**Riley Restorers club Inc**

**Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)**

**Preamble**

The Riley Restorers Club is about meeting and connecting with likeminded men and women in pursuit of their hobby. Monthly meetings are about conducting the business of the club and for the exchange of ideas, encouragement and offering specific restoration advice to members who are looking for ways of improving the running or doing repairs on their Rileys. The purpose of the club is to facilitate the restoration of Riley motor cars and in order to fulfil that goal we provide for the giving and receiving of advice, giving and receiving parts that may be rare, camaraderie, building lifelong friendships, attending meetings where everyone is accepted irrespective of religion, race, gender or gender orientation.

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) provides guidance about behaviour in meetings. It sets out standards for behaviour. It also provides guidance for dealing with misbehaviour. It is not intended to be a warning about the consequences of poor behaviour but a reassurance to members that what needs to be done has been done to assure all members that every member is respected, protected and their contributions valued.

Another purpose of this document is to protect volunteers of the club from inappropriate public attacks, and to maintain order and acceptable behaviour and speech in a club meeting. Meetings should be a safe place for every member. It sets out procedures for dealing with differences of opinion.

**Expected behaviour**

Language in public meetings should be acceptable and polite. Those attending meetings are expected to display courteous behaviour.

**Definitions of unacceptable behaviour**

Behaviour that is unacceptable includes

1. Raised voices (yelling at another member),
2. Swearing and denigrating words whether directed at another member or not.
3. Refusing to allow another member to express their opinion.
4. Sexist jokes or jokes that denigrate the person or lifestyle of someone of any gender or sexual orientation.

This behaviour makes meetings uncomfortable for other members who simply want to enjoy the exchange of thoughts of likeminded enthusiasts. Differences of opinion or dislike of another member is not an excuse for arguments or vilification.

**Practices**

Prior to a person becoming a member they are to be given a copy of the MOU and tick the box on the membership form that affirms that they have read and agreed to the MOU.

Complaints about another member must be put in writing and given to the committee for consideration before the complaint is presented to a public meeting.

Complaints about a committee member or more than one member of the committee must be put in writing and considered by the committee prior to being presented at a public meeting. Those who preside over meetings have a set of procedures for dealing with interjections, irrelevant comments or vacuous criticisms, including inviting someone who has lost his temper to go for a 5 minute walk to calm down.

Office bearers who give their time and effort or members making contributions should be respected and protected from vacuous public criticisms. They are, after all unpaid volunteers who are giving their time and talents to a club because of their enjoyment of their hobby. In any case and in all cases, there ought to be consequences for not respecting other members of the club.

The MOU should be provided to each member annually when they renew their membership

**Differences of opinion**

Every member should be free to express their thoughts without inappropriate criticism. Others should listen politely without interjection.

**Chairman’s powers**

The president or the person presiding over meetings has the authority to keep order and correct poor behaviour and may exercise agreed procedures for dealing with issues and invoke penalties for non-compliance.

Speeches are to be decibel and time limited.

The following are the procedures for dealing with interjections, irrelevant comments or vacuous criticisms. The chairman has the power to

1. Ask a member to withdraw a comment
2. Ask a member to apologise for making an unsubstantiated criticism
3. Overrule a vacuous criticism
4. Ask a member to vacate the meeting room and take a 5 minute walk to calm down
5. Expel a member for the duration of the meeting
6. If a member maintains unacceptable behaviour they may be banned from attending the next meeting and up to three meetings
7. In extreme cases the constitution makes allowance and provides a procedure for withdrawing membership from a member for unacceptable behaviour.

**Conclusion**

Unacceptable behaviour is a reflection on the club’s culture. All people do from time to time lose their composure and make an inappropriate comment and a simple apology is sufficient in most cases for the meeting to move on.

Language and behaviour should be acceptable to anyone who attends. Meetings should always be a safe place for those attending them. Instructing a person to take some time out is solely within the power of the person presiding over the meeting. Sometimes people need to go for a short walk to calm down. It is exercised in our state and federal parliaments so it is also practiced in this club.