

STATEMENT FROM CLLR ROBIN MOSS
SPECIAL CABINET MEETING – 26 MAY 2022

The decision in 2016 by the ruling Tory administration to transfer our community health and social care services to Virgin Care was always a risky one, which we in the Labour Group opposed. These services are vital to the wellbeing of our communities. We may not now have a great deal of choice about whether the existing contract should run its course, but I have to question any idea that we would extend the contract and leave these services in the hands of a private equity company for an additional three-year period. As we have already seen with the transfer from Virgin Care to HCRG, there would be nothing to stop this new company from selling on without any discussion with the Council. For this reason, the Labour Group rejects Option 1 and would encourage the Cabinet to agree Option 3 – allowing the contract to end with no contract extension beyond 31 March 2024.

We would ask the Cabinet to urgently begin the preparatory work required to bring these services back in-house. Under the current contract, there are significant areas of underperformance, and it has already been agreed to bring strategic adult safeguarding back to the Council. Now we need to do that with the remaining services. This will enable us to align our services with Council priorities with much greater control over how our services are delivered. This work needs to happen right now so that we are ready when the contract ends in March 2024.