain in full the information or circumstances that give rise to their concern even where this cannot be backed up by firm evidence.**

Any concern raised will be treated seriously, assessed on its merits and appropriately investigated.

All efforts will be made to give feedback to the individual on the outcome of any investigation, subject to legal or investigatory limits.

### Anonymity & Confidentiality

An anonymous report will be investigated. However it is likely to prove much more difficult to fully investigate such a report. In addition, it should not be assumed that the reporting person's anonymity can be protected. The Association will not be able to provide feedback on issues raised.

A member who prefers to report in confidence should state this clearly at the outset when initially raising the issue. The GAA will not disclose their identity unless required by law. There may be instances when a concern cannot be investigated or resolved without revealing the reporter's identity. Such circumstances will be discussed with the person before agreeing how best to proceed.

Where member raises a concern in good faith and it is subsequently established that there is no wrongdoing no action will be taken against the individual who raised the matter.

### Misuse

Any evidence of misuse of the procedures set out in this policy will be treated very seriously and may result in disciplinary action. Such instances include

- a member or unit creating difficulties for another member due to he/she raising a genuine concern
- any attempt to cover up wrongdoing
- making nuisance/vexatious claims



Pái



Círc an Chrócaígh

