

States of Alderney



DELIBERATIONS

WEDNESDAY 21ST JULY 2021

STATES OF ALDERNEY
DELIBERATIONS
FOR THE STATES MEETING
ON WEDNESDAY 21ST JULY 2021 AT 1430HRS

Present: Mr William Tate, President
Mr Bill Abel
Ms Annie Burgess
Mr Kevin Gentle
Mr Rhys Jenkins
Mr Boyd Kelly
Mr Graham McKinley, OBE
Mr Alex Snowdon

Lieutenant G T Workman RN (Rtd) represented His Excellency The Lieutenant-Governor of the Bailiwick of Guernsey.

Apologies were received from Mr Carter, Mr Roberts and Mr Harris.

The President opened the meeting and advised that under Rule 19.1(c) of the Rules of Procedure he had accepted a Report from Mr Abel and given the importance of this Report, he had decided to deal with the Report section of Item V as the first item.

The President then advised that under Rule 19.3 after the Report has been given the Members may offer a personal opinion and ask a question on the Report.

Item V **Questions and Reports – Report Only**

The following report was received from Mr Bill Abel, Chairman of Policy & Finance Committee:-

“Current Situation

The Island, although ‘locked down’ twice, as part of the Bailiwick over the last 15 months, has been protected by the decisions of the Civil Contingences Authority and has been fortunate that up until now had only one case of Covid on the Island.

However, as of the 16th July as a result of an apparent super spreader event on the island it was rocked by the rapid increase in COVID cases from 3 to the current level of 27 of which 25 relate to the apparent super spreader event.

The Public Health, Island Medical and our Welcome teams have carried out over 800 tests over the last few days and it is probable that infections have plateaued, but that as yet is to be fully determined.

In the process of testing track & trace and people symptomatic conditions, the 27 cases were identified, but over 50 people, mainly the younger working members of the Community, are in isolation, leaving businesses and public services with a limited ability to operate.

The Community is understandably angry, with many frightened by the rapid increase in Covid cases; our younger working members livelihoods threatened; and the profitability of our businesses threatened.

Why – it is believed that this is as a result of the CCA introducing the untested ‘blue traveller’ class from the 1st July.

Looking back

Over the previous 15 months, travel to the island and even between islands had been restricted and only on the 23rd April was the first phase of category travel with testing and isolation requirements introduced; with a second phase on the 14th May. On the 21st May the concept of opening up the Bailiwick to no testing or isolation conditions was tabled and was being matched to the proposed red, amber and green system being tabled in the UK. However, with conditions in the UK it was determined that on the 1st July untested, 2+2 blue travellers would be allowed with bubbled children and other travellers would continue to be subject category testing and isolation rules which with the majority of the UK currently being at Cat 4 means testing at one, seven days and 14 day isolation until a negative 13 day test result. Testing has not been removed for more risky travellers.

The vaccination programme

The vaccination programme commenced on the 17th December 2020 and has proceeded well with over 93% percent of the over 50s double vaxxed; and over 78% of the over 18s double vaxxed. However, this represents less than 60% of the under 50s double vaxxed.

The 1st July decision

The CCA following advice by the Scientific and Technical advisory Group (STAG) of which Public Health and other medical staff from across the Bailiwick; consideration of the high level of double vaccinations of over 50 year olds who are considered to have a higher likelihood of hospitalisation and a threat to the ability of the Bailiwicks capability of the Medical teams and Hospitals; and a ‘considered’ level of double vaccinated 50 to 18 year olds; made the decision to lift travel restrictions further with no testing of doubled vaxxed blue travellers and continued with on-arrival category testing of other travellers.

It is to be understood that the CCA is not a limited political group of 5 with a representative from Sark and Alderney making decisions. But it is that group supported by STAG; Public Health; the Guernsey Civil Services; Sark and Alderney Civil Service representatives; the law officers; the Bailiff, and more importantly Crown Procureur and/or Comptroller whose role is to question the decisions made by the CCA in terms of balance and proportionality.

Considerations

Science: The risk profile of blue non-tested travellers is comparative to a tested and post-isolated traveller.

Vaccinations: Single >35% and double > 90% reduction of becoming very sick and requiring hospitalisation.

Transmissibility: Numbers not definitive but considered to be reduced with both 1 jab and more with 2 jabs.

Can you still catch the virus and get sick: Yes and the risk increases if you are vulnerable.
Island Population: Not certain but it has risen from some 2000 to now well over 2500 with new residents and increased visitors. As our population swells not only does our economy benefit but our risk of infection increases as well.

The New Normal

It is obvious that people have not fully assessed or understood what the new normal means...

- It means that we can no longer rely on being protected by our closed borders (a fortress);
- It means that businesses must be more diligent in terms of hygiene, sanitisation, space and crowded events;
- It means we all have to be responsible and consider every situation with regard to the risks of being too close to people; the impact of closed places; and the impact of crowds;
- We can no longer expect to jump into space and expect that we will be caught;
- We must consider what our action means in terms of others – our recent apparent super spreader event is a sad result of this.
- It is likely that if these responsibilities are not embraced that we will find ourselves in the same place as we are in today, immaterial of how much testing we do at the borders;

All of the above must be considered:

- if we want to return to our feeling of wellbeing that we are entitled;
- to encourage people to come to our Island, to boost the economy and for families to at last meet up.

The next steps

Remember that we are a small part of the Bailiwick. It is a very important part to us and I am proud to represent the Island on the CCA.

I am impressed at the extensive support that my Guernsey colleagues provide for Sark and ourselves. We cannot survive without being a part of the Bailiwick.

However, we do need the following to be considered:

- Pre-travel testing at least until everyone who wants to be vaccinated to 2+2 status are vaccinated;
- Clarification of the isolation rules for vaccinated and partly-vaccinated people. Is there any evidence/science that a single jab stops the virus from 'rearing its head' after a period less than 14 days?
- A blue print for Living with Covid which may change over the coming weeks but will at least provide clarification on what to expect and how do we keep safe and healthy with Covid as a more transmissible version of the flu which also like flu mutates and will require ongoing booster vaccinations.
- At the briefing this week that questions to the 'panel' can be put by Alderney press directly and that emailed questions from Alderney and the Bailiwick communities can be addressed (if pre-briefing time permits).

Support being provided:

- Business support is still in place and if businesses can justify support will be considered as has happened over the COVID period and from which the receive it from the public purse;

- The normal income support for people is in place as far as sickness, but clarity is being sought as regards isolation.
- The furlough scheme provided extensive support to our community over the last 15 months.”

Item I **Emergency Powers (Coronavirus) (General Provision) (Bailiwick of Guernsey) (No.7) Regulations, 2021**

The States of Alderney resolved not to annul “The Emergency Powers (Coronavirus) (General Provision) (Bailiwick of Guernsey) (No.7) Regulations, 2021”

Proposed by Mr Bill Abel
Seconded by Mr Alex Snowdon
Approved unanimously

Item II **Emergency Powers (Coronavirus) (General Provision) (Bailiwick of Guernsey) (No.7) (Amendment) Regulations, 2021**

The States of Alderney resolved not to annul “The Emergency Powers (Coronavirus) (General Provision) (Bailiwick of Guernsey) (No.7) (Amendment) Regulations, 2021”

Proposed by Mr Bill Abel
Seconded by Mr Alex Snowdon
Approved unanimously

Item III **Emergency Powers (Coronavirus) (Vaccine) (Limitation of Liability) (No.7) (Bailiwick of Guernsey) Regulations, 2021**

The States of Alderney resolved not to annul “The Emergency Powers (Coronavirus) (Vaccine) (Limitation of Liability) (No.7) (Bailiwick of Guernsey) (Regulations, 2021”

Proposed by Mr Bill Abel
Seconded by Mr Alex Snowdon
Approved unanimously

Item IV **Amendment to Rule 4.1(a) of States of Alderney Rules of Procedure**

The States of Alderney resolved to approve that Rule 4.1. (a) of the States of Alderney Rules of Procedure 2010 (last amended 16th October 2019) is amended to read:-

"1 (a) any letter to the President, except for a letter to which Rule 4A applies, signed by the Chairman of a Committee of the States and referring to a matter which falls within the mandate of that Committee and the preparation of which has been approved by electronic recording means of a quorate meeting of that Committee (whether unanimously or by a majority), and received by the President at least 16

days before that meeting or within such other lesser time as the President may notify to Members of the States.”

Proposed by Mr Bill Abel
Seconded by Mr Kevin Gentle
Approved unanimously

Item V **Questions and Reports – Questions only**

The following question was received from Mr Kevin Gentle for the Chairman of Policy & Finance Committee:-

“Is the Chairman in a position to explain why the image showing an exclusion zone around the former burial site on Longis Common with the FAB link going around the site was shown to stakeholders but removed from the IHRA public presentation?”

Response to the question was given verbally and will be available in due course on the Hansard Report for this meeting.

Meeting Closed: 1608 hrs