



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Cllr Gail Macgregor
Spokesperson Environment &
Economy
COSLA

By email only

**Net Zero, Energy and Transport
Committee**

c/o Clerk to the Committee
Room T3.40
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

netzero.committee@parliament.scot

12 July 2024

Dear Gail,

**Local Authority and Transport Partnership - Bus Service Improvement
Partnerships and Local Service Franchising**

I am writing to you as part of the Committee's pre-budget scrutiny of the Scottish Government budget 2025-26. Around early November this year, we expect to write to the Scottish Government with our pre-budget recommendations and comments.

On [4 June](#), the Committee heard from the Cabinet Secretary for Transport on priorities across her portfolio. The Committee asked about the powers in the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 to create Bus Service Improvement Partnerships and implement Local Service Franchising. We were interested in how these are being used by local authorities and transport partnerships.

The Cabinet Secretary said that she did not "necessarily agree that there are barriers" to the use of these powers. She also mentioned that the regulations for transitioning from a deregulated system to a franchise are expected to be laid in early autumn 2024 and to come into force before the end of the year. She described these as "necessary next steps" which did not prevent "decision making and the planning that is required".

The Committee agreed it was important to hear local government's latest views on this issue. I am therefore writing to COSLA to seek the collective views of local authorities on—

- **How they are planning to use these powers; and**
- **Whether any further support or resources is required to do so and, if so, any further detail on this.**

In the light of the passing of the [Transport Partnerships \(Transfer of Functions\) \(Scotland\) Order 2024](#), it may be helpful to add that I am also writing directly, and in similar terms, to the Strathclyde Partnership for Transport, ZetTrans and SWestrans.

On behalf of the Committee, I look forward to hearing from you and request a response by 29 August 2024.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Edward".

Edward Mountain MSP
Convener
Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee