

Go-Ahead board accepts £647.7 million takeover bid – but it might not be over yet

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A deal for **Go-Ahead** has been agreed, worth about £647.7 million.

But although that offer looks to set to be snapped up, another could be in the wings.

Go-Ahead runs Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR), consisting of Great Northern, Thameslink, Gatwick Express and Southern.

The initial offer, recommended unanimously by the company's board, has been made by a consortium comprising Australian bus operator **Kinetic** and highways and rail business **Globalvia**.

- **Go-Ahead Group appoints new Managing Director of Business Development**
- **The Go-Ahead Group strengthens senior management team**
- **Go-Ahead showcases inspirational women in transport on International Women's Day**

Go-Ahead shareholders are set to get 1,500 pence per share and a dividend of 50 pence in lieu of a final dividend for the year ending 2 July 2022. The board is recommending to shareholders to vote in favour of

the acquisition, which is expected to be completed October 2022.

Christian Schreyer, group chief executive of **Go-Ahead**, said: “This is a compelling offer which combines an attractive valuation for shareholders with bright prospects for Go-Ahead’s operations and colleagues around the world.

“We have confidence in **Go-Ahead’s** future as an independent business, but see that being part of a truly global mass transit platform will yield exciting opportunities. We welcome the commitment of **Kinetic** and **Globalvia** to invest in the decarbonisation and digitalisation of our operations, and to support our strategy, The Next Billion Journeys.

“As a standalone business within a global platform, we will be better placed than ever to connect communities and to fulfil our purpose of moving our customers towards a smarter and healthier planet.”

Michael Swards, Co-CEO of **Kinetic**, said: “We are delighted that the Board of **Go-Ahead** has unanimously recommended our offer to shareholders. As Australia and New Zealand’s largest and fastest growing bus operator, with the majority of our revenue aligned to long-term government contracts, we will bring proven experience to accelerate the delivery of **Go-Ahead’s** Next Billion Journeys growth strategy.

“We are one of world’s largest operators of electric buses and we will not only provide the necessary long term capital but the expertise to facilitate the rapid transition of **Go-Ahead’s** bus fleet from diesel to zero emission technology.”

Javier Pérez Fortea, CEO of **Globalvia**, said: “As a leader in the management of transport infrastructure concessions, specialising in railways, we believe we can add real value in helping **Go-Ahead** become a leading global, multi-modal, mass transit platform.

“With operations around the world, our experience will help **Go-Ahead** grow in existing and new geographies while remaining a standalone UK business.

“Along with **Kinetic** we have a long-term approach and we are culturally aligned sharing a common mission based on delivering value for our customers.”

But it might not be over...

Things might not be quite cut and dried, however.

Another Australian firm, Kelsian, has said it is mindful to make a bid.

It said: “Kelsian believes that the potential combination with Go-Ahead would create an international leader in multi-modal, mass transit supporting a sustainability agenda for its passengers and governments, with strong growth prospects.

“Kelsian believes that, if an offer is made by Kelsian, it could bring to bear its expertise across safety, operational efficiency, digital, decarbonisation, and experience operating in the UK to enhance and

accelerate the growth of Go-Ahead creating substantial value for Kelsian shareholders as well as benefiting wider stakeholders including passengers, governments and employees. Kelsian continues to carefully assess the opportunity with a disciplined focus on the strategic and financial rationale.

Kelsian therefore urges Go-Ahead shareholders to take no action at this time.”