**FRIENDS OF MV FREEDOM**

**Charity Number 283955**

**POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICE TO COMPLY WITH EXISTING LEGISLATION**

**1. INTRODUCTION:-**

The Trustees, members and volunteers are under a constant obligation to conduct themselves in a proper manner and must comply with the law in every regard. The following paragraphs address policy first on matters of specific relevance, followed by the relevant procedures.

**2. CONDUCT:-**

2.1 Everyone is expected to behave in a professional, conscientious and

responsible manner at all times. In return they will be treated fairly

and with respect and given help and advice as needed.

2.2 The charity is committed to equality and will not tolerate discrimination

with regard to race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, gender, marital

status, disability, religion, age, or sexual orientation. Nor will it

tolerate harassment or bullying of any kind. Members have a duty to

report any inappropriate behaviour to the Trustees, who will consider the circumstances and take appropriate action.

**2.3**

 If any member is :-

2.3.1 suspected of a criminal offence especially involving violence, dishonesty, or deliberate damage relating to other members, volunteers or the charities property, the Trustees shall immediately report the offence to the Police and may suspend the member concerned until the conclusion of the Police enquiries;

2.3.2 acting in a way that is significantly detrimental to the interests of the charity or fellow members, or is likely to bring the charity into disrepute, in a manner which places future membership in doubt, the matter shall be immediately reported to the Trustees. The Trustees will then decide the course of action to be followed, which may include a report to the police and/or immediate suspension.

2.3.3 seen to be failing in his or her behaviour in any other respect, the Trustees will take ap

 propriate local action.

**3.0 PROCEDURE (Hearings – suspension – involvement of police)**

3.1.1 In the event of an accusation under 2.3.3, immediate enquiries should be made in order to gather evidence and establish whether or not the accusation is supported. If the evidence does not support further action the member should be informed.

3.1.2 Where appropriate a member may be suspended whilst enquiries are being carried out.

3.1.3 Before any disciplinary hearing takes place:-

* the member should be advised in writing of the time and place, and requested to attend;
* he or she may be accompanied by a friend.
* at least 24hours notice should be given

3.1.4 In order to make any local hearing as impartial as possible, it should consist of three members including at least one Trustee, who is not the Chairman of the charity, and that was not involved in the investigation of the allegations. It will be desirable to include a person with sufficient experience of employment law and disciplinary proceedings, who need not necessarily be a member of the charity.

3.1.5 All information gathered in the course of a hearing must be treated asconfidential. A written note must be kept.

3.1.6 Any subsequent action decided by a local hearing can include:-

* a limited period of closer supervision
* a verbal or written warning
* a final written warning
* immediate dismissal(for matters of gross misconduct).

3.1.7 Any action taken should be made clear to the member concerned

verbally at the meeting or after any adjournment and immediately

confirmed in writing.

3.1.8 A member may appeal against any disciplinary decision:-

* This must be done in writing within twenty-one days of receiving notice of the decision and must set out reasons for the appeal.
* The Appeal panel of at least three persons should include the Chairman, plus two different members/trustees from those who heard the original hearing.
* It will be desirable to include one person with sufficient experience of employment law and disciplinary proceedings. The decision of any Appeal hearing will be final.

3.1.9 If a referral is made to the Trustees with a view to a termination of membership, the Board as a whole will decide the outcome.

3.1.10 The authority to terminate the membership of any individual member

rests solely with the Trustees. However, a member may voluntarily resign at any time.

3.1.11 As a matter of natural justice, it is vital that before any decisions to terminate membership are made about a member, he or she must:

* be given details of all allegations;
* be made fully aware of all of the evidence;
* be allowed to answer all of the allegations.

3.1.12 All allegations must be proved upon the balance of probabilities.