

Good afternoon.

I must begin by sadly acknowledging our first Covid-19 related death this week. And I extend my condolences to the individual's family and friends. We hoped against hope that day would not come; but we knew in reality it would. I would like to imagine that we will be acknowledge at these press conferences *every* death in the same way as the first, but that is probably an unrealistic expectation. It makes the virus horribly real in our community. And it serves as a reminder to us all, as why we need to Stay at Home to reduce the loss of more lives.

As ever, we don't have all the answers instantly to the many questions many people have – but we do want you to keep asking them. Please direct these to the helplines and email addresses you can find on the website, depending on nature of the enquiry.

We are also today inviting you to send your questions to [covid19enquiries@gov.gg](mailto:covid19enquiries@gov.gg) and put in the subject heading MY CORONA VIRUS QUESTION in the subject. We will collate them and then a number of the most frequently asked will be pitched to us at our next press conference on Friday. We'll see how we are get on and then decide whether we do it again.

Nikki will obviously update you on the cases, numbers and testing; and will also cover off some of the issues around use of masks in the community and PPE.

Heidi is going to talk about some the issues the current restrictions bring for those living in abusive relationships, recognising that our challenges with this crisis go beyond simply managing the threat of Covid-19; and she's also going to talk about the fantastic work now gearing up in the voluntary or third sector.

Paul will talk about some other issues including around business support and a new community support tool.

Last week, I said we were reluctant for the island to go into lock down until it was necessary, for fear that the island would suffer cabin fever. Well, having had a kitten named after me and 3 chicks named after the three of us in the first week, my worst fears have been realised somewhat sooner than I expected. But I want to make a serious point. The three of us have been immensely grateful for the messages of support that we have received.

Speaking personally – and I can't speak for Heidi and Nikki – I would be lying if I didn't say it wasn't flattering. But it really isn't all about us and it's incredibly important to make that point now; we are just doing our jobs; and we just happen to be in the spotlight as the public face and voice of an amazing team – indeed the whole community is incredible, which I shall return to. We could not do our jobs without an army of people behind us. As my colleague, Deputy Neil Inder says, if you lead and no-one is following, well then you are really just going for a walk. So we want, between Heidi and I, to take the chance today to highlight some – and it can only be some - of those who enable us to do what we do.

Dr Brink is **so** clearly the expert in her fields of both virology and public health that she is quite literally the only person in Guernsey of whom it can be said that this is the job she signed up for. Calm, reassuring, professional and in total command of her brief.

Heidi and I have known each other, scarily, for 30 years; and have worked together on and off for 25. Another highly professional, logical thinker and problem solver.

I am extremely fortunate to have both of these individuals as my wingmen on this public stage.

But I also must thank political colleagues. Politics everywhere and in Guernsey too is renowned for division and argument. But on this issue, we are all as one. Although I've name checked a few over recent days, I am particularly grateful that I have given the unequivocal support I need to lead – not only from Deputies Barry Brehaut and Mary Lowe who sit with Heidi and I on the Civil Contingencies Authority – but from **all** our colleagues. Right now, we would of course all swap the Bailiwick's current predicament for the normalcy and rancour of yet another education debate – and I know *that* day will come soon enough. But in the meantime, we have to rapidly find consensus on how we can enable our system of government to lead the island through the next few month's and the Bailiwick's recovery, with the quick fire decisions that will be needed, whilst maintaining the democratic accountability and oversight of the decision makers.

I also want to thank the Chief Executive and his senior leadership team. In 30 years of working, I've been privileged to work with some very intelligent and

highly professional people; but what marks this group of individuals out is their complete unflappability. So much so, sometimes I think I'm living through a drill rather than the real thing – as new information or challenges are injected into the picture, no-one loses their cool, they simply and quietly adapt – and actually normally do so with good humour too. Guernsey is immensely lucky to have this group leading the organisation of the Bailiwick's response; and we can all be proud - as well as very reassured.

But finally from me today, if my role means that I am the focal point of leadership in the island right now, that is only really a testament to the whole community's spirit. Our interconnectedness and reliance upon each other is so starkly exposed by this crisis. The nurse can't go on shift to help the sick patient without the teacher taking care of his kids; and the doctor can't treat her patient in the new ICU, without the plumber who helped build it in the last two weeks; and so on.

The world in recent years has seemed so endlessly divided and polarised, with 24 hour news feeds projecting images that suggest greed, violence and conflict are the key features of humanity; but that is wrong, the defining characteristic throughout human civilisation is our ability to co-operate and work together. Guernsey Together is not just a slogan or a hashtag; it is what our community in the Bailiwick is doing and will do to get us all through this crisis and out the other side.