

## Media Release

**Date: 14 July 2021**

### **Policy & Resources Committee agrees support for business in critical need as a result of self-isolating**

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The Policy & Resources Committee has agreed it will consider providing exceptional support, on a case by case basis, to businesses who find themselves in a critical state as a result of staff having to self-isolate, which would be based on the current Payroll Co-funding scheme.

Local businesses, particularly small businesses, have raised concerns about how a potential two-week self-isolation period for staff members may impact them following the relaxing of border restrictions on July 1<sup>st</sup>.

Workers who are advised by Public Health that they need to self-isolate for 4 days or more and who cannot work from home can already make a claim for sickness benefit. The maximum weekly rate is £168.07 but benefit is based on an individual's own contribution. Workers directed to self-isolate can self-certify for up to 14 days. While the Committee recognises that this would not make up the normal income for many businesses, any period of self-isolation will be strictly short term, and the likelihood of being required to self-isolate at the current time is low.

Today (14 July) there are 14 active cases in Guernsey and a further 35 people self-isolating as a result of being the contact of a positive case. As the vaccination programme continues to make quick progress, with 75% of adults already having received two doses of vaccine, the already low risk of needing to self-isolate is being reduced further. By early August it is expected that all of those who choose to have both doses will have had the opportunity to do so.

There remains a possibility that a small business could find its staff are required to self-isolate and this could have a significant short-term impact on the business. If a business finds itself in this situation and, as a result, things become critical, the Committee will consider claims on a case-by-case basis.

Deputy Mark Helyar, Treasury lead for the Policy & Resources Committee said

“Our aim through all of the business support we have arranged throughout the pandemic has been to help viable businesses survive these extraordinary times. That’s still the case now for those sectors which can still apply for the various

support schemes, and if we're going to use public funds responsibly, we need to take that same approach for businesses affected by a self-isolation requirement. So, where businesses find they're in a critical situation, they should contact us and we will consider their claim. We want to reassure local businesses that we will continue to provide support where necessary."

**Ends**