

## **GOLDEN MOTION - Bus Franchising for Bristol**

**Motion to be moved by: Cllr Hopkins, Knowle Ward, Liberal Democrats**

**Date of submission: 7<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

### **Council notes:**

1. The distrust and disappointment among residents of Bristol with their bus services.
2. That large numbers of Bristol residents find themselves unable to access work opportunities due to the lacklustre service or find fares taking up a disproportionate amount of their income.
3. That Bristol City Council has no direct control over the routes, timetables or vehicles that bus operators use in the city, but must [continue to](#) use its influence to help address these problems.
4. That in recent years congestion has worsened, increasing air pollution within the city leading to estimates of hundreds of deaths every year, [and the Labour administration has taken action across the board to tackle this, with the Mayor recently meeting with the Minister.](#)
5. That First Bus currently operates an effective monopoly in Bristol which has led to disdain for the people who pay their fares [but, under a franchising model an established economy-of-scale operator still remains the outright favourite.](#)
6. That due to ill-advised past slashing of the railway network we are overwhelmingly reliant on our bus services as the main means of public transport, [though the current administration are pushing forward plans to re-open old and open new stations across the city and region.](#)
7. That London currently operates a successful bus franchising scheme, [though with substantially more powers and resources than Bristol](#), with Cambridge and Greater Manchester and others currently developing schemes for the future.
8. That in the Bus Services Act 2017, bus franchising powers were devolved to the mayors of combined authorities; [at the time Bristol's three Labour MPs all pushed for all councils to have these powers, just like Labour-run Nottingham which has award-winning bus services.](#)
9. [The House of Commons' Transport Select Committee visited Bristol in November 2018 to examine the city's 40% rise in bus passenger journeys since 2009/10 – and compared to a 40% fall in English metropolitan areas outside of London in the last 25 years.](#)
10. [When Councillor Hopkins and the Lib Dems were in charge of transport, the staggered bus contracts were ended in one go and, through a retendering process, all contracts/routes went back to First and all at a higher cost to the taxpayer.](#)

### **Council believes:**

1. That to address all of the above problems there needs to be a fundamental change with buses in Bristol to a system that recognises public transport as a vital service.
2. That a franchising model ~~could~~[would](#) allow greater competition within our public transport, making new operators available for local services, [though franchising also brings significant financial and operational risks.](#)
3. [Municipalisation should also be explored, as councils should have the option to directly run services for their citizens and the dozen or so municipal bus companies across the country have some of the highest passenger satisfaction ratings.](#)

### **Council resolves:**

1. To request the Mayor to use his position on the West of England Combined Authority Committee to [continue to](#) push for [the public transport system – buses, trains, and mass/rapid transit – which the people of Bristol need and deserve – and seek for franchising to be properly considered. the establishment of a bus franchising system in Bristol, to gain control on behalf of the citizens of Bristol of routes, timetables, fares and emissions.](#)
2. [That under a franchising system, all buses operating within the city should run on ultra-low emission or zero emission fuels within five years. To endorse progress which has seen Bristol](#)

already secure around 100 biogas buses, win funding to retrofit scores more, submit bids for further retrofitting, and – through the landmark Bus Deal being negotiated by Labour – take steps to ensure a lower-emission bus fleet, alongside £20 million of Labour investment in cleaner vehicles for the council, waste company, and Lord Mayor.