

**PROTOCOL WHEN THE PROVINCIAL GRAND MASTER, DEPUTY
PROVINCIAL GRAND MASTER OR AN ASSISTANT PROVINCIAL GRAND
MASTER (CHAIN BEARING OFFICER - CBO) ATTENDS A CRAFT LODGE
PROCLAMATION MEETING.**

Foreword

Lodges hold a Proclamation Ceremony, where the Worshipful Master is staying in the 'Chair' for a second consecutive year. There could be all sorts of reasons for this to happen and it does not necessarily mean that a Lodge is struggling.

The Proclamation Ceremony can and should still be a celebration for the Lodge and the Worshipful Master.

A Lodge can simply open up to the First Degree, proclaim the Worshipful Master for another year and after appointing the Officers of the Lodge, close it. This would of course mean that no Brother gets an opportunity to carry out any ritual, that guests and visitors do not get the chance to witness the Lodge carrying out any ceremony and the Principal Guest and Representative of the RWPrGM does not receive any Salutations (West Lancashire Protocol dictates that Salutations should only be given in the Third Degree, without exception). This brief ceremony could result in Brethren being in the Lodge room for approximately 30 minutes and is obviously not recommended.

The ceremony can be tailored around a Lodge's custom, but if the Group and Lodge have invited a Chain Bearing Officer as the Principal Guest, then this Protocol should be adhered to.

1. This document should be read in conjunction with the 'Guide for Director of Ceremonies' to be found on the West Lancashire Provincial website.
2. The RWPrGM and DPGM will always be accompanied and attended upon by the Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies (PrGDC) or a Provincial Deputy Grand Director of Ceremonies (PrDGDC).
3. An APGM will not normally have either a PrGDC or PrDGDC with him. It will therefore be the responsibility of the Lodge Director of Ceremonies to ensure that this procedure is adhered to.
4. A copy of the Lodge summons should be forwarded to the CBO and the PrGDC/PrDGDC, as soon as it has been prepared. Also forward to them the full menu of the Festive Board and please include any alternatives that are available.

5. The CBO will be pleased (if requested to do so and if given prior notice) to deliver the Address to the Brethren.
6. It would also be appropriate for the CBO to be informed of any interesting or unusual detail regarding the Lodge or any of its members. This would include information on the Worshipful Master, any recent promotions in the Lodge, significant Lodge changes, bereavements, etc.
7. Unless agreed beforehand, the CBO will not be expected to take part in any part of the meeting or ceremony other than giving the Address to the Brethren. If the Lodge wishes him to do anything additional, such as present a Grand Lodge certificate, etc, this should be communicated to him several weeks before his attendance. It should also be communicated to the PrGDC/PrDGDC attending upon him.
8. It is anticipated that the CBO will arrive at the Masonic Hall up to one hour before the start of the meeting. If possible it would be appreciated to have as many members of the lodge (of all ranks) present to meet and greet him. Light refreshments would be agreeable, but not essential.
9. Where possible the CBO should be provided with a car parking place and he should be notified of where he should park several days before his attendance.
10. The CBO, PrGDC/PrDGDC should be informed of how to gain access to the Masonic Hall, such as any key-code number.
11. Grand and Provincial Grand Officers should be asked to wear full dress regalia for the meeting.
12. Grand Officers and the Group Chairman should be requested to wear tailcoats for a Proclamation meeting.
13. The Lodge should select two **West Lancashire Provincial Officers** to act as Provincial Grand Deacons for the meeting. It should be noted that they will be required to be in the Procession and Recession. They will therefore not be in the Lodge for the opening or closing. They should be informed that they will be required to wear full dress regalia (no Lodge collars) and be present in the Lodge room 1 hour before the start of the meeting. If they are to be 'collared' as an Officer of the Lodge, they should remove these collars as soon as they resume their seats. They will also be required to sit on the front row in the South East corner of the Lodge. Two reserved seat notices will be brought for them. The Lodge should also provide two Deacons wands and 2 wand stands.
14. Additional wand stand(s) should each be provided for the PrGDC, PrDGDC and any Acting Provincial Grand Stewards (if attending).

15. The PrGDC/PrDGDC will bring reserved notices for the Grand and Acting Provincial Grand Officers, as well as the Group Chairman. There is no need for the Lodge to provide these when the PrGDC or PrDGDC are attending, but the Lodge should organise these, if they are not.
16. The PrGDC/PrDGDC/Lodge DC will hold a rehearsal before the meeting for the WM, Provincial Deacons and any Acting Provincial Grand Officers. They should be in the Lodge Room **1 hour before the start of the meeting for this rehearsal to take place**. All of these officers MUST have been clearly informed that they must report to the PrGDC/PrDGDC/Lodge DC in the Lodge room promptly for this rehearsal, irrespective of whether they have done this before.
17. The Lodge should have previously rehearsed the admission of latecomers to the meeting who should be admitted PRIOR to the main Procession. Latecomers should not be allowed to 'tag' onto the main Procession.
18. The Lodge should commence promptly (**recommended start time no later than 6pm**) and carry out the business, as per the Lodge summons.
19. The Lodge should then open up to the Second and then the Third Degree without performing any of the Proclamation Ceremony.
20. Once the Lodge has opened up to the Third Degree the Tyler will give the Third Degree knocks. He will then say to the Inner Guard *"The Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies (or Provincial Deputy Grand Director of Ceremonies) seeks admission"*.
21. If the PrGDC or PrDGDC are not in attendance, the Lodge DC should retire from the Lodge after it has opened in the 3rd Degree. Once he has ensured that the procession is ready the Tyler will give the Third Degree knocks. He will then say to the Inner Guard *"The Director of Ceremonies on his return to the Lodge"*.
22. The Inner Guard will then interact with the Junior Warden, who will inform the Inner Guard to admit him.
23. The PrGDC/PrDGDC/Lodge DC will then enter alone, salute and address the WM *"The RWPrGM (DPGM or APGM) stands without and demands admission"*. The WM should respond *"We will be honoured and pleased to receive him"*.
24. The Brethren will be asked to stand and the Procession will take place under the direction of the PrGDC/PrDGDC/Lodge DC. The CBO will salute the WM from the top of the Lodge room, which should be acknowledged by the WM with a court bow.

25. The CBO will then make his way to the East, through a cordon of Grand and Acting Provincial Grand Officers.
26. The PrGDC/PrDGDC/Lodge DC will quietly introduce the CBO to the WM. The CBO, Grand Officers and Group Chairman will then take their seats without prompting, before the PrGDC/PrDGDC/Lodge DC says *“Brethren, be seated”*.
27. As soon as the Acting Provincial Officers have taken their seats, the WM should then stand and formally welcome the CBO to the Proclamation Meeting and offer him the gavel of the lodge. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, agreed with the CBO and the PrGDC/PrDGDC beforehand, the gavel will be declined and returned to the WM.
28. Salutations will then be conducted by the PrGDC/PrDGDC/Lodge DC, as per the ‘Guide for Director of Ceremonies’.
29. At the conclusion of the salutations the Ceremony then proceeds under the direction of the Lodge DC.
30. The Lodge should then carry out any 3rd degree business, such as the 3rd Degree Working Tools, if they are to be given (recommended, see foreword).
31. The WM will then close (by virtue) to the 2nd Degree, followed by the readmission of any Fellow Crafts.
32. The Lodge should then carry out any 2nd degree business, such as the 2nd Degree Working Tools, if they are to be given (recommended, see foreword).
33. The WM will then close (by virtue) to the 1st Degree, followed by the readmission of any Entered Apprentices.
34. There should then be an explanation of the 1st Degree Tools, if they are to be given (recommended, see foreword).
35. The Lodge DC should then stand, court bow to the WM and say *“Brethren upstanding”*.
36. Once all the Brethren are standing, the Lodge DC should then say *“Brethren I now declare Brother ***** Worshipful Master of this The *****Lodge. Number **** in the register of the United Grand Lodge of England for the ensuing 12 months or until a successor shall have been duly elected and installed in his stead. And I now call upon you to greet him with a single court bow”*. *“Brethren be seated”*.
37. Once the Brethren have resumed their seats the Lodge DC should stand and say to the WM *“Worshipful Master you will now appoint and invest your Officers”*.

38. It is not necessary to re-collar Officers who are staying in post. They can stand and acknowledge the WM upon re-appointment with a single court bow. Likewise it is not necessary to give collar addresses to those Brethren who have received this on a previous occasion.
39. If an Acting Provincial Grand Officer has been asked to deliver any Collar Addresses they will ordinarily be escorted by the PrGDC/PrDGDC, unless agreed beforehand with the Lodge DC.
40. If the CBO is to give the Address to the Brethren, he will be escorted and prompted by the PrGDC/PrDGDC if they are present and by the Lodge DC, if they are not.
41. It is recommended that the Address to the Wardens and Address to the Brethren are still given at a Proclamation Ceremony (see foreword).
42. At the point where the actual Proclamation is concluded, the Lodge DC should rise and say "*Worshipful Master that now completes the ceremony of your Proclamation, you will now revert to the summons*". The CBO will then rise and bring greetings from the RWPrGM.
43. If a cheque for Charities is to be given to the CBO it should be presented to him after he has risen to give those greetings and BEFORE he resumes his seat.
44. The Lodge should then revert to the summons.
45. After the first rising and greetings have been given by the Grand Officers, the PrGDC/PrDGDC/Lodge DC will form up a recession of the CBO, Grand and Acting Provincial Grand Officers and Group Chairman.
46. The CBO will salute the WM from the top of the Lodge room. The WM should acknowledge the salute with a court bow.
47. Brethren who are required to retire from the Lodge before it has closed, such as those required for stewarding duties, or bar work, etc, should do so in the correct and appropriate manner, They should not join in the main Recession.
48. The second, third risings and the closure of the lodge will then be under the direction of the Lodge DC.
49. The festive board should be commenced promptly **(7.30pm, if a 6pm Lodge start time)** and the caterers should be ready to serve the first course no later than 1 hour 30 minutes after the Lodge start time.
50. It should ALWAYS be the case that the caterers are waiting for the Brethren and not that the Brethren are waiting for the caterers.

51. If for whatever reason, these times cannot be achieved. The explanation MUST be communicated and agreed with the PrGDC or PrDGDC in advance. Not on the day of the meeting.
52. The festive board will be conducted in its entirety under the direction of the PrGDC/PrDGDC/Lodge DC, until such time as the CBO retires.
53. The Festive Board seating plan is the same as for an Installation and is available on the Provincial Website. It should be strictly adhered to, without exception.
54. A Procession will be organised and conducted by the PrGDC/PrDGDC/Lodge DC into the Festive Board.
55. The Lodge Chaplain or a stand-in should be prepared to say Grace and Return of Thanks before and after the meal.
56. If raffles are normal at your festive boards, then this will be acceptable, but efforts, such as using stewards to deliver prizes should be encouraged to minimise delay.
57. Use of the shortened toast list, with the Tylers Toast immediately following the WM's response is strongly encouraged. However, should the Lodge wish to continue with additional toasts such as to visitors, charity, absent brethren, etc, the CBO will retire under the direction of the PrGDC/PrDGDC/Lodge DC after the WM's response.
58. It is however acceptable for the WM to include these additional toasts within his response, but without reply from any other Brethren.
59. If toast cards are to be printed, they should not include the proposer or responder.
60. The PrGDC/PrDGDC/Lodge DC should bring individual toast cards to be used by the WM and others making toasts 1 to 5.
61. If the Principal Guest is the DPGM or an APGM he should be associated with Toast 3 and respond to that Toast. The RWPrGM will respond to Toast 4.
62. Toast 6 should still be to the Worshipful Master and should be given by a Past Master of the Lodge.
63. Appropriate honours should be given after the response to any of the Toasts.

Barry Fitzgerald
PrGDC (October 2023)