

Media Release

embargo until **1.15pm 22 May 2020**

Date: 22 May 2020

Decision made in principle to move to Phase 4 on 30 May 2020

Today marks 22 days since the last diagnosis of a new case of COVID-19. We moved into Phase 3 on the 16 May 2020 and have had no new cases of unexplained community transmission since 21 April 2020. The Bailiwick currently has 2 known active cases.

As stated last week, the current public health data has exceeded our expectations and there is clear evidence that the community is working together to ease out of lockdown. In view of this, and the fact that all other criteria to move into the next phase have been met, HSC has agreed, in principle, to move to Phase 4 on **30 May 2020**.

Deputy Heidi Soulsby, President of the Committee *for* Health & Social Care said:

‘The way the community has continued to support us means we can once more move into the next phase quicker than expected.

Due to the significant changes that Phase 4 brings, HSC has decided to announce this in principle decision today to give businesses, organisations and the wider community time to prepare ahead of the new arrangements in a week’s time.

As well as enabling the vast majority of businesses to re-commence operations, including all retail, hairdressers and beauticians, Phase 4 will also allow public venues, including museums and cinemas to open, subject to social distancing and hygiene guidelines being followed.

In addition, restrictions in relation to contacts between households and those outside the household will be lifted, although it will be expected that people continue to follow social distancing and hygiene advice as this will become more important than ever as we return to a new normal.

Non-essential travel will be allowed subject to the need to self-isolate for 14 days on return to the Bailiwick. We are conscious that people are desperate to travel to meet new babies that have been born during lock down or to see relatives who don’t live

in the Bailiwick. I am therefore delighted that we have been able to make this happen now.'

Director of Public Health, Dr Nicola Brink said:

'We have just completed the first week in Phase 3. Announcing this message early to enable people to prepare and also gives Public Health Services another week to monitor the results that we are getting from our sampling programme. As you are all aware, the incubation period for COVID-19 can be up to 14 days. Commencing Phase 4 on **30 May 2020** means we will have had 14 days in Phase 3 and will be certain of the epidemiology.

I would like to reassure the community that if we see positive cases occurring again they should not panic. It is possible that there may be islanders who have shown no symptoms who have had COVID-19.

We know Islanders have been watching the statistics daily and are waiting for the day that we get to zero. That will indeed be a momentous day. However, it should not be seen as a failure if we find other positive cases. Indeed, that will be a sign of success in that our 'test, trace and quarantine' in identifying cases.

If anyone has any symptoms, however mild, they must come forward to be tested. Please don't think you don't want to adversely influence our results. We know we will get more positives and from my perspective that is a good thing. If we know about them we can track and trace and contain them to protect the rest of the community.

Our strategy remains the same 'test, trace and quarantine'. It continues to be effective as evidenced in the lack of new positives and the low number of active cases.

We have commenced our extended testing programme to proactively seek out cases by targeting certain key workers who we are testing regardless of any symptoms of COVID-19'.

Deputy Gavin St Pier, Chair of the Civil Contingencies Authority said:

'As I have said before, it is in all our interests to end the lockdown as quickly and as safely as we can. We will continue to be led by the advice of Public Health but we are currently in a very strong position and have got here much more quickly than we could reasonably have hoped.

Moving into Phase 4 will see a return to near normal life for the community. All that remains for Phase 5, and a return to a Bailiwick bubble, will be pubs and clubs opening and the return to contact sports.

Inevitably this announcement will result in Islanders speculating how long before off-island travel without the need to self-isolate for 14 days is a possibility. We know there is a pressing need for this to return to normal as soon as possible. Obviously we need to balance the risk bearing in mind the COVID-19 situation of our near neighbours. However, we cannot stay in fortress Guernsey or fortress Bailiwick until we have a vaccine, which may never emerge. We are actively discussing how off-island travel can recommence safely and will update Islanders as soon as we can as plans evolve.'

Full details of what has been included in Phase 4 can be found here:

<https://covid19.gov.gg/guidance/exit>

Ends