



**Proposed Private Hire Operator Awards Scheme**

**Rochdale MBC Licensing**

 **November 2013**

Awards Scheme

As part of your Private Hire Operator licence conditions you will be periodically audited and awarded a grade/award (Bronze, Silver or Gold) to rate your business or not be awarded a grade/award at all.

*No Award* - Non-compliance with legislation/conditions. Improvement Notice issued.

*Bronze Award* - Some non-compliance with legislation/conditions – more effort required.

*Silver Award* - Full level of legal compliance/conditions. Only minor issues not addressed.

*Gold Award* **-** Full level of compliance with conditions plus demonstrate areas of best practice.

1. Introduction

1.1 The aim of the Awards scheme is to promote the private hire trade within the Metropolitan Borough of Rochdale and ensure that their high quality service is recognised by the affixing of a grade/award (Bronze, Silver or Gold) on their vehicles and at the Operator bases.

1.2 In addition it allows the residents of the Borough and those visiting to make a free choice of who they wish to conduct business with via the grade awarded to a particular company.

2. Licensing Objectives

2.1 The Council has set objectives in relation to the licensing of the private hire/hackney trade.

They are: -

(a) Ensuring passengers have safe journeys at a transparent price;

(b) Ensuring vehicles are safe, accessible and reducing their impact on the environment;

(c) Ensuring drivers are safe and know what they are doing; and

(d) To provide a quality service to the public within the Borough.

3. Assessment criteria

3.1 Assessment of the grade awarded to each Operator will be a series of indicators which will be assessed by a Licensing Officer in conjunction with the Operator or his/her nominated person.

3.2 It should be noted that dependant on the outcome of the assessment, the grade awarded could go up as well as down, subject to the Appeal provision.

3.3 Assessment will take place as detailed below which is linked to the grade/award an Operator may currently have, but could be reviewed at any time by either the Council or upon the request of the Operator if he/she thinks they can achieve a higher award/grade.

No Award – Once every month

Bronze Award – Once every 3 months

Silver Award – Once every 6 months

Gold Award – Once every Year

It is likely that in addition to the scheduled visit there may be a spot check conducted from time to time to ensure on-going compliance with the scheme.

4. Determination & Appeals

4.1 Once the criteria have been assessed by a Licensing Officer and the form completed, a decision will be made on the grade to be awarded by the Licensing Manager. If a Private Hire Operator is aggrieved by the grade awarded, he/she may lodge a written appeal within 7 days which will result in an appearance before the Licensing Panel.

4.2 A certificate will then be forwarded to the Private Hire Operator who must then inform the owners/drivers of the vehicles as to what grade to attach on the vehicles. If no grade/award has been awarded, the vehicles will remain as they are and nothing will be attached to them.

5. No Grade / No Award

5.1 Following the Assessment of the grade/award to be awarded to an Operator, it may be decided that no grade/award should be awarded to an Operator due to standards at the premises being very poor with no compliance to legislation and/or conditions. In this instance, an Improvement Notice will be served upon the Operator to address the issues and for a further visit to be conducted in one month time to review the ‘no grade/award’.

5.2 If three consecutive Improvement Notices are served upon an Operator, the matter will be referred to the Council’s Licensing Panel for the Panel to decide whether the Operator is a fit and proper person to hold the relevant licence.The Licensing Panel may then suspend or revoke a licence, or issue a warning to the Operator, depending upon the circumstances. Periods of suspension of a licence by a Panel will be dependent on the nature of the breaches of the legislation/conditions and the compliance history of the Operator.

6. Publication / Advertise

6.1 The Council may from time to time advertise in any form and manner, the grade/award that has been awarded to all the Operators, for members of the public to view.