

Appendix 4

Objections to proposed table of fares

1.	<p>“I object to the fares in West Somerset being the same as Taunton Deane.</p> <p>The increase could be the same in percentage terms but the proposal to align the two areas is very unfair.”</p>
2.	<p>“An percentage increase is fine but not making West Somerset the same as Taunton Deane. In West Somerset we are predominantly a rural community with next to no bus service. Our only option is to use a taxi and this increase only serves to isolate us further.”</p>
3.	<p>“You are equating journeys that occur in Taunton Deane to those that occur in West Somerset. They are not equivalent in any way. In the former the taxi is more likely to spend time in a queue so the same distance will take longer, why are you penalising members of the public in west somerset who have little or no public transport by such a big increase in their fares.</p> <p>Weekend fares should not be +50%, absolutely ridiculous, happy with +25% on a Sunday.</p> <p>Late night should have some enhancement but increase it to a stupid level and people are more likely to drink/drive than take a taxi.</p> <p>Decide on a percentage increase in the fares and keep Taunton separate from West Somerset or reduce the Taunton fares to match and then apply the percentage increase.”</p>
4.	<p>“In West Somerset the public transport system is, to put it mildly, limited, and the over-extended, under-funded emergency services can often take hours to arrive.</p> <p>For an elderly and often geographically isolated population many of whom no longer drive, using a taxi is the only option whether to go shopping or to get to hospital.</p> <p>Add to this the fact that the nearest hospital is, depending on where you live in the area, a considerable distance away, increasing the cost for those trips, simply on the basis of 'bringing fares into line with those being charged in Taunton' is disingenuous and simply an excuse to charge more with no real justification.”</p>

5.	<p>“In the (former) West Somerset area, the increase in fares is substantial. This will inevitably lead to hardship for individuals who rely on taxis and will also damage the local economy where people cannot afford taxis to or from their local shops. In particular the 50% premium on a Saturday is indefensible. Saturdays are a standard working day. Very few other licensing authorities allow such a premium on a Saturday day time.</p> <p>No account has been taken of families in setting the rates for 5 to 8 passengers. Allowance should be made for children not triggering the premium charge.</p> <p>Whilst understanding that Hackney owner drivers need to make a living, there is clearly no understanding of price elasticity of demand. Putting up fares to this extent is not going to increase driver income. If anything it could have a negative impact due to fewer journeys being made. A further unintended consequence is likely to be passengers attempting to negotiate a fare lower than the metered fare which in turn could lead to conflict.</p> <p>Given that PHVs can set their own fares such a move to significantly increase Hackney fares is likely to generate an incentive to transfer custom to PHVs.</p> <p>No account seems to have been taken upon the impact on disabled people who are more likely to be reliant on Hackney Carriages to be able to travel, especially if in a wheelchair since the bulk of WAVs are Hackney. Therefore a cost penalty is being disproportionately imposed on disabled vs non disabled persons. This should be clearly assessed through an Equality Impact Assessment. Despite increasing fares, there appears to be no move to rid the discriminatory "grandfather rights" that allow certain HC plate holders to disadvantage disabled people by operating non accessible vehicles leaving them no guarantee of an accessible vehicle on the rank. A fares increase might be defensible if it was accompanied by all HC plate holders being compelled to invest in WAVs.”</p>
6.	<p>“I understand the need for price increases as they need to make a profit, but on a fixed income as a pensioner it is a rise that will make it more likely I will not be able to use taxis. My pension will not rise as much in percentage terms as these fares. Its is punitive to those of us in West Somerset as the rise is greater. Many of us are still,shielding and when it is deemed safe for us to return to “normal” we will not be able to afford to go anywhere on a Saturday. Most businesses dont charge premium prices in the day time on a Saturday so why should taxis?”</p>
7.	<p>“I Don't.”</p>
8.	<p>“Taxi fares in Taunton are already prohibitively high. I have yet to visit any other area where the taxi prices are as high as here. For those of us not able</p>

	to drive and on low incomes the fares are expensive and the high costs limit the ability to travel by taxi as much as I would like.”
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