# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE** | **One Network, One Timetable, One Ticket:**  **Planning Buses as a Public Service for Wales** |
| **DATE** | **05 March 2024** |
| **BY** | **Lee Waters MS, Deputy Minister for Climate Change** |

I am pleased to announce we are today publishing the document: Our Roadmap to Bus Reform Towards One Network, One Timetable, One Ticket.

This marks a major milestone in the bus reform programme.

It builds on the proposals in our white paper and sets out how the Welsh Government and Transport for Wales are intending to approach the delivery of franchising, including how we intend to work with partners and stakeholders to plan and deliver bus services.

Franchising means that the decisions about bus services in Wales (including routes, timetables, fares, hours of operation and service quality standards) will be made by Welsh Government and Transport for Wales instead of commercial bus operators. However, we want to make decisions in partnership with Corporate Joint Committees. Bus operators can bid for contracts to run services to these specifications. This will be a major change to the Welsh bus system, which has been deregulated since the 1980’s.

The roadmap will give the industry, local authorities and the public a picture of what franchising will look like in practice. However, this is only the start of the conversation about how we can make sure bus franchising delivers for people in Wales.

It sets out our current approach to key issues which will determine how franchising is delivered. Transport for Wales has been working with local authorities across Wales to consider where better planning could improve bus networks. This has produced nine core network planning principles, designed to remove duplication, and maximise the network across a given area, rather than focus on passenger numbers of an individual route.

We are proposing to adopt a gross cost contracting model, with incentives available to operators, which will enable decisions over fares and ticketing to be made in the public interest and to allow passengers to make the journeys they need to irrespective of who operates the service.

The roadmap also sets out our intention to transition to the new system over several years. We are proposing to take a geographical approach to roll out across franchise zones. Each zone will include a series of franchise opportunities available to a range of operators

Above all, it reiterates the importance of working with the industry, bus operators, trade unions and other partners to discuss and agree the detail of a franchising system which works for Wales. I hope this document will mark the start of a detailed and productive conversation.

Bus reform is central to creating an integrated public transport network and tackling transport poverty across Wales. This, in turn, is essential to drive modal shift, without which we cannot contribute to the achievement of our statutory net zero targets. We look forward to working with our partners to discuss these proposals and developing the next level of detail to build a bus network capable of meeting those goals.

Our Roadmap to Bus Reform Towards One Network, One Timetable, One Ticket is available at: [Bus reform for Wales: our roadmap to franchising](https://www.gov.wales/bus-reform-wales-our-roadmap-franchising)