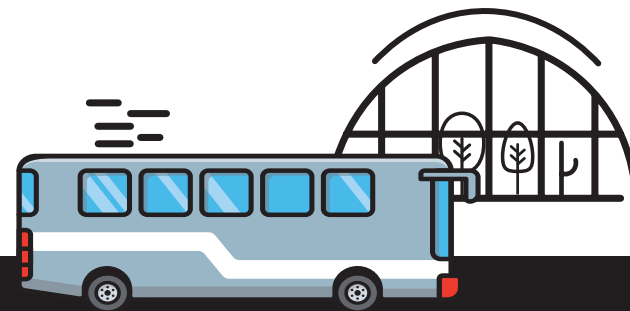
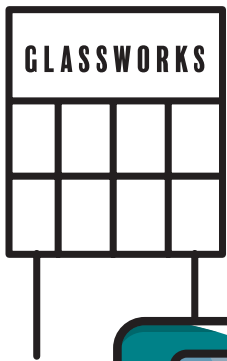


**HAVE  
YOUR SAY  
ON TAKING  
BACK CONTROL  
OF OUR  
BUSES**



# SYMCA Bus Franchising Consultation FAQs

Take part at [southyorkshire-ca.gov.uk/bus-reform](https://southyorkshire-ca.gov.uk/bus-reform)

The deadline for responses is 11.59pm on 15 January 2025.

Scan for  
survey



## What is SYMCA consulting on?

SYMCA is consulting on proposals to introduce Bus Franchising in South Yorkshire – that means consulting on taking back control of buses so the main decisions about buses are taken by the public sector

## What is the deadline for responding?

11.59pm, 15 January 2025 – it's a 12-week consultation.

## Why is SYMCA doing this?

People in South Yorkshire have told us that they are dissatisfied with the reliability of buses - over 60% of respondents to a survey said they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the reliability of bus services in South Yorkshire, with around 1 in 5 buses arriving late.

There are currently 23 bus companies operating in the region and over 100 types of tickets available, which can be confusing for passengers.

In recent years there have been significant cuts to the bus network. In 2007 the bus network in South Yorkshire operated 43 million miles but this has now more than halved.

Also, SYMCA has to subsidise some routes private operators won't run but are vital for local communities such as evening and weekend services at a cost of up to £24m.

## What is Bus Franchising?

Bus Franchising means SYMCA would take control of how buses are run in South Yorkshire; owning the depots and the bus fleet. That means the buses will be back under public control.

This will give SYMCA powers to decide:

- what routes buses take
- what times they run
- the quality of the service
- how many ticket options are available
- what the fares will cost
- how to improve the reliability of the bus network
- how buses, trams and trains can connect with each other

As a public body, SYMCA can reinvest any profit back into improving the system for the public.

Equally, SYMCA would be responsible for any revenue shortfall should costs exceed the fares revenue.

Private operators will bid for contracts to run bus services and will be held to account for running a good quality, punctual and reliable service.

## **I have concerns about my bus service – route, timetable, fares, etc. Does the consultation ask about these issues?**

The consultation is very specific about asking the public if they support or do not support the proposal for Bus Franchising. It is not about the public's experience of current services.

However, you are welcome to raise your views about these matters in your response to the consultation which will give us additional insight into the current service.

## **Why does SYMCA need to consult?**

The government has set up a process Combined Authorities must go through to franchise buses and a 12-week statutory consultation is required. It is important that we hear what the public and those who are affected by bus services think about our proposals.

## **What happens when the consultation closes?**

All responses will be analysed and a report compiled summarising opinions against each question.

SYMCA has to produce a report responding to the report.

Both reports go to the Mayor to inform the decision he will make in March 2025.

The reports will be published on the SYMCA website.

## **When will a decision be made on whether or not to go ahead with Bus Franchising?**

March 2025.

## If a decision is made to have Bus Franchising, when will the first franchised buses be on our streets?

We expect the first franchised bus services to begin operating in late 2027.

## What would it cost SYMCA to introduce the Proposed Franchising Scheme?

In South Yorkshire, changing to Franchising would require an initial, one-off investment by SYMCA of £20.8m over four years (transition cost). This would cover things like consultancy, mobilisation. Other transition costs such as IT for that four-year period would be an additional £5m.

Additional costs include £57.9m for depot investment and £350m over a 15-year period for bus fleet investment

## How will Franchising be funded?

Beyond the initial costs to introduce franchising, funding sources for the ongoing delivery of the Proposed Franchising Scheme include:

- Farebox revenue – the money collected from fare paying passengers
- Government funding
- Bus Services Operator Grant – a government grant paid to operators of eligible bus services and community transport organisations to help them recover some of their fuel costs

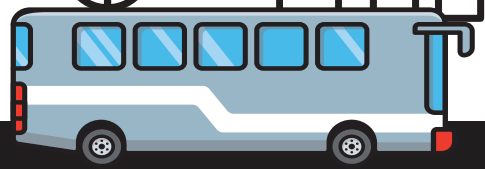
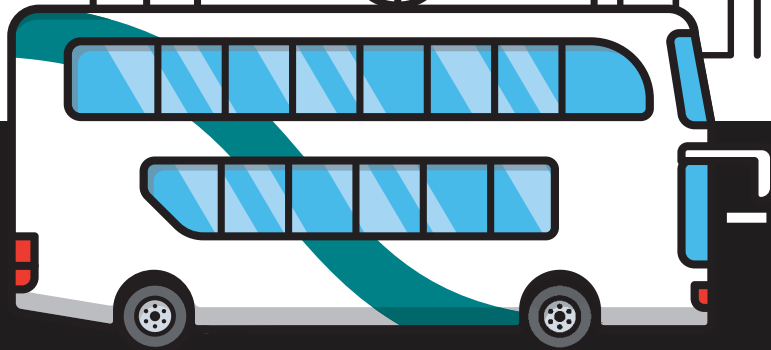
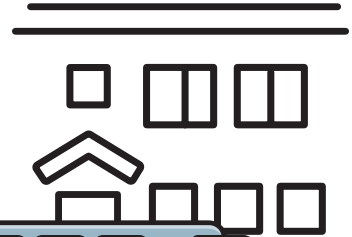
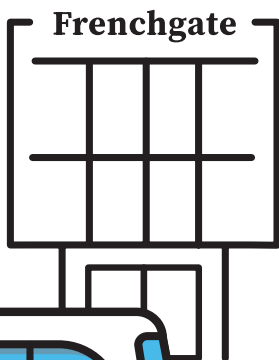
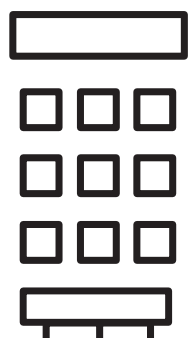
More information about funding and finance relating to Franchising can be found in the consultation document.

## How will my feedback be used and when will we find out the results?

Your responses will be independently assessed as part of the consultation process. All responses will be considered when making any decision on whether to introduce the Proposed Franchising Scheme. This decision is currently expected in March 2025.

## What will the personal information I provide be used for?

All personal information (such as age, postcode, gender) you provide will be anonymised and only used for analysis of the key findings and trends in this consultation at a aggregate level. When we look at the feedback, we separate it by things like age and gender which helps us to understand how ideas may affect different groups of people. This helps us to develop our ideas. You can read our Privacy Notice on the SYMCA website.



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SOUTH YORKSHIRE  
**SYMCA**

 MAYORAL  
COMBINED  
AUTHORITY