

Good afternoon.

We have all recognised that good communication has been a key to our success so far as a community in managing Covid.

We have always tried to communicate openly, honestly, quickly and frequently – not least to scotch any misleading rumours circulating on social media or in the community.

So, I must begin by saying that this is the last **planned** briefing before the General Election on 7th October. We know that is not ideal. But, although we do not in Guernsey have any formal ‘purdah’ rules during the election period, as both Heidi and I will be candidates, we have decided that we will **not plan** to hold any briefings during the election period. We will only do so, if there is a development or new information that requires a briefing to be held. In a sense, you can therefore assume that ‘no news, is good news.’

The purpose of today’s briefing is to update you on progress towards Phase 5c and to explain in more detail how this phase will work. Deputy Soulsby and Dr Brink will take you through this in more detail in a few minutes.

We know that a move to Phase 5c does increase the risks of COVID-19 returning to our Bailiwick. It is worth repeating that elimination of the virus was *never* part of our strategy; the fact that we have *managed* to do so, for well over 100 days now, is fantastic - but it is a *by-product* of our strategy, as has been the ability for our community, economy and

education systems to return to their pre-Covid operating norms.

The fact that everybody has the confidence to go anywhere and do anything, which is not the case elsewhere, without facemasks or social distancing is immensely valuable. Being Covid-free has given us a level of confidence and wellbeing for the whole community which is almost as valuable as being Covid-free itself. It's that trade-off that has to be taken into account and in any decisions we now make, we have to judge the impact of the loss of that confidence amongst the community and its potential economic and social impact. And that's what makes our decision making different from other jurisdictions. Other places are not making the same decisions from the same point of advantage that we are. Arguably this makes it harder for us to make the right judgements at the right time. It's a nice problem to have - but it's a challenge.

Phase 5c will make travel much more viable for most travellers. Those travelling from Group B countries will need to observe only a very short self-isolation period to allow for test results on entry at the ports to be processed, provided those tests return 'negative.' We have set a tight deadline for the public service to design and deliver a model for Phase 5c that is ready to go, as and when the CCA decides it is right to make the change - and that work is *nearly* complete. **But, and it is a very big 'but' the CCA has *not* yet decided to make that move, and has *not* set any date as to when that should happen.**

The construction of the facilities at the harbour and airport will be completed by 7th September. New equipment is being sourced to increase Guernsey's on-island testing capability, to a potential capacity of more than 2,000 tests a day, and additional skilled staff are being recruited, while others are undergoing training to upskill in this area. The new equipment was ordered in July but the manufacturer in Australia has now advised us of a delay to its arrival in Guernsey, which is expected to be in the last week of September. This will be followed by a short process of commissioning and testing the new equipment before it can be used in practice. **Therefore, there can be no move to Phase 5c before the end of September. The CCA will endeavour to give at least one week's notice ahead of any change so that transport operators and the community can plan appropriately.**

A couple of other quick points from me in terms of consequences. Firstly, costs. We estimate that the one-off capital costs of the testing facilities and equipment will be around £600,000. The ongoing costs of a Phase 5c testing regime for travellers is estimated at £3.7m for 6 months. In light of this, it is incumbent on us to give full and proper consideration to any charging strategy. Secondly, car parking. There will be a temporary loss of 49 car parking spaces on the East Arm of the Harbour during the construction of the facilities there. When operational, there will be the loss of between 107 – on a normal day - and 175 spaces on a busy day. The team are looking at whether and where alternative parking provision can be made.

Finally from me, given the General Election and all that will follow, this may well be the last time that I speak as the Chair of the Civil Contingencies Authority. It has been the most enormous privilege to serve this year in this role and to lead the most amazing team that has served the Bailiwick so well. The spirit, camaraderie and teamwork embodied by the whole community, pulling together as one, under the banner of #GuernseyTogether has been an enormously uplifting and positive experience for so many in an otherwise very dark period.