

Brighton & Hove City Council

Council

Agenda Item 28

Subject: Save our Buses

Date of meeting: 23 July 2026

Proposer: Cllr Alistair McNair
Seconder: Cllr Anne Meadows

Ward(s) affected: All

Notice of Motion

Conservative Group

This Council notes that:

- 1) It is seeking government funding for a feasibility study into bus franchising which would give the council greater control over fares, timetables and routes;
- 2) Despite the fact there may be the new Strategic Authority from 2028 that will decide whether our buses are franchised, there are concerns that council time and money will be diverted from more pressing issues;
- 3) Brighton & Hove Buses are among the best and most heavily used bus networks outside of London. The network has scored 90% overall for passenger satisfaction because of the frequent service, a modernising fleet and easy payment options;
- 4) Due to policies of the current Administration, buses are expensive, especially since the decision to phase out the 50p unaccompanied child fare; short-hop fares have increased by 30% because subsidies have been cut by the Council for most areas;
- 5) Manchester is used as a reason for franchising, but the Bee Network has only increased the service by 19.4% while the privately controlled bus service in Bristol is up 33.1% over the same two years;
- 6) Franchising may expose the council to high costs at a time of severe budget constraints, leading to a worsening service.

This council therefore resolves to request a report to Cabinet

- 1) Which explores the option and implications of postponing any feasibility study until the elected Mayor for the new Strategic Authority is in place in May 2028;
- 2) Which sets out, if the feasibility study does continue, how all Parties will be involved in the study and the mechanism to ensure a widespread public consultation whose findings are adhered to.

Supporting Information:

[Brighton and Hove council wants public control of buses | The Argus](#)
[Passenger satisfaction continues to grow across Brighton and Hove - Brighton & Hove Buses](#)
[Burnham's buses show why he will probably fail as prime minister | The Spectator](#)
[Under-18s travelling in Brighton and Hove now face higher bus fares | The Argus](#)

