

SOUTH YORKSHIRE  
**SYMCA**



**MAYORAL  
COMBINED  
AUTHORITY**

## **South Yorkshire's Mayor takes landmark decision to bring buses back under public control**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

South Yorkshire's Mayor, Oliver Coppard, has taken a once in a generation decision to bring buses back under public control in South Yorkshire in the biggest shake up of the bus network since the 1980s.

In a landmark decision today, Tuesday 18 March, Mayor Coppard announced his decision to go 'back to the future' after an overwhelming response to one of the biggest bus franchising consultations ever undertaken, anywhere in the country.

More than 7,800 people had their say on proposals to take bus services back under public control with nearly 9 out of 10 people (87%) of those who had their say either strongly supporting or supporting in part, the introduction of bus franchising.

At the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority Board meeting Mayor Coppard and Leaders discussed the findings of the 12-week bus franchising consultation before the Mayor made his decision to introduce bus franchising in the region.

Under bus franchising, SYMCA will take control of the bus network including depots, bus fleets, routes, timetables, service standards, tickets and fares. Publicly controlled buses will start to roll out in South Yorkshire from September 2027.

**South Yorkshire's Mayor, Oliver Coppard, said:** "Today, we've made history; turning back the tide on the failed experiment of the privatisation of our bus network that was started in the 1980s, putting the public back into public transport. When I was elected as South Yorkshire's Mayor in 2022, I promised to take back control of our buses. Today I'm proud to say that is a promise being kept.

"Starting in 2027, we will begin to take back control of routes, fares and timetables across South Yorkshire, so we decide where buses run, when, and where.

“Buses are essential for our communities. They connect people to services, to jobs, training and opportunity, and to friends and family. But over the last forty years we’ve seen public transport taken apart; fares go up, routes and passenger numbers go down, and our city centres, our high streets and our economy flatline.

“I want us to build a bigger and better economy in South Yorkshire and we need a public transport system that allows people to get to where they want to go, when they want to go there.

“After nearly thirty years we took the tram back into public control last year. Today is another huge step on that journey. The destination is a fully integrated transport system across Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield, one that works in the interests of our communities and our economy, putting people back in control of essential services.

The Mayor is committed to putting people at the heart of his vision for a fully integrated public transport network. Following today’s decision, SYMCA will be talking to communities about their buses, what they would like to see as part of the future network and on the design and features of the buses.

The Mayor will also be announcing a new integrated public transport branding which will cover buses, trams and other public transport assets owned by SYMCA in the coming months.

A summary of the responses to the consultation and SYMCA’s response have been published and are available [here](#).

## **Notes to Editors**

For more information contact [press.enquiries@southyorkshire-ca.gov.uk](mailto:press.enquiries@southyorkshire-ca.gov.uk).

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