Middlesex Freemasonary

The Lodge & Chapter Treasurer

A Guide and Help

Kanti Mistry

Provincial Grand Treasurer

May 2025

Provincial Grand Lodge of Middlesex

Provincial Grand Chapter of Middlesex

Congratulations on your election and welcome to the Treasures Club (TC)

We hope this booklet will help you to plan your appointment and help to make it both enjoyable and rewarding. It does not deal with every Lodge's needs but is a broad guide for most – more help is available – just ask and we will put you in touch with our TC centre representative.

For Chapter Treasurers please read Lodge as Chapter and the Rules in the Book of Constitutions applies.

The office of Treasurer is one of the two elected positions and holds the fourth highest rank in the Lodge. The Lodge has a financial responsibility, and the Members have the right to proper management of their funds. They should receive an accurate and complete financial report annually, which has been reviewed and to provide the Provincial Grand Treasurer with a copy. These responsibilities are outlined in the Book of Constitutions and the Lodge bylaws (see appendix).

Treasurers Guide Booklet

Executive Summary

This booklet provides comprehensive guidance for treasurers, covering essential topics such as financial management, budgeting, and reporting. It aims to equip treasurers with the knowledge and tools needed to effectively manage their Lodge/Chapter finances.

Introduction

The role of a treasurer is crucial in ensuring the financial stability and integrity of their Lodge/Chapter. This booklet aims to provide treasurers with practical advice and best practices for managing finances effectively.

Financial Management

Effective financial management is the cornerstone of a treasurer's responsibilities. This covers key aspects such as budgeting and financial reporting.

Budgeting

Budgeting is essential for planning and controlling financial resources. Guidelines on creating and maintaining a budget is provided.

Financial Reporting

Accurate financial reporting is vital for transparency and accountability. This outlines the principles and practices for preparing financial reports.

Risk Management

Risk management involves identifying and mitigating potential financial risks.

Internal Controls

Implementing robust internal controls helps safeguard assets and ensures financial accuracy.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the treasurer's role is integral to the financial health of the Lodge/Chapter. By following the guidelines and best practices outlined in this booklet, treasurers can effectively manage finances and contribute to their unit's success.

Please remember that this booklet is my suggestion it is up to you how you meet the obligations laid down; more importantly we are here to help you.

In order to plan your appointment, you need to gather together:

The books

A copy of the last accounts and the workings that made up those accounts.

Copy of the bank mandates – you will need to ensure that they are updated.

The bylaws which will give you target dates (year end, notice to members, when accounts need to be sent out etc) and the current rates – a model is available from the Provincial Office (check rate you pay with bylaws to ensure up to date)

A copy of the last Lodge Relief Chest Statement – the first page is all you need (the Charity Steward is responsible for collecting and banking but the Treasurer has to keep the accounts)

A list of outstanding fees and dues and relate them to the bylaws (unpaid for 6 months may be liable for exclusion)

List of outstanding liabilities (such as last printing bill and fees to UGL and Province)

The bank reconciliation (where the bank statement balance is reconciled to the Cash Book balance for any outstanding cheques or banking cleared after the year end)

The budget for the year – if none prepared you will need to do so – if showing a deficit then look at raising fees next year and dining this (2 meetings needed for notice and the vote on the proposition) and a voluntary contribution if there is little or no surplus from previous years to use.

Name and contact details of those elected to examine the accounts (try to have those near centre or your home)

Details of assets and insurance in place (review and update regularly) and remember to check the Centre as they often cover for loss and personal injury (but may not cover for Tyler and Organist)

Also look at the Pitfalls and Frequently Asked Questions handouts.

So where do you start after gathering the papers. You could use the existing books and system but please make sure that they match the broad basis of the booklet and remember the Lodge must meet its financial obligations and the accounts must be able to be audited and give a full and accurate reflection of the books and records and give a true and fair view of the assets and liabilities of the Lodge.

Produce a budget.

Open up the members accounts with any debts and this year's fees.

Open up the bank analysis with the opening balance of the bank.

Agree a timetable with the examiners so that examined accounts will be sent out and voted on within a short time after the year end.

Set up the accounts format (or better still use our model accounts format) and obtain and enter last year's figures.

After this, the duties are:

Sending out bills (probably with the Secretary when he sends out the summons)

Keeping the meeting sheet

Keeping up to date the Members account and the Cash Book

Promptly banking funds collected and paying bills.

During the year produce the next budget, but in time to change the fee rate if required.

Collect the money (try to use a system that does not involve too much cash and you running around during the festive boards – perhaps ask the secretary to send out envelopes with the amount due shown with the summons and get the members to put their fees, dining and visitors dining in it and hand it to you before the start of the meeting)

Look at outstanding debts (do a notice of motion the meeting before last, this will usually make late payers pay)

As the year end is reached

Total the books.

List the debtors.

List the outstanding liabilities.

Reconcile the bank(s)

Prepare the accounts.

Remind the examiners of the agreed examination meeting.

Send out the examined accounts (probably with the Secretary when he sends out the summons). I would suggest that you ask for queries by return to you so that they be eliminated and not wait for questions on the adoption meeting (however Members of course have a right to ask questions or make comments then)

Prepare and have to hand a short verbal report to make at the adoption meeting and the proposer and seconder in place.

After the year end

Produce the accounts.

Look at and analyse any variance between the budget and the actual figures.

Meet with the examiners.

Send the accounts to the members (ask the Secretary to include with the summons)

Open up next year's books and accounts format with this year as comparatives.

The not too small print!	
The Lodge Accounts	**Rule 153 Book of Constitutions**
The Lodge Property	**Rule 143 Book of Constitutions**
Payment of fees	**Rule 147 Book of Constitutions**
Secretary's subscription	**Rule 104(c) Book of Constitutions**
Fee Rates	**Lodge By Laws**
Year End	**Lodge By Laws**
Notice to Members	**Lodge By Laws**
Examiners Report	**See model accounts.**
Annual UGL/PGL Fees.	**These are billed in ARREARS so need accruing if not paid by year end**
Insurance	**This should be in place and reflect the value of assets (but not any shares held in the centre)**
Bank Mandate	**These should be current and in accordance with Rule 153 Book of Constitutions**

The Treasurers Club

This has been set up to assist Treasurers and share good practice. Each centre has a Centre Representative (usual the Treasurer of the local Past Masters/First Principals Lodge/Chapter. They or a local volunteer will assist.

They are there to help YOU – if you live near another centre then use that Representative.

More volunteers are needed!

Finally, please feel free to comment on this booklet – feedback will make it continually relevant.

Lodge No XXXX

Budget **For the year ended XX/XX/20XX**

						Last Year
Income						
Annual Subscriptions	*25 members*	*at £125*		0		0
Dining Fees	*20 members * 4 meetings*	*at £30*	0		0	
	*5 Guests * 4 meetings*	*at £25*	0		0	
			-----------		---------	
				0		0
Initiation		at £125		0		0
Interest				0		0
				---------		---------
				0		0
				---------		---------
Expenditure						
Grand Lodge Dues	*26 members*	*at £32*		0		0
PGL Dues	*26 members*	*at £26*		0		0
Initiates Fee		at £30		0		0
Year Book						
Room Rental	*4 meetings*	*at £125*		0		0
Locker Rental	*12 months*	*at £8*		0		0
Print & Stationery	*Printing 4 Summons*	*at £30*	0		0	
	Post 4 summons	*at £10*	0		0	
	Sundry	*say*	0		0	
			-----------		---------	
				0		0
Tyler & Organist	*4 Meetings*	*at £115*		0		0
Insurance & Sundries		*say*		0		0
Regalia			0		0	
Widows Xmas Gifts				0		0
Dining	*20 members * 4 meetings*	*at £28*	0		0	
	*5 Guests * 4 meetings*	*at £28*	0		0	
	*Secretary * 4 meetings*	*at £28*	0		0	
	Official/Other Visitors (4)	*at £28*	0		0	
			-----------		---------	
				0		0
				---------		---------
Surplus for the year				**0**		**0**
Brought Forward				0		0
				---------		---------
Carried Forward				**0**		**0**
				======		======
Fees Summary						
Costs				0		0
Add Dining Cost			0		0	
Less Dining Fee			0		0	
			---------		---------	
				0		0
				---------		---------
Members				25		25
Net Cost				0		0
Fee				125		125

Lodge No XXXX

Accounts - General Fund **For the year ended XX/XX/20/XX**

			Last Year	
Income				
Annual Subscriptions	0		0	
Dining Fees	0		0	
Initiation	0		0	
Interest	0		0	
	0	0	0	0
	--------		--------	
Expenditure				
Grand Lodge Dues	0		0	
PGL Dues	0		0	
Initiates Fee	0		0	
Year Book	0		0	
Room Rental	0		0	
Locker Rental	0		0	
Print & Stationery	0		0	
Tyler & Organist	0		0	
Insurance & Sundries	0		0	
Regalia	0		0	
Widows Xmas Gifts	0		0	
Dining	0		0	
	0	0		0
	--------		--------	
		--------		------
Surplus		0		0
Brought Forward		0		0
		--------		------
Carried Forward		0		0
		=====		
=====				

Accounts Benevolent Fund **For the year ended XX/XX/20XX**

		Last Year
Income		
Alms Collection	0	0
Raffle	0	0
Gift Aid Tax Repayment	0	0
Interest	0	0
	0	0
	--------	-----

	0	0
Expenditure		
Donations MCF	0	0
Donation XX	0	0
	--------	----

	0	0
	--------	----

Surplus	0	0
	=====	
=====		
Brought Forward	0	0
	--------	-----

Carried Forward	0	0
	=====	====

Balance Sheet **As at XX/XX/20XX**

		Last Year
Reserves		
General Fund	0	0
Benevolent Fund	0	0
	--------	--------
Carried Forward	0	0
	=====	=====
Represented By		
Current Account	0	0
Deposit Account	0	0
Lodge Relief Chest	0	0
	--------	--------
	0	0
Debtors		
Fees Outstanding	0	0
	--------	--------
	0	0
Creditors		
UGLE	0	0
PGL	0	0
PPS	0	0
	--------	--------
Carried Forward	0	0
	=====	=====

Treasurer
xx/xx/20xx

We have duly audited the Lodge Financial Statements and confirm that they are in accordance with the underlying books and records maintained by the Treasurer.

Auditor 1 Auditor 2

xx/xx/20xx

For Information Only

Accounts - Festival Account **For the year ended XX/XX/20XX**

			Last Year	
Income				
Ladies Night	0		0	
Raffles	0		0	
	------		-------	
		0		0
Expenditure				
Ladies Night	0		0	
Donation to Benevolent Fund	0		0	
	------		-------	
		0		0
		------		-------
Deficit (Surplus)		**0**		**0**
Brought Forward		0		0
		------		-------
Carried Forward		0		0
		====		====
Represented By				
		------		-------
Bank - Festival Account		0		0
		====		====

Meeting Form **Date xx/xx/20xx**

Due	**Dining**	**Guests**
Member 1		
Member 2		
Member 3		
Member 4		
Member 5		
Member 6		
Member 7		
Member 8		
Member 9		
Member 10		
Member 11		
Member 12		
Member 13		
Member 14		
Member 15		
Member 16		
	0	0

Received	**Fees**	**Dining**	**Guests**	**Broken Column**	**Cash**	**Cheque**
Member 1					0	0
Member 2					0	0
Member 3					0	0
Member 4					0	0
Member 5					0	0
Member 6					0	0
Member 7					0	0
Member 8					0	0
Member 9					0	0
Member 10					0	0
Member 11					0	0
Member 12					0	0
Member 13					0	0
Member 14					0	0
Member 15					0	0
Member 16					0	0
	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unpaid		0	0			
Paid Out						
Tyler					0	
						0
Banked						0
						=======
Dining Costs						0

PROVINCE OF MIDDLESEX

UNIT MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why does the Provincial Office criticise my efforts?

If the accounts do not present a clear picture to the Provincial Office it is unlikely that the Brethren of the Lodge are any the wiser. The Provincial Office will ask questions, offer advice and all the help you need to ensure that accounts may be understood by Lodge Members.

Where can I get help?

From the Provincial Office and the Treasurer's Club – just give the Office or Kanti a call. We can give advice and help or ask one of the Club members to talk/meet with you. Use the Province

What is Rule 153?

Rule 153 of the Book of Constitutions sets out the duties of a Lodge Treasurer and responsibility for producing annual accounts.

Does that mean that a Charity Steward may have to produce annual accounts?

If he administers a bank or building society Account- Yes.
The same may apply to an Almoner

Do I have to give information about the Grand Lodge Charity Relief Chest.

Yes. It is part of the Lodge funds.

My Lodge has insufficient income what shall I do?

Pass the hat round and ask for donations. Put up subs for next year

Can I hold a raffle to boost the Lodge General Fund?

No. See the paragraph on Lotteries in "Information for the Guidance of Members of the Craft"

Can I ask for donations to the Lodge from the Brethren?

Yes. Get the Lodge Committee to recommend such action.

What form must the accounts take?

Any, However they need to clearly show the Members the true position of income, expenditure, assets and liabilities for each individual account (Lodge, Benevolent etc). Why not use the Provincial Accounting Pack?

When do I have to submit the Annual Accounts to the Lodge Secretary?

In time for him to send them out with the Summons. See Lodge By-law regarding the Audit Committee. (Model By-Laws No. 5).

After non-payment of subscription or dining fees, how long should elapse before the Lodge takes action?

It can be less than one year. By-Laws should enable Notice of Motion to be given two meetings before the end of the Masonic Year.

Do I have to submit a Balance Sheet in the Accounts?

Yes. The accounts are incomplete without a Balance Sheet to show where funds are deposited. Use the Provincial Accounting Pack!

I use Receipts and Payments accounting so why shouldn't the money from the Benevolent Fund be included in with general funding?

It is essential that the accounts show the year end balance for each type of funding. The Benevolent funds may not support the Lodge General Fund. Use the Provincial Accounting Pack!

The examiners live miles away and are difficult to contact. Surely it is alright if they sign them on the evening when the accounts are approved by the Lodge?

No. The Examiners certify that they have examined the Treasurer's Books, have verified balances and are satisfied that they are a true record of the finances of the Lodge. They cannot do this five minutes before the meeting. In certain circumstances it might mislead members of the Lodge.

Our Lodge is a private organisation and we can do what we like with our money.

No. The Lodge and its members are bound by the provisions of the Book of Constitutions as well as the Law of the Land.

What is the confusion between an "Account Examiner" and an "Auditor"?

Few Lodges have sufficient income to require a registered Auditor. The words of the Model By-Laws must be followed.

Why do the accounts have to include an Examiners' Certificate?

See your Lodge By-Laws and the Model By-Laws

PROVINCE OF MIDDLESEX

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EXTRACTS FROM THE BOOK OF CONSTITUTION.

Treasurer's Duties and Lodge Accounts

153 (a) Save where a payment is made direct into the bank account of the Lodge, all moneys due to, or held for, the Lodge shall be paid or remitted, to the Treasurer direct, who shall without undue delay deposit the same in an account in the name of the Lodge at a bank to be approved by resolution of the Lodge. The Lodge may by resolution authorise the Treasurer, but on no pretence any other Brother, to make payments from the Lodge's account by electronic means; in the absence of any such resolution all payments from Lodge funds shall be made by cash or by cheque.

(b) The Treasurer, if available to do so, shall make such payments as are duly authorised, or have been sanctioned by the Lodge. All cheques must bear the signature the treasurer and (unless the Lodge resolves to the contrary) at least one other authorised by the Lodge. Provided that if it is impracticable for the Treasurer to sign any cheque it shall be sufficient for such cheque to bear the signature of two members authorised by the Lodge.

(c) The Treasurer shall regularly enter a complete record of all moneys passing through his hands in the proper books of account, which shall be the property of the Lodge, and which, together with all Lodge funds and property in his possession, shall be transferred to his successor upon investiture. He shall prepare a statement of accounts annually, at a date to be determined by the members, showing the exact financial position of the Lodge, which statement shall be verified and audited by a Committee of members of the Lodge annually elected for that purpose.

(d) Copies of the accounts and of the certificate signed by this Audit Committee that all balances have been checked and that the accounts have been duly audited shall be sent to all members of the Lodge together with the summons convening the meeting at which they are to be considered. Such meeting shall be not later than the third after the date to which the accounts are made up. The books of account shall be produced for inspection in open Lodge at such meeting, and on any other occasion if required by a resolution of the Lodge.

(e) The same procedure of annual accounts, audit and presentation to members of the Lodge shall, *mutatis mutandis*, be followed in relation to any other funds maintained by or in connection with the Lodge (whether by the Treasurer or by a Charity or other Steward or by any other member of the Lodge) such as, but not limited to, a Lodge Benevolent Fund, the funds of a Charity or Benevolent Association, Dining Fund, Charity Box collections or other moneys receivable from individual members of the Lodge or any of its Officers.

Election of Treasurer

112 (a) The Treasurer shall be elected by the members on the regular day of election of the Master and in the same manner.

(b) The Grand Master or in a Metropolitan Area, Province or District the Metropolitan, Provincial or District Grand Master may, upon the representation of the Master that the Treasurer by reason of ill health, absence likely to be protracted, or other special circumstances, is unable to discharge his duties to the reasonable convenience of the Lodge, grant a dispensation to the Lodge to elect a member, not serving a regular office in the Lodge, to discharge the duties of the Treasurer until the Treasurer is able to resume the normal discharge of his duties or until the next regular period of election, whichever shall first occur.

(c) Ten days' notice of intention to propose such an election together with a statement that the requisite dispensation has been obtained must appear on the summons for the meeting at which the election is to take place and such meeting may be either an ordinary meeting or an emergency meeting duly authorised pursuant to Rule 140.

By-laws

136 Every Lodge has the power of framing proper by-laws for its government, but no by-law nor any alteration thereof shall come into operation until approved on behalf of the Grand Master. In the case of a Lodge in a Metropolitan Area, Province or District, the by-laws and every alteration thereof shall be sent to the Metropolitan, Provincial or District Grand Secretary for the approval of the Metropolitan, Provincial or District Grand Master, who may, in the case of by-laws or any alteration thereof conforming to the model bylaws from time to time issued on behalf of the Grand Master, also grant approval on behalf of the Grand Master. In every other case, the by-laws and every alteration thereof shall be sent or forwarded (as the case may be) to the Grand Secretary for the approval of the Grand Master.
When finally approved, the by-laws must be printed, and a copy sent to the Grand Secretary, and also in the case first before mentioned to the Metropolitan, Provincial or District Grand Secretary.

Property, Furniture, Jewels, Books, Papers, etc., of a Lodge

143 All property of a Lodge not vested in special trustees belongs to, and is the property of, the Master and Wardens for the time being, in trust for the members of the Lodge. If any Lodge shall pledge its jewels and furniture or any part thereof, or permit or suffer any charge or lien thereon to arise or to be created, then its warrant is liable to be forfeited. Every member of a Lodge is bound on ceasing to hold an office in the Lodge forthwith to hand over to his successor in such office all books, papers, documents, and other property, if any, in his possession or under his control by virtue of his having held such office.

Lodge Subscriptions

145 All members entitled to the same privileges of a Lodge must pay annually the same amount of subscription, save that, if the by-laws so provide, a smaller rate of annual subscription may be fixed for members who, for some cause satisfactory to the Lodge, are not in a position to enjoy such privileges regularly.

No Lodge may by its by-laws or otherwise provide that any subscribing member thereof shall not be entitled to receive summonses, or be disqualified from holding office therein, but a Lodge may in its by-laws provide that members who are in default in the payment of their subscriptions for some specified period, not less than three months after their becoming due, shall be deprived while so in default of all or any of the rights of voting, proposing or seconding candidates, and being appointed or elected to office.

Remittance of fees, etc.

147 Every Lodge when it makes the return required by the preceding Rule shall remit the proper fees and contributions payable pursuant to Rules 269 and 271 in respect of every member whose name appears thereon, irrespective of whether his subscription has been paid or not. In the case of a member who has not paid his subscription the date to which he is clear on the books of the Lodge shall be stated in the appropriate place on the return form.

Cessation of membership when two years in arrear

148 Should the subscription of a member to his Lodge remain unpaid for two full years, at the expiration of that period he shall cease to be a member of the Lodge, which fact shall be reported to the Lodge at the next regular meeting, and recorded on the minutes. He can only become a member again by regular proposition and ballot according to Rule 163, and the Lodge shall require payment of the arrears as a condition precedent to his election. This Rule shall not prevent any Lodge proceeding against any of its members under Rule 181 in respect of sums due for a shorter period than two years, if so provided in its by-laws. When a Brother ceases to be a member under this Rule, and also when a Brother subsequently pays his arrears of subscription the fact shall be notified to the Grand Secretary and, if the Lodge be within a Metropolitan Area, Province or District, also to the Metropolitan, Provincial or District Grand Secretary. The provisions of Rules 9, 163, 175 and 182 shall apply in the case of a Brother ceasing to be a member under this Rule as if he had been excluded by vote.

Returns by Lodges in Metropolitan Areas, Provinces and Districts

149 If a Lodge be in a Metropolitan Area, Province or District, it shall make returns similar to those required to be made to the Grand Secretary once in each year, or oftener if required, to the Metropolitan, Provincial or District Grand Secretary, and transmit therewith all moneys payable to the Metropolitan, Provincial or District Grand Lodge.

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UNIT MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

RESPONSIBILITY OF TREASURER IN RELATION TO CHARITY STEWARD

These guidance notes are for the Lodge and Chapter Treasurer and the Examination Committee and cover all the financial aspects of the Charity Stewards activities.

Overview

The Charity Steward's role is to manage all of the charitable activities of the Lodge. This includes collecting money, banking money and running the Relief Chest.

Due to the confidentiality of the information received by the Charity Steward, this should not be shared with other Members of the Lodge.

Accounting and Banking

It may be that the accounting is undertaken by the Lodge Treasurer. However, you will only be provided with the total money that is collected and not the individual make up of specific Members unless of course a Member of the Lodge pays by cheque or direct credit

Relief Chest

A Relief Chest need to be opened which is VERY simple task and the Charity Steward will be the nominated representative. The Charity Steward is advised that no information should be passed to any third party except that page 1 of the Relief Chest should be passed to you on an annual basis.

Gift Aid Envelopes

This facility considerably increase the charity take and you should encourage it and offer assistance. The form to send with the envelopes is VERY simple to complete and the individual envelopes are not listed only totalled according to the box ticked by the Member.

When the Gift Aid envelopes are opened it would be sensible for a second person to be there to help count the money, however the envelope should be opened by the Charity Steward and the money handled by the second party. Obviously the Charity Steward should ensure the amount on each individual envelope agrees with the amount that has been counted by the second person.

Accounts

You need to include the Accounts of every fund in the Annual Accounts and this includes the Benevolent Fund and the Relief Chest. If the Benevolent Fund is maintained by the Charity Steward then Accounts need to be prepared by the Charity Steward and provided to you annually. In respect of the Relief Chest, the Treasurer needs to either attach page 1 of the Relief Chest to the Accounts or better still include a summary of that in the Accounts

Examination Committee

The books and records will need to be audited by the Audit Committee. The Audit Committee may wish to see information held by the Charity Steward in respect of the Relief Chest, including the Gift Aid collection envelopes report. This information will need to be provided should they have any queries on the Accounts. However, the contents of this information should be treated in strictest confidence and unless there is any specific reason I would have thought the individual makeup of the amounts that have come into the Relief Chest by Members is not necessary. The Examination Committee should ensure the collections of all meetings have been included in the totals which are shown on page 1 of the Relief Chest report, or through the Charity Bank accounts.

May 2025

PROVINCE OF MIDDLESEX

UNIT MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

LOTTERIES

Since the Board reported to Grand Lodge on lotteries in March 1981 and September 1983, there has been no significant change in the law on the subject. There has, however, been a change in Grand Lodge's approach towards outside bodies and the public in general. The Board has considered its previous reports in the light of that change, and hopes that the Grand Lodge will endorse the following statement on lotteries.

There is no inherent Masonic objection to any form of lottery currently permitted by law, and a lottery with a Masonic character may, therefore, be used by members of the Craft to raise money for any lawful purpose, subject to the qualifications set out below. Such a lottery should, in general, be used to raise money only for charity, other benevolent purposes, or some other specific object not directed to private gain; no form of lottery should in any circumstances be used to defray the general running expenses of a Lodge, Province or District.

A lottery has a Masonic character if it is promoted or run by Freemasons

a. a. who declare their capacity as such; or

b. b. for a purpose, or on behalf of a body, which is identifiably Masonic, whether or not the purpose or body includes words such as "Masonic" or "Freemason" in its title or description.

The Board considers it essential that the purpose for which any such lottery is held is clearly stated to anyone to whom chances in the lottery are offered for sale. It does not accord with the spirit of Masonic charity or of Masonic bodies that lotteries should be held which seek money under the banner of Freemasonry from other than Masonic sources (Masonic sources include anyone who has a family or other close personal connection with the Craft or with any of its members). It is therefore inappropriate for tickets for a lottery with a Masonic character to be made available for sale to the public at large.

The responsibility for compliance with the provisions of the law rests firmly on those responsible for promoting and assisting in the running of lotteries. It is the duty of such Brethren to ensure, by obtaining where necessary appropriate procedural and legal advice, that the Craft is not brought into disrepute by any failure to meet all legal requirements, or for any other reason. Advice is readily available from, among others, the Gaming Board for Great Britain, local authorities, the National Council for Voluntary Organisations and the Institute of Charity Fundraising Managers.

Three classes of lottery are currently permitted by the law of England and Wales (except in the case of local authorities), namely small lotteries incidental to exempt entertainments, private lotteries and society's lotteries.

c. The Board sees no objection to "small lotteries incidental to exempt entertainments" (for example, a raffle at a dinner), provided that the entertainment is of a Masonic character.

d. A "private lottery" (for example a "100 club") is subject to complex and restrictive rules with which it is difficult to comply, and the Board therefore considers that such lotteries, if appropriate for Masonic purposes, should be subject to the same restrictions as society's lotteries (see below).

e. A "society's lottery", for which registration of the organisation is required, is appropriate for fundraising on a larger scale, for example a Provincial Benevolent Fund or one of the Masonic Charities or local charities, or when a Private Lodge sponsors a special appeal. The written leave of the Provincial or District Grand Master (or, in London, of the Board of General Purposes) must be obtained at the earliest opportunity, both before registration is applied for, and again before any individual lottery is organised.

Literature which includes Masonic forms of address in promoting the sale of lottery tickets is unacceptable, even if it emanates from Associations of Friends, over which Grand Lodge has no jurisdiction.

Provincial and District Grand Masters and Masters of Lodges should refuse to permit the distribution of literature or tickets which clearly infringe any of the above principles, and may refuse to permit their distribution if in their opinion the spirit of those principles is infringed.

(Extract from Report of Board of General Purposes, adopted 14 December 1994.)

MAY 2025

PROVINCE OF MIDDLESEX

UNIT MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

PITFALLS

Our accounts don't balance

Contact the Provincial Office so that we can put you in touch with a member of the Treasurers' Club who can assist you. If you use the Provincial accounting pack, you can't go wrong! Our Club member will only be too pleased to set this up and show you how it works.

I noticed that payments have been made to our Relief Chest and I can't find anything about it.

First thing to do is ask the Charity Steward to contact the Grand Charity to get a printout from him. It's his territory but in order for the accounts to show a full and proper state of affairs of the Lodge, it needs to be included. You will also need to remind him each year to get you a copy so you can include it in the accounts. You may be exceptionally surprised at what you find and may need to discuss this matter with the Provincial Office and even the Lodge members. There have been two occurrences so far where a request for help to the Provincial Office has found nearly £18,000 that the Treasurer and the Lodge had no idea they had!

The Lodge has broken even and we have a small retained surplus. Is everything okay?

Well, is it? Have you taken into consideration the liability the Lodge has at the end of the financial year to Provincial Grand Lodge and Grand Lodge for annual fees? These are charged in arrears and, in our experience, most Lodges only include it on a payments basis in the following year. It is essential that you bite the bullet and include these in this year's accounts and then the figure that you paid this year for last year should be shown as a prior year adjustment. This will hopefully leave you with a balance or a small surplus or a small deficit for this year, but it may eradicate your surpluses. You will need to put a note to explain this to the Brethren. Not putting this into the accounts is very, very misleading. If you end up with an overall deficit, contact the Provincial Office to get some advice.

We have a deficit carried forward but there is money in the bank account. How did this happen?

In my experience is what has happened is that you haven't been operating a separate benevolent bank account (which you should in any event). The net result is that you are using benevolent money to prop up the Lodge. This is not allowed, and the Lodge is in a very dangerous position, both from a financial and legal point-of-view. It is essential that either a separate bank account is opened, or, that there are sufficient funds in the bank account to cover the balance on your benevolent fund account.

We have large surpluses on both the Lodge and the Benevolent Fund, and these have been put into one deposit account to get higher interest.

Yes; this is reasonable. There is sufficient money for both the Lodge and the Benevolent Fund in the total bank accounts. I would suggest that you contact the Provincial Charity

Steward as charity money has been collected for charitable purposes and unless the Lodge has a specific reason for holding substantial sums of money, you may be in contravention of Charity Commissioners' rules.

I cannot get all the examiners together to examine the accounts. One normally gives a cursory glance over the books and the others follow his example.

This is really not good practice. It is essential for the examiners to examine the books and records and see how the accounts have been prepared and be able to verify the underlying documents. It is possible for you to provide an 'audit pack', which contains sufficient information for the examiners to carry out the examination remotely and copies of this could be produced so that they could be sent to each of the individual examiners. They would then need to contact each other if they have any queries so that these queries can be recorded, resolved and eliminated. Their (and your) duties are covered by the rules and regulations; not only Masonic but also statutory and should be treated in such fashion.

I haven't sufficient money to pay the Lodge bills.

Obviously, this is a dreadful situation and you should contact the Provincial Office for advice. You will probably have to 'pass the hat round' and undertake some debt management.

I am having a problem with the amount of cash that I receive …

This is probably the biggest woe of the Treasurer. It is important to keep a complete record of all monies received and paid out (Tyler, organist, charity donation, etc). A record should be kept for each individual meeting on pro-forma (see Provincial accounts pack).

I would also suggest that when you attend a meeting, that you have your own personal money safely put away in your back pocket and that all monies you receive you put into another pocket or, preferably, a bag for that purpose. If your dining fee is a number that would require change, it might also be sensible to take a bag with the appropriate change for which you have put an opening balance in your cash control. Do try not to dip into your own personal money to give people change because you will end up having sleepless nights about how much money you have lost! Also, you don't want to go round the meeting trying to collect money; it is going to spoil your evening so use an envelope system. You can leave an envelope for each individual member by the signature book for them to put their money in. A little bit of preparatory work will allow you to show if there are any arrears and the dining fee for themselves and for any guests. They can tick the boxes and leave the appropriate money (preferably cheque) in the envelope.

I have inherited a situation where there are long-term debtors.

This is probably in contravention of both your bylaws and also Grand Lodge rules. However, taking these rules into consideration may provide you with a very difficult – and intolerable – situation. If you can have the debt paid off over a reasonable period and ensure that the member for the current year meets his liabilities in accordance with the bylaws and Grand Lodge rules, then this is probably the best approach.

There has been a situation where the application of the correct rules would have meant half the Lodge would have been excluded! However, two years down the line, there were no debts even for the current year.