



OFFICIAL REPORT

OF THE

STATES OF GUERNSEY

SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT

COMMITTEE

Response of the Committee *for* Home Affairs to
the COVID-19 pandemic
Public Hearing

HANSARD

Guernsey, Tuesday, 28th July 2020

No. 4/2020

*Further information relating to the Scrutiny Management Committee
can be found on the official States of Guernsey website at www.gov.gg/scrutiny*

Members Present:

Panel Chair: Deputy Christopher Green, President,
Deputy Jennifer Merrett, Member,
Mrs Gill Morris, Non-States Member,
Scrutiny Management Committee

Mr Mark Huntington, Principal Scrutiny Officer

Business transacted

Procedural – Remit of the Committee	3
EVIDENCE OF Deputy Mary Lowe, President and Mr Adrian Lewis, Chief Secretary, Committee <i>for</i> Home Affairs; Mr Dave Le Ray, Director of Operations Justice and Regulation; Ms Vicky Lajoie, Acting Administrator, Population Management; Mr Ruari Hardy, Head of Law Enforcement; Mr John De Carteret, Prison Governor; and Mr Jon Le Page, Chief Fire Officer	3
<i>The Committee adjourned at 2:52 p.m. and resumed its sitting at 2.57 p.m.</i>	17
Response of the Committee <i>for</i> Home Affairs to the COVID-19 pandemic – Public Hearing continued.....	17
<i>The Committee adjourned at 3.20 p.m</i>	23

Scrutiny Management Committee

Response of the Committee *for* Home Affairs to the COVID-19 pandemic – Public Hearing

*The Committee met at 2 p.m.
in the Cambridge Room and Delancey Rooms, Beau Sejour Leisure Centre*

[DEPUTY GREEN *in the Chair*]

Procedural – Remit of the Committee

The Chairman (Deputy Green): I would like to welcome everybody here today. Our session this afternoon is initially with the Committee *for* Home Affairs and in this hearing we will focus on the response of the Committee *for* Home Affairs to the pandemic to date, the issues that have arisen and any lessons learnt.

5 Our Panel today comprises Mrs Gill Morris, Non-States Member on the Scrutiny Management Committee; Deputy Jennifer Merrett, and myself, Deputy Chris Green. Following this event my Committee will decide whether any further review activity will be commissioned on these areas. Turning to the arrangements for this afternoon, I can confirm that a *Hansard* transcript from this proceeding will be published in due course. Please can I just ask everybody to make sure that their
10 mobile phones are on silent, so we can hear the answers from the questions that we ask?

EVIDENCE OF Deputy Mary Lowe, President and Mr Adrian Lewis, Chief Secretary, Committee *for* Home Affairs; Mr Dave Le Ray, Director of Operations Justice and Regulation; Ms Vicky Lajoie, Acting Administrator, Population Management; Mr Ruari Hardy, Head of Law Enforcement; Mr John De Carteret, Prison Governor; and Mr Jon Le Page, Chief Fire Officer

The Chairman: Right, can I turn then to our witnesses for the record. Can we start down this end with Mr Le Ray, please? Can you each introduce yourselves and your position?

15 **Mr Le Ray:** Yes, I am Dave Le Ray, Director of Operations Justice and Regulation.

Ms Lajoie: I am Vicky Lajoie, Acting Administrator for Population Management.

Mr Lewis: Adrian Lewis, the Chief Secretary of the Committee *for* Home Affairs.

20 **Deputy Lowe:** Mary Lowe, President of Home Affairs.

Mr Hardy: Ruari Hardy, Head of Law Enforcement representing the Police, the Guernsey Border Agency, the Joint Emergency Services Control Centre and also Trading Standards.

25 **The Chairman:** Anyone else? *(Laughter)*

Mr Hardy: It is long enough!

Mr De Carteret: John De Carteret, Prison Governor.

30 **Mr Le Page:** I am Jon Le Page, Chief Fire Officer.

The Chairman: Thank you very much, and welcome.

35 Can I just start by thanking you and the services that you represent for the work you did during the lockdown period? Obviously COVID is not entirely gone from the world, so there are obviously risks going forward; but in terms of the way in which the lockdown was conducted from your point of view, we would just like to pass on our thanks to start with.

So I think, Deputy Lowe, if we can start the ball rolling with you. What would you say, in your experience, were the most major challenges for the Committee *for* Home Affairs during the pandemic and to date?

40 What do you think those major challenges were?

45 **Deputy Lowe:** I just want to say thanks for inviting us. A bit premature, it is still very much in the forefront for all the emergency services under our mandate, **(The Chairman:** Absolutely.) and also for me personally representing Home Affairs on the Civil Contingencies Authority. We are still meeting, Civil Contingencies, and of course what happens with Civil Contingencies for regulations then comes down to operational and for the staff to deal with it under direction.

50 There are only four of us on the Civil Contingencies Authority and we have been extremely busy, and remain extremely busy. We have got another meeting on Thursday. So I think that all of the service chiefs who are here will be able to expand on how they are still extremely busy. In fact some of them are actually busier now than at the beginning of the operation because you are talking about security here. And I will try and answer as much as I can, but you have got to remember with some of it I have got two hats on here, and with Civil Contingencies I cannot actually disclose some of the information. Equally, some of the Border Agency and Law Enforcement will be a bit restricted as well, but we will try and give you as much information as we can, that is in the public domain –

55 **The Chairman:** Yes, but in terms of those major challenges, Mr Hardy, can I turn to you? In terms of your areas of responsibility – four, I think you said – what do you think were the major challenges with the pandemic from the Police’s point of view, also from the Border Agency?

60 **Mr Hardy:** I think from Law Enforcement it was very quickly getting structures of command, identifying what the priorities were that we had to respond to; and I think very quickly working with other areas of Government, other States’ Departments, and ensuring that there were very strong lines of command, as well as making sure that the priority areas were resourced in a situation that was unprecedented, and of course a situation that none of us had met before.

65 I think for Law Enforcement one of the major priorities was we were going into an emergency in which we were not the principal lead agency. The Director of Public Health and Public Health were the lead and we all had to identify how we could support Dr Brink and her team, and Health, in ensuring that the Island did the best it could to prevent the spread of COVID and support all the other critical services.

70 **The Chairman:** Deputy Lowe.

Deputy Lowe: Yes, well, you are right. We had the all-day planning in November which actually had been a huge benefit because there were over 100 of us in the room, it had been organised by Dr Brink and all the emergency services were there, and Health. It was an extremely good planning process that we actually went through.

75 But when this first started it was Home Affairs, or Civil Contingencies, it was the first regulation, because we knew there were an awful lot of people coming back through the borders and hearing about the parties and things that were going to be going on, and over 700 students were coming back. So it was for us to make sure that we got started straight away with restricting the hours of the pubs opening and that you could only sit at a table, to try and stop this spread getting completely out of control from those that were coming back into the Island.

80 So, yes, we started that straight away with Civil Contingencies and we were very supportive of that.

85 **The Chairman:** Deputy Merrett.

Deputy Merrett: Thank you.

You stated, Mr Hardy, that you identified the priorities. So I would like to ask: did you have to cease providing responses to certain matters in order to respond to the pandemic? And, if so, what specific areas were most adversely affected, if I can put it that way?

Mr Hardy: I would say that we never did anything at all at any time that would put the public at risk. There were activities that we ordinarily performed that fell away. So the clearest example is the night-time economy. The night-time economy is a significant responsibility that we have to resource in normal times in a robust way. So by the night-time economy closing down it allowed us to rebalance the organisation and ensure, for example, there were more staff on during normal daytime hours, particularly in those first weeks of the lockdown where we had a very high-visibility police presence.

95 The way we prioritise our work is on risk and if there is physical risk of harm to anybody of course those would always remain one of our key priorities. So with other areas, for example, traffic, the roads were considerably quieter, there was far less call for traffic enforcement. We took staff away from, for example, doing parking tickets – our traffic wardens. They all helped with the daytime response to lockdown.

100 So the change in the way society was behaving and everything going on allowed us to rebalance the organisation and ensure that we could reprioritise.

105 **The Chairman:** Mrs Morris.

Mrs Morris: Did that leave gaps anywhere? It was quite fortunate in some ways that some activities declined whilst there were other more important things to do. Did that leave gaps anywhere that you had to fill in some other way?

Mr Hardy: Part of our contingency planning was we were expecting that to happen. So, for example, we were planning for a loss of staff in the region between 30% and 35%. That was not just through illness, it was through other areas like the schools were closed, the nursery was closed and therefore staff had to accommodate their children. We had a lot of staff who, for example, cared for elderly relatives and they could not rely on other agencies to help with that. So we were planning for abstractions not only from the potential of illness but of all the other aspects that we had to support as an employer, in our duty of care to our staff. So our planning went a lot further than reality in terms of abstractions.

So in answer to your question I am not aware of any areas that we had to just make a decision, we could not simply deliver it and we let it go.

125 **Mrs Morris:** If we went into a second wave, is there anything that you would do differently about the deployment? Are there any additional resources you think would have been useful?

130 **Mr Hardy:** Well, we planned to use additional resources that in the end we did not use; for example, officers who had left the Force within the last six months to a year. We had persuaded them to come back, be sworn-in as special constables and we had a pool of additional officers that if our numbers became exceptionally short we would be able to use them. Fortunately, that never came to fruition.

135 We had other plans of potential areas of work we could have stopped doing if we had to due to a lack of numbers, but fortunately that never came. But as part of coming out of this phase of the COVID-19 emergency we are reflecting, we are looking that if there was a second wave and if we face the same problems again what would we do differently. So there is very much a review and a reflection with the thought that we may have to go into a further state of the emergency.

Mrs Morris: That is very good to hear.

140 Was there an increase in call-outs or incidents related to mental health during the lockdown that you had to deal with?

145 **Mr Hardy:** Over the past five to 10 years we have had a year-on-year increase in our calls for service to mental health. In the round I would say that the calls for mental health in the community, particularly we tend to get involved in crisis, particularly where there is self-harm and there may be people using weapons to self-harm or really where violence is threatened. Those numbers of calls for service were fairly stable with what we would expect ordinarily. So there was not a big spike in what we would describe as the acute mental health. But there was still throughout the emergency a necessity for us to be involved in quite a few cases.

150 **The Chairman:** Could we get into what happened with general crime rates during the lockdown, whilst we are on the topic of policing in particular? I know from reports in the media that domestic incidents did go up.

155 Can you just confirm that; and what is the position also in terms of more general crime rates during that hard lockdown period?

Mr Hardy: Anticipating that may come up, I do have some graphs which may help, so I am more than happy to share that with the panel. (*Interjections*)

160 I have extended this to 27th July. The bottom graph demonstrates the calls for service, so that is calls coming into the Joint Emergency Services Control Centre that we have described to be in a domestic circumstance. That could be a very *broad* topic. It can be parents struggling in a domestic circumstance with children, it could be where adult children are living back with parents because of the emergency and there have been tensions and anything that we have put in the 'domestic' context that is the calls for service.

165 The table above is actually where we have classified there is a domestic assault, a criminal offence that has merited investigation by Law Enforcement.

170 So you can see that in March and April ... well, in March there was obviously a decrease and in April it was fairly consistent with what we would expect. There was a considerable spike in May and into June, and July also was slightly higher. Of course, when you talk about 'domestic abuse' this is just one facet of the broader services that are being tasked and are available to deal with this kind of incident in our community. So this is from the Law Enforcement.

Otherwise crime levels generally were fairly consistent with what we would ordinarily expect, other than in the night-time economy, such as assaults, disorderlies, public order-type offences were clearly a lot lower.

175 **The Chairman:** Jennifer, then Gill.

Deputy Merrett: Thank you for the update. Obviously I had some figures previously given to me which I appreciated, but my understanding is that in line with the College of Policing Authorised Professional Practices, and I am sure these are words to your ears because I think they probably
180 came from your good self, advises that forces should have dedicated personnel with specialist knowledge in this area – particularly in this area.

I would like to really know what your thoughts and your intent is in having a specialist trained member of staff to support members of our community for these instances, because the spike that we have seen is of considerable concern.

185

Mr Hardy: I am aware there is a post we are looking to recruit, but that is not a post that would undertake these investigations. The post we are looking to recruit to is working in the space of partnership working with other agencies and trying to enhance education and awareness around domestic abuse, outside the normal investigative practice.

190 Within Law Enforcement, we have a public protection team which are specialist, highly trained investigators that are all trained to the higher levels of investigation and they deal with domestic abuse investigations, domestic violence and safeguarding; and that department ran effectively and was fully staffed throughout the pandemic.

195 **Mrs Morris:** Moving on to the Border Agency, or a segue between the two, obviously my understanding is that the Guernsey Border Agency has been conducting inbound checks on critical worker permits. I am assuming that they were involved in the seven-day pilot and follow-up checks after entry. Has this presented resource difficulties for the GBA, and if so how have these been overcome?

200

Mr Hardy: A very good example of how we have supported the 14 or 7-day isolation checks is that Mr Le Page made staff available from the Guernsey Fire and Rescue Service to support our footprint on the ground for doing visits on people who were in self-isolation. These visits were not solely about whether someone was self-isolating appropriately. It was about checking on welfare and checking on mental health because we do understand that the 14-day self-isolation for some
205 was going to be very difficult and we worked in partnership with Health to make sure that our work in that space not only focused on potential breaches but focused on the welfare. You mentioned mental health earlier, and we were very aware that.

As far as the Guernsey Border Agency, there have been a number of functions that they have continued to do throughout the emergency and one of them is obviously monitoring and investigating the importation of controlled drugs. We saw a fairly significant increase in the volume of postal importations during lockdown, because obviously there was not the normal passenger movement that we would anticipate. So they were very busy and are still busy dealing with that work. However, because the numbers of actual passengers significantly reduced they were able to meet the demands of working with the seven and 14-day isolations very effectively. However, as we
215 now return back to normal the pressures on staffing are becoming more obvious and it is an area we are working on.

We have also had support at ports from other members of States' staff who were reallocated work because they could not do their normal function. So, for example, individuals arriving in the Bailiwick from outside, we had support from some Aurigny staff who were not able to work, who were helping us manage passengers in the terminal to ensure that all of the self-isolation notices and information was given correctly.

220

225 **Mrs Morris:** You may not be able to answer the next question because I think it might be still in planning, but are you preparing for Phase 6 and the kind of pressures that that might put on the Border Agency and the Police Force and whoever else happens to be redeployed? Obviously the rest of the Island is back to normal, so those people who you could call on in lockdown I am assuming would no longer be available.

230 **Mr Hardy:** It is in planning, we do not know what the decision is going to be, but we will work with our partners and do our best to ensure that it is resourced appropriately.

Mrs Morris: How likely is it that you are going to have sufficient resource?

235 **Mr Hardy:** We are a very 'can-do' service and we will find solutions.

Deputy Merrett: Can I just ask, going back to the quarantine? You said, in partnership with HSC and the Fire and Rescue Service, you tried to visit people in quarantine. On average, how many times were they visited?

240 **Mr Hardy:** Not everybody in quarantine received a home visit. We did a lot of work around risk assessment and profiling and also responded to intelligence from the community. So everybody in the main received phone calls and those phone calls were supportive as well as inquiring as to ensure that they were maintaining their isolation. But the resource was not available for everybody to get a visit. I think some of the work we have shown with regard to the prosecutions we have instigated where people have breached, we have been very quick to secure and preserve evidence and investigate those cases, and bring people before the courts if they have breached.

250 **Deputy Merrett:** So of the people that were in quarantine who were seven or 14 days, how many were visited? Do you have that data?

Mr Hardy: I do have some figures here, if I can dig them out.

Mrs Morris: Was it a half, a third ...? Just a -?

255 **Mr Hardy:** No, was not. It was less than half.

These figures are from last week. So on the Thursday of last week there were 515 people who were in self-isolation. Within the last 14 days we put in just short of a thousand telephone calls to people in self-isolation; and the total number of visits done on a single day on Thursday of last week were 20 home visits.

260 **Mrs Morris:** Can I just ask a supplementary question to that, because that would have been while we were still in the second week of the seven day?

265 **Mr Hardy:** There were 14 and seven mixed in.

Mrs Morris: Okay.

So were the figures for last week typical of what has been going on, or was it a little bit out of kilter because you had the two overlapping regimes?

270 **Mr Hardy:** The pilot did bring in more but not as many as we had planned for. But day on day there is a fairly consistent number of passengers arriving.

Mrs Morris: Okay. Thank you.

275 **The Chairman:** Mr Le Page, obviously there has been mention of the fire service crew who were redeployed to carry out the checks and the home visits. Did that have any kind of knock-on effect in terms of your business-as-usual services; or how was it managed? Was it managed in a way that did not effectively cause detriment to existing core services delivered by your Department?

280 **Mr Le Page:** During the lockdown it did not have any effect, because the staff that had been redeployed were the staff that are normally employed as Fire Safety Inspectors to ensure compliance with the Fire Law. So of course they could not get out and about and visit premises. So they were redeployed to work with Public Health at that particular time and to do welfare checks on the people that were in self-isolation and the few that were in quarantine at that time. Obviously they got a good skill set with doing that at that time so when we were winding down on that kind
285 of work whilst Guernsey Border Agency were winding up with what they were doing, Mr Hardy was asking, 'Could you still support us?'. So we were happy to carry on supporting that, and what that means is that we have delayed turning back on the inspections of premises for compliance with the Fire Law.

290 Now, that can only happen for a short period of time because then there is a knock-on effect of the risk of people not complying with the Fire Law and buildings becoming unsafe. So currently we are working to a date at the end of August when I expect to see my staff repatriated back to the Fire and Rescue Service in order to carry on their business.

295 So that in turn is going to have an effect with us. We are expecting that the six-month hiatus with fire safety inspections is probably going to take us about a year to catch up on, because we know from experience that there will be an degradation in the quality of buildings which will require not just a check to make sure things are 'tickety-boo' but follow-up checks to make sure that everything complies with remedial work.

300 **Mrs Morris:** Shall I move on to Population Management?

The Chairman: Yes, please.

305 **Mrs Morris:** I have got some questions on Population Management. Shall I address them to Vicky? (**Ms Lajoie:** Yes, sure.)

Okay, what additional flexibility did Population Management need to put in place before and during lockdown?

310 **Ms Lajoie:** I think as we went into lockdown, we recognised that there would potentially be two issues really: the free movement of people in and out of the Island to fulfil essential roles was going to be very limited and perhaps people in roles ... There would not be full-time work for them, so the Committee supported sending the regulations to the CCA that basically meant the requirement attached to an employment permit which links to your employer fell away for the period of those regulations. What that meant was people could still live lawfully in the Island and not work; but it also, really importantly, allowed them to support other sectors which ordinarily with an employment
315 permit that would not be able to happen unless they applied for a different permit.

320 So the message was very light touch, keep us informed of where there are changes, which we did find a group of people that did, so it allowed that flexibility to people to be able to continue working supporting essential services during the lockdown. Also there were other policy decisions, so individuals on a 9/3 pattern who would ordinarily be looking to leave the Island, there was not that requirement. Again, we asked that they kept in touch ... and was the job still there. So there were other flexibilities that were allowed within the normal conditions of the permit, but that was the principal one.

325 **Mrs Morris:** I was at a meeting last week and Carnation Group were talking about all the good things that their staff had been doing – because they obviously were not employed or being used at the Duke of Richmond – which I thought was excellent.

What is Population Management doing now to support people on Island who are unlicensed and may be being made redundant? And, of any measures that you are taking at the moment, how widely publicised is this for people who are obviously in a very stressful situation?

330 **Ms Lajoie:** I think the key message that we are trying to get across at the moment is to get in contact. Obviously it is very difficult to communicate a broad message because everyone's circumstances are different. There are already in place in the Population Management regime redundancy policies, so how we can support people. There is the opportunity to apply for other Employment Permits. So those who have not got the choice, we can talk through with people to
335 make sure they fully understand what the options are for them and what they potentially are.

We have had a small group of people who actually want to return to a foreign country but have struggled, so we have kept in contact with them simply on availability and cost of flights, things like that. So the message we are trying to get across is just contact us rather than worrying, and we will talk through the individual options.

340

Mrs Morris: Thank you.

So the Revive and Thrive Policy Letter in response to the pandemic detailed a target to achieve improved growth rates by an average of 1% per annum. What pressures do you think this is going to put on the population figures? This may be actually a question for Deputy Lowe, *(Interjection)*
345 but would that target growth rate apply, do you think?

Deputy Lowe: Okay, but before I answer that, I just want to follow on a little bit about population management because the Committee agreed to waive some of the fees, obviously to be able to help many of those that are in hospitality and in the economy. It was unfair to be charging when they could not use the permits for the job that they had actually been appointed to.
350

We put that out as well to make sure that we had the right message that we are trying to do what we can to help the economy for that one as well. Also, just added on to that, for those that were coming through that are the critical workers or that they are exempt, they still go through the Population Management Office who have done all the work to allow those to come in. So there has been a lot of work like that carrying on during that period of time.
355

To answer to your questions about the Revive and Thrive: absolutely. I mean, 'revive and thrive' is a nice little soundbite, but actually what does it mean? I am still not totally sure what it means, to be honest! *(Laughter and interjection)* I think from the public's point of view they want to see some action. They do not want these sorts of words. They want to know that Mr Smith down at the Vale has got a job he can go to, and what are we doing as the States to put on some form of employment that they can actually do? And equally that if it is businesses that have got a problem what are we doing, where P&R are actually giving the grants, and all the other funding that they are able to do. So it is working collectively and collaboratively with P&R, but also for population management.
360

Population management I do not see as a hindrance to the Revive and Thrive because there is not anything as such yet that you could actually say, well, this is key to the Revive and Thrive because there is not really anything on the table, to be honest, in my opinion –
365

Mrs Morris: There was definitely the implication, I think, at the Chamber of Commerce yesterday that it might lead to increased numbers.
370

Deputy Lowe: Well, again, that is right, and there will be some who may have been there yesterday, who have always wanted an open-door policy and the States' directive is we will not have an open-door policy to population management, but we will have a population management regime that is flexible – you can turn it on, you can turn off. Like at the moment we are waiting for

375 the next lot of figures for employment and the skills that are involved with unemployment. I think
people will have already seen ... Certainly in an article I was reading yesterday was a bit of a backlash
about people that have been not self-isolating, therefore they now face the courts; and there will
probably be people in the 1,100 that are unemployed that really should have been used before we
were bringing in people that actually could have put the Island at risk through COVID.

380 So we are waiting to see, because we work very closely with Employment and Social Security to
see the skills, to make sure that they work. That is all part of the triangle, the current triangle, it is
usually a square because it includes Skills Guernsey as well to try and get people trained up within
the community.

385 So there is an awful lot, it is not just on its own. It really has to be that we are all working together
to be able to do that, to be able to make sure. So if there are a lot of people, a lot of skills that are
going to be unemployed, it is important that we look at those policies. There are 250 policies on
the Population Management Regime website. So if you are the employer or the employee you can
look up and say, 'Well, actually there is a plumber on there and we will get a five-year permit'. So
both parties know that is the permit they would get. So the business would know what they would
390 be able to do, they would be able to plan, and equally the person coming here would know it is a
permit for five years – (*Interjection*) providing the Police checks and everything else are sufficient,
because it is not tied up how it was years ago where it was tied up with the Social Security. So it has
changed completely, but it is a lot more flexible than what it was.

395 **The Chairman:** Deputy Merrett.

Deputy Merrett: Thank you.

I am seeking some comfort here from Mr Hardy, because one response from Population
Management suggested it was free movement of people in and out of essential roles, and I think
400 Deputy Lowe just said putting people at risk by having essential workers coming in. There has been
some public concern about people coming into the Island as an essential or critical worker who are
not going into self-isolation.

405 So what checks and balances are in place on those particular people, because I am fearful they
are putting people at risk and/or that they have this free movement? Can you give us some clarity
around the quantity of numbers coming in and what checks and balances are in place for the
essential workers, please?

Mr Hardy: I can only really comment on my experience. So, for example, we have a machine
that deals with drink-drive offenders and we have to have an annual service inspection and quality
410 assurance on that device because it is an evidential device. The licence was due to expire in April so
we had to apply for an essential worker permit and it took us the best part of probably two weeks
to get sufficient information to allow that permit to be ticked up for that individual to arrive in the
Island, to be escorted directly from the Airport with very little contact with anyone other than the
driver of the vehicle that brought them to Police Headquarters. They were allowed to go into the
415 machine to do the service on the machine, they were then taken to a hotel room where they were
isolated overnight, and then were taken from that hotel room straight back to the Airport to leave
the Island.

420 So the movement of people coming in, or critical workers that I have experienced, has been
extremely robust and well managed. I think Mr Le Ray may be able to give a bit more help on than
that because I think the majority of the permits go through certain senior civil servants but, as
someone who has applied for a critical permit, it was not given away lightly and there was a lot of
medical information required as well as the necessity for the professional involvement.

Deputy Merrett: So critical, essential and key workers are all the same thing, it is just about terminology?

425

Mr Hardy: No, they all have different standards of what they have to go through –

Deputy Merrett: Okay, so the essential workers or key workers, what checks and balances were in place when they arrived on our shores?

430

Mr Hardy: They still have to go through the quarantines where necessary, unless they are airline crew or something like that; that is more particular. I have not had a lot of involvement in those elements. That is why I say senior civil servants have been managing those.

435

The Chairman: Mr Le Ray, have you got anything to add to that?

Mr Le Ray: Yes, I have been responsible for Justice and Law Enforcement and anybody under the Home Affairs banner, so I would be the one responsible for issuing those permits for people that are classed as essential workers.

440

My experience is that I have probably rejected more than I have approved and that just shows the level of scrutiny that goes into whether these are essential workers or not. We tried to find ways of undertaking the roles differently, perhaps extended licences and in some cases where we are not actually working on the regime of previous governments for licensing different types of work, and just really working on whether things can be postponed until travel can be safely delivered.

445

Part of that consideration, is mitigating the risk as well. So the one that Mr Hardy spoke about was a quick in and out visit to the Island, but some may need to be here for a few days. So we need to make sure that enough restrictions are put in place to make sure that any risks that those individuals pose to our effective COVID-free community are mitigated sufficiently.

450

Mrs Morris: Can I just ask a slightly cheeky question? Given all these restrictions that you needed to put round critical workers, has anybody ever turned around and said, 'Well I'm just not bothering coming'?

455

Mr Le Ray: Yes, we have had a number of companies who have actually said, 'No, we'll wait until the restrictions can be lifted and there is a freer movement of working in the environment in which they are going to work'. So, yes, a number have said they will not travel.

Mrs Morris: Does that increase risks in certain areas markedly?

460

Mr Le Ray: No, not that I am aware, not within Home Affairs. We managed to mitigate those risks and undertake the work differently or put different provisions in place to remove the issues that we may have faced.

465

Deputy Lowe: If I could just add on to that, I am aware that there are some companies who have actually decided in the end to go and use self-catering units, because it was better to put them in the self-catering unit for 14 days than to keep holding up the business. Some will see that as cost effective because it does not look like there is going to be any time soon where it is going to be open ports, with all that is going on in the UK and beyond.

470

So, yes, there have been some that will take that sort of response to it all and decide to actually use self-catering units ...

Deputy Merrett: But will they be subject to the checks and balances –?

Mr Le Ray: They will be subject to 14 days –

475 **Deputy Merrett:** Yes, because obviously the checks and balances are phone calls and visits.

Mrs Morris: Yes, so the Collenette, for instance, I think has been doing that, as –

480 **Deputy Lowe:** It is still through the borders and they are still aware they are here, because they have to be checked on.

The Chairman: I think this is probably a question either for Deputy Lowe or possibly Mr Lewis. So maybe Mr Lewis first, and then Deputy Lowe. During the pandemic, during the lockdown, did P&R provide or will they provide any additional funds to your Committee and/or their services to deal with this situation?
485

We spoke to Health & Social Care, not last week, it should have been P&R last week, but the week before, Health & Social Care, and they said they had received additional funds, moneys provided by P&R. What is the position in relation to Home Affairs, Mr Lewis?

490 **Mr Lewis:** I would imagine it is the same as Health & Social Care insofar as the rules were given by P&R to say basically, if it was below £50,000 then you should try to absorb it within your existing budgets – given that our budget is measured in millions – but it was over that sum. So we put forward a short business case to say why we needed to spend the money. So in the case of Home Affairs there were probably two main areas where we have incurred expenditure in excess of that.
495 One relates to mortuary facilities, where we had to do it for handling, if we had a certain number of bodies

The other was with regard to the coronavirus helpline, which Law Enforcement through JESCC and also with the support of the Fire and Rescue Service put that in place. So it is still going through the process of actually unlocking the money but, no, P&R did set up parameters and thus far we have followed that process and expect to receive the money. *(Interjection)*
500

The Chairman: Deputy Lowe.

Deputy Lowe: But as we said right at the very beginning, we are still in the midst of it all. It would be great if this was at the end of it all and we can actually give you the final figures and know exactly what the position is. **(The Chairman:** Yes.) But for us we are really in the depths of it all, with the emergency services.
505

The Chairman: Yes. The purpose of this hearing is to try to attempt some real-time scrutiny. We absolutely appreciate that the pandemic is not over; we are trying to get a snapshot of where we are now moving forward. **(Deputy Lowe:** Sure.)
510

I think our structure may have gone slightly awry, but while I think of it, Deputy Lowe, in the States last week you talked about the COVID Recovery Advisory Group (CRAG) and you made reference to the fact that that group had suggested that maybe going forward there should only be four priorities and everything else should be deprioritised. I think you spoke about the four areas of government activity that were going to be prioritised.
515

Did you want to elaborate on that? How do you feel from the Home Affairs point of view? How do you think that the CRAG body has worked? Has that been of help or benefit to you or your mandate? What is your view on that?
520

Deputy Lowe: For us, if we ever feel that we need more resources or anything, we will just go straight to P&R and we deal direct. So we do not need to wait until a CRAG meeting to be able to deal with it. It should be an open-door policy; it should be a two-way process between both P&R and ourselves. And of course we have the Oversight Board meetings as well.

525 This CRAG group was set up – it was not called CRAG to start with, so it has got its new title –
what benefit does it bring? I am not totally sure it brings a huge amount of benefit. However, it just
came to us that they wanted to deprioritise – that was a message coming from the centre. Brexit is
still absolutely key for Home Affairs; COVID is absolutely key for Home Affairs; the General Election,
obviously, that goes without saying; and then the Revive and Thrive.

530

The Chairman: They are the four?

Deputy Lowe: They are the four. So when you look at it and scrutinise it and think what would
we actually look at to say, what can we deprioritise? Well, looking at the emergency services here,
535 there are not a lot of front-line services, and there cannot be too much change at the Prison, or at
the Fire, or the Police. But nevertheless the staff will be having a look to see if there is anything that
we could actually deprioritise at this moment in time and then they will bring it to Home Affairs –
and that will actually happen with the same on all the Committees that are on CRAG. But as I say, I
think that would be more ... we would be talking about that at the Oversight Board. But Brexit is
540 actually right at the very top at the moment for us as well, because there is not much difference
between COVID and Brexit. It is taking a huge amount of resources and the Head of Law
Enforcement will be able to tell you about the Border Agency. We are having our meetings probably
about weekly, and it is changing. We will hear from the Ministry of Justice on a Friday and they want
answers on a Monday – they have got 6,000 staff and we have got something like three, and they
545 want all of this and these technical documents to be gone through and see where we are with it.
Then we will be at the meeting and suddenly a message comes through that actually London have
changed that stance and they want to do something else. It is just massive, and of course we are
talking about by the end of the year. Whether that will happen or not, we have still got to do it as
if it is going to happen, because they are insisting it is going to happen.

550 So there is nothing we can do there on deprioritising – it is actually *more* resources we need for
Brexit, as an example; and as you all know about COVID, we have got Fire and Rescue helping out
Law Enforcement. When we actually spoke to one of the strategic leads who attended our all-day
meeting at Home Affairs, I said, 'We just need more resources'. And they said, 'There are not any
more resources, we haven't got them'.

555 That is the difficulty you have got; and when you have got front-line staff like this, right at the
top of the P&R plan, or whatever we call it these days, is that the Island has to be safe and secure.
Well, we have got to back that with making sure that we are. I am confident we are, but you have
to make sure that not too many things are falling behind the wayside while we are actually making
sure that we have got our border safe and secure.

560

The Chairman: Mrs Morris?

Mrs Morris: I want to ask some questions about the Prison.

565 **Deputy Merrett:** I have a question on what Deputy Lowe has just said, if that is okay?

The Chairman: Do you want to go first, then?

Deputy Merrett: It does sound as if the emergency services or Home Affairs are still being
570 relatively reactive rather than proactive. What I mean by that is that if we are truly to grow back –
Revive and Thrive, to build back better – then at some point we need to move to more preventive
measures so that these services are not dealing with things like, for example, domestic incidents.

575 So I note that the Sarnia Programme for domestic abuse perpetrators was paused in March, at
a time when arguably the pressure valves would have been on those homes. I understand the
reasons why, because obviously I have got them in writing. But the increase in the incidents
obviously gives us evidence that actually during this period of time – and if there is a second wave –

in my opinion, and the figures evidently show a risk of people in their homes. It would appear to me to be woefully under-resourced especially from a preventative point.

580 So my question to Deputy Lowe is: we were due to have a domestic abuse strategy update and I believe it is potentially in October, although we have an election, but when can we move back to the preventative stance so that this harm is not done to our community in the first place? So whether that is physical harm or mental harm, it is not done in the first place. If we want to build back better then we have to get to the preventative stage of working and from the panel today so far, I understand we are reacting to an emergency situation, but when do you believe we could get back
585 to that stance of trying to actually prevent such harm in the first place?

Deputy Lowe: Well, as you know, we had the Justice Review last week and the Sursis Motivé was successful in that. But part of Home Affairs, of the Justice Review is to set up the Cross-Committee, the collaborative Committee. There are five of us, it is not going to be just on Home Affairs, it really
590 has to be across the five Committees to be able to address this, and the domestic abuse obviously is part of that. You would have had the email this morning which I sent you through – hopefully you will have received it, Deputy Merrett? (**Deputy Merrett:** Yes.) You wanted some answers to some questions. We have sent that to all States' Members so everybody can know the answers to those questions that were posed, because as I said, I could not answer that because the Rules did not
595 allow me to stand up and answer those questions last week, so I thought it would be helpful to actually send that.

The Domestic Abuse Strategy again is key for us. That does come under Home Affairs and that will be coming to the States in October. It is like all these things, really, everybody wants to do everything and we just have not got it and you really do have to prioritise. Of course domestic abuse
600 is serious and it is something we need to do but it has got to be across Committees and we have got to be able to see what we can do with this panel. We tried to get a date for this week but some of those other four Committees could not make it, so we have now gone back with more dates because we really want to get on with this Justice Review. We want to get off the starting blocks with it and we are just reliant on the other Committees to join us.

605 **Mr Hardy:** I would like to come back, if I may, on the point you made about 'things did not happen' during COVID. The Island's response to domestic abuse is multi-agency and throughout COVID we had multi-agency meetings, which consist of all the key people wrapped around domestic abuse and that functioned throughout. It did not function physically meeting in the same room but we used technology to ensure the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences took place on a regular basis.

There were pressures in the space of domestic abuse, there was an increase, but significant steps were taken very quickly to increase capacity. So, for example, with social distancing and with issues potentially around the Refuge, additional capacity was found very quickly. I cannot go into any
615 detail, (**Deputy Merrett:** Please don't.) because obviously it is confidential where facilities like that are, but additional capacity was put in place during COVID to allow an increased service being offered by the Refuge facility. That was not just for female victims of domestic abuse, male victims of domestic abuse were accommodated during lockdown as well.

The partner agencies who worked with Law Enforcement around domestic abuse were fully
620 functioning. So the independent domestic abuse advisers were working. Yes, there was an increased workload but people coped; and the people who work in that are passionate about supporting victims of domestic abuse, and that was as much during COVID as when not in COVID.

I really must provide some reassurance that services were functioning for victims –

625 **Deputy Merrett:** Yes, and I am assured by that, but my question is one about how we would prevent in the first place. So we can react to it and deal with it when it happens, but my question really is about: when do we move to more preventative measures? When can we actually get some

more resource to look at preventing it happening in the first place? Obviously if it does not happen in the first place you do not then have to deal with that.

630 So when do we change the flow, front load the cost, shall we say? The cost is not the fiscal one, it is the one to our community. It is a massive cost. But I am also led to believe – a supplementary, if I may – that child abuse incidents are not recorded, are they, as domestic incidents? So did we see any increase in that area of our community?

635 **Mr Hardy:** With respect to child safeguarding a lot of the referrals come through Education, through schools and through nurseries, and obviously they were on lockdown. So there was a reduction in the number of those types of referrals.

640 Again, the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub – the MASH – that continued to function; and we continued to work with partners throughout COVID. When we were called, if we went to domestic incidents where there were children, our systems, our procedures, our information sharing with other agencies remained consistently throughout. So, again, to just reassure, the best practice across Health and Social Care, across Law Enforcement, across voluntary agencies continued throughout.

645 **Deputy Merrett:** Thank you.

The Chairman: I think, Mr De Carteret, we will ask you some questions about Guernsey Prison now and then we will have a short break. Are you able to tell us what additional controls were put in place in the prison to help the fight against coronavirus?

650 **Mr De Carteret:** Yes, it reflected the wider community to be absolutely honest with you. It is a closed community and whilst it is very easy just to shut the doors and put everybody behind their cell door that in effect can have a negative impact, as you can imagine, on the prisoners' mental health and the general well-running of the prison. So what we needed to be very careful of was that we did not overreact to the risks that were present at the time. It is lucky that we missed the time back in March when it was all happening. But our primary concern was obviously looking after our prisoners, making sure everybody was safe and making sure that we had the staff there to enable us to deliver our services.

660 What we did do is we focused on the regulatory changes that we would need to enable us to quarantine people coming into reception, because the biggest risk at that point was outside of the prison. And of course the staff group was another area of concern. We had a number of people within that staff group who could be considered to have aspects, and there were people that did have underlying health issues, and so on and so forth. So we had to design quite a complicated regime which meant that certain parts of our staff group were actually protected against each other, and all sorts of things. But once we got all those things into place the Committee were extremely helpful in passing off the necessary regulatory changes quite quickly.

670 Once we had got these things into play, we looked at the regime, because of course we had taken away things like visits and visits by external agencies and all sorts of other things that go on and fill up a prisoner's daily life. We kept them all working and we tried our best really to keep everybody as occupied as we possibly could. I think that is very different to the way in which other prisons in other jurisdictions reacted – I know it is not fair to compare, but I think what we did on the whole ... Obviously we followed the advice of Public Health very closely, we were very lucky because we had a fantastic healthcare manager who was tied into acute nursing and everything we did we did under advice and guidance from Public Health. That was a model that we applied.

675 **The Chairman:** What do you think the number one challenge was for the Prison?

Mr De Carteret: Infection control, to be honest. It is a closed community and as you can imagine if it got into the prison we would have a very, very difficult job with cross-contamination. Anybody

680 who has ever been inside a prison would realise just what that environment is like. We were very lucky, the prisoners themselves were absolutely fantastic. We involved them early on in the actual planning process and said, 'Look, we are part of this community together; we have all got a role to do', and they took that, in some cases very, very seriously and –

685 **The Chairman:** I could imagine that ahead of knowing how it turned out, there may have been a concern that morale might have been adversely affected in lockdown particularly if there were no family visits. How was that? And indeed very often meeting with their professional substance abuse workers or whoever it is, the professionals going in actually gives inmates structure. So was morale an issue, or are you saying it was not, actually?

690 **Mr De Carteret:** No, I think they were quite pleased on the whole that we put in the measures that we put in. They felt very safe and they felt that we were trying to keep their family safe by not doing open visits. If you turn it on its head, they may have felt there was pressure for the family to come in and expose themselves to unnecessary risks that they would not necessarily want them to be exposed to.

The Chairman: So that was actually quite helpful to them?

700 **Mr De Carteret:** Yes, it was. And other things that we had in place within the Prison which had been in for quite some time – in-cell telephones, for instance, keeping the family contact going throughout the whole lockdown period – were very, very important; and we kept the prisoners informed. So every time there was a media release, for instance, that came out, that was communicated to them via in-cell technology. I would brief them every time there was a significant change. I gave them lots of presentations on what I knew about COVID-19 at that stage and really tried to keep that channel of information flowing.

The Chairman: Okay, we take a brief break and then when we come back I think if we could try and focus on what we think the lessons learnt are, or what they might be, and we will try and cover that off.

710 Right, five minutes, thank you.

The Committee adjourned at 2:52 p.m. and resumed its sitting at 2:57 p.m.

Response of the Committee for Home Affairs to the COVID-19 pandemic – Public Hearing continued

The Chairman: Moving forward and trying to work out what lessons we have learnt and applying those for the future, obviously, Deputy Lowe, there is some discussion and thinking that by the end of the summer or early autumn we might be looking at a Phase 6 situation. I think what we have picked up from you this afternoon is that there are pressures on resources in terms of policing and patrolling the borders as they are within Phase 5. Would it be too much of a stretch to say in Phase 6 your Committee's services are going to have even more pressure put on those limited resources if we get rid of the compulsory 14-day quarantine period?

Is that a fear that you have?

720 **Deputy Lowe:** There are a few things that that has thrown up, with what is actually happening at this moment in time.

We have certainly seen more flexibility from staff right across Home Affairs. We were saying that Fire are helping out the Police; we have also got other staff that are in Home Affairs that have been

725 moved across to be able to help the service or indeed outside of Home Affairs. So I think there is far more of that, the cross-team working within Home Affairs.

Also the point being that there have been frustrations which I do not see we are going to be able to resolve yet, where we are talking about lessons learnt inasmuch as lack of data – the systems for Population Management and the systems for Employment and Social Security, being able to get that information because the computer systems do not allow that to actually happen.

730 We knew that was the problem previously, but when you have got a situation like you have got now where it is an emergency, and you need that when you have got unemployment going up, that is something that we really need to address of the lessons learnt. It is happening, but it is just not happening at this moment in time. So we want to fast track that as well.

735 Again, when we were talking just before, as well, I think the States and indeed Home Affairs have to recognise about priorities. For us, the Justice Review was a priority and remains a priority; and how you are going to have to prioritise all of this. If you have not got the resources there might be one States' debate where, 'This really has to happen!' And you have got another States' debate where, 'This has really got to happen!'

740 Having the discussion with P&R last week they were saying, 'Well, actually, dates, you have got to take with a pinch of salt, they are aspirational. You have just got to get realistic that things are going to have to be prioritised of the resources that you have actually got'. I think that is the reality of it all, really. I think we are going to have to do that.

745 **The Chairman:** Would you accept that moving to Phase 6 would represent some challenges in terms of the resourcing of how that would work in practice?

Deputy Merrett: Especially for the borders.

750 **The Chairman:** Specifically on the borders, yes.

Deputy Lowe: Right, okay. Well, again, you would have to speak to the staff regarding that because obviously the information we get from the staff, it is not for us to tell them what they have got to do at the borders. **(The Chairman:** No, well –) They will be coming back to us.

755 I mean, if you have got Phase 6, it depends whether it is a full Phase 6 where everything is open, or whether it is staged, or what they are going to do. That is all part of discussions that would be taking place at CCA, I suggest, and that is not really for within this domain at this moment in time.

760 **Mrs Morris:** So you would not even be prepared to say if it was *your* preference as to how we went into Phase 6, given that you are being told you have to deal with this with the resources you have, what would your preference be?

765 **Deputy Lowe:** My preference would be working with the staff; you have got to work together. We do not work as though Home Affairs as a Committee is a dictatorship, we actually work as a team with the staff. So if it was a message coming through if this is what we need to do for Phase 6, we obviously have to have dialogue with the staff and we have to see what is manageable and what is not manageable; and if we need to go back to P&R and say, 'Well, what's actually happening at this moment in time, we are going to need more resources, whether that is money or whether that is staff'.

770 So I think it is a bit hypothetical to be able to answer that at the moment because we just do not know at this moment in time what it would be – what I would like, what others would like, that is just not helpful. I do not think that is actually helpful to come out and for me to say as a statement, as President of Home Affairs, 'This is what I want for Phase 6', because I think that is irresponsible.

775 **The Chairman:** No, it is more about trying to pinpoint where the challenges will be rather than speculation, isn't it? There is a difference between planning for the future and extrapolating the plan. But I suppose what we are trying to say is, to what extent are you confident – and I suppose Mr Hardy, perhaps, might be best to answer this – to what extent are there robust plans in place, given the experience you have had, to be able to adequately deal with the border situation in a Phase 6 environment? I do not think that is *too* hypothetical. It seems to be the trajectory that is being suggested. I do not think it is too radical to say that.

780 **Deputy Merrett:** So I think it is about when we move from hundreds travelling to thousands travelling, what is in place to ensure the checks and balances for those people entering our community are either under mandatory quarantine or they are not. I think it is trying to get assurance that if at the moment from your earlier question, a response that I believe you said under 785 50% had home visits, and had those checks. So what can our community expect going forward, in Phase 6, when they may wish to travel? The assurances that I am looking for, and the comfort of how many of these people coming into the community, will be the checks and balances that will be in place. Can you cope with that volume of people travelling?

790 I think that is basically what we are asking for.

The Chairman: I think that is basically what we were trying to get at!

Deputy Merrett: Can you cope and can you give the assurances so that in September – we are August I think this week, aren't we? That is what we are looking to find some assurance on, because 795 lots of our community do actually want to travel.

Deputy Lowe: It is not decided yet.

800 **Mr Hardy:** The first thing that I think we have witnessed throughout this is the population, the public, our community have complied with what they have been asked to do. (**Deputy Merrett:** They have.) So the vast majority of people travelling are complying and are doing what the Director of Public Health is asking them to do. (**The Chairman:** Yes.) (**Deputy Merrett:** Brilliant.)

805 Our response will be based around risk; our response will be based around intelligence; and if there is information that specific individuals are placing our community at risk, of course we will prioritise that aspect of work.

810 With regard to increased numbers of people coming in and out of the jurisdiction, it is going to be very much by consent of the public complying with the regulations rather than us having a very high profile Law Enforcement presence in checking people, whether they are at their home addresses. That said, our community to date has reported concerns or issues that they have witnessed or seen, and we have followed those up. Some of them have been founded, some have been unfounded. So it is our job to look at that intelligence information and put resources where we think we are going to have an impact and actually have a result.

815 Health have to resource track and trace and I think one of the issues that is being worked up at the moment is how we get the data we need to enable Health to pursue that policy. So, for example, if someone does test positive – and I think Dr Brink particularly at the press conference last week was clear – we cannot take a position that we will not get more cases. We will. If people start travelling and moving there will be cases, but it is the response we have as a jurisdiction if there is a positive case. So it is about having the data, the knowledge of how that person has travelled, when they have travelled, who has been nearby, who they have had contact with to enable the track and trace to then lock down and allow Public Health to do their screening and their tests to see whether 820 they can prevent any further community seeding.

Obviously Dr Brink is the expert and will be able to comment on that, but it is very much a team effort to which Home Affairs, Law Enforcement and the other agencies will all be playing our part. Deputy Lowe has mentioned the CCA, but there are various other groups sitting beneath that, so

825 we have a Strategic Coordinating Group and we have Tactical Coordinating Groups who are all working on the planning or looking at the resources and at how we can effectively deliver the opening up of travel.

So there is an awful lot of work and an awful lot of people working to respond to this –

830 **The Chairman:** Right, that is very useful. I think we have got some way there.

Mrs Morris: Do you think that if you get your arms around Phase 6 and how we resource Phase 6, and the public stays compliant, that you are actually going to be able to cope with the changes that you need to make before 1st January, as well?

835 **The Chairman:** For Brexit?

Mrs Morris: Yes, for Brexit.

840 **Mr Hardy:** For Brexit there is a lot of fairly high level significant work going on between the Government here and the government in the United Kingdom, but the main aspects we are working on is the movement of goods to enable a free and unimpacted movement of goods, predominantly from the UK into the Bailiwick, but also the other way as well.

845 All I can say is the people that I know, the right people are working in that space and doing their very best. Of course we do not know the ultimate result of the negotiations of the UK with Europe, and that is one of the aspects that ... We have not got a crystal ball unfortunately, and as the President said we can very quickly get information from the UK government that they are asking for a response in a very short space of time. We have to have commensurate legislation in a number of areas that will allow the free movement of goods. There is also a lot of discussion about an extended period to July 2021 to enable certain laws and things to be put in place. So there is potentially some space to allow us to play catch-up if we are not fully compliant by 1st January.

850 **The Chairman:** Yes, just to come back to the question about the data, Mr Hardy. What data sets are missing in terms of what we need to deal with those things in the future?

855 **Mr Hardy:** I guess it is not so much what data we are missing, it is having an information-sharing agreement. So, for example, if data is held for medical reasons by the Director of Public Health, it is when that data becomes applicable to Law Enforcement and how others share that data. **(The Chairman:** Right.)

860 We as a jurisdiction I think have worked very well with Public Health and there has been a commonality in a lot of the data, because our Joint Emergency Services Control Centre has been managing a whole host of different elements under one branch, which has allowed various branches linking into JESCC to share that data. So, for example, Public Health has shared certain data with JESCC, particularly over the call centre, and that has enabled us to have access to individuals who may have been identified with COVID-19. So we have been responding to calls at specific addresses, and both the Ambulance Service and Law Enforcement have been aware that there is a COVID link to an address which has enabled us to have a far more appropriate response.

870 **The Chairman:** I am trying to interpret exactly what that means: does that mean that data protection has been something of a barrier?

Mr Hardy: Not a barrier, but we had to really think carefully about data sharing and having appropriate agreements, because we have to respect how that data is shared ...

875 **The Chairman:** Okay, I understand that, yes. Deputy Merrett.

880 **Deputy Merrett:** Can I just ask, because I am really interested in Phase 6 as I think many of our community are. I have noted from previous correspondence the whole ... from BLE has been 'engage, encourage, enforce, educate' – the other way around, obviously. Will there be communication campaigns so our community, and others from other jurisdictions visiting our community, will fully understand the expectations of arriving in the Bailiwick?

885 **Mr Hardy:** What happens presently is, yes, that is very much the case. They get a physical briefing on arrival and as things move forward I would anticipate that will continue. One of the aspects that we have had to really make sure was robust is that if we were to seek a prosecution under the emergency powers law of anyone who breached, the Crown Officers were very clear that there had to be a clear evidence chain that each individual understood their requirements. That is one of the things that we have invested a lot of time and energy in, making sure for people coming into the jurisdiction that there is no uncertainty as to what their requirements are for self-isolation.

890 **Deputy Merrett:** So do you have the resource to maintain that for Phase 6?

895 **Mr Hardy:** The current way that we do it, we may have to vary. So certainly we have noticed recently we are spending a lot of time investigating private yachts, private vessels, private aircraft which are all subject to the same entry into the Bailiwick requirements. And, yes, as those sorts of numbers increase the pressure on staffing increases as over seven days a week, 24 hours a day potentially yachts can turn up. So we are scoping that and looking at ways in which we can make people very, very clear what their requirements are on entering, whatever they are going to be, at points of entry like the Harbour and the Airport.

900 **The Chairman:** So that means they each get given information about their obligations and presumably if there is any language issue there is appropriately translated information for them to have? Have all of these bases been covered, and there is no risk that somebody might end up not being able to understand the basic information?

905 **Mr Hardy:** Yes, the notices have been produced in other languages. We have had occasions when people have arrived at the Airport and we do not have literature in their language and there have been considerable delays, because those people have been held at the Airport until the appropriate language barrier can be overcome, and the information we needed to allow that individual to enter had to be obtained. So I am aware of one where there was a considerable delay because we could not get an interpreter for that language.

The Chairman: Mrs Morris?

915 **Mrs Morris:** No, I am done.

The Chairman: No, you are done. Deputy Merrett?

920 **Deputy Merrett:** I just wanted assurances you are prepared for an increase in passenger numbers if it comes in September?

Mr Hardy: We are preparing, yes –

Deputy Merrett: You are preparing? Okay.

925 **The Chairman:** I think we have probably got to the end of our questions. Is there anything else that any of our witnesses would like to add in terms of either Home Affairs or a particular service's response to the pandemic?

Deputy Lowe, is there anything more you would like to add?

930 **Deputy Lowe:** No, I think we have all covered it. If the service chiefs wish to raise anything they are free to do so, but for us it is just that we are in the midst of it all, really, and that becomes a little bit difficult to answer perhaps some of the questions –

The Chairman: No, no, we appreciate that.

935 **Deputy Lowe:** Some of it is a bit hypothetical because we do not know yet what is actually going to happen. But what we can say though is thankfully Guernsey is in a pretty good place and that comes from everybody working together – Guernsey Together. The services have worked together and they have put a huge amount of work in there. It would not have happened without the support of the staff across the States, I think we agree? Those right at the front-line services have been absolutely fantastic, so my public thanks to them. (**The Chairman:** Absolutely.)

940 Hopefully, one of these days we are going to be back to normal, whatever normal will be, but in Guernsey I think what we are actually seeing is that people have forgotten really about what is happening outside. They know, they see it on the news, but when you look across to the other side, 20 miles away, and they have to wear masks and they still have to socially distance. It has not taken long for our community to get into the norm of family do's, going to the beach, doing whatever you like, with free movement everywhere. That is where the message really has to come out that we still have a *huge* responsibility to make sure our borders and our community are safe.

That is my final word, so I want that message to come out.

950 **The Chairman:** Yes, just so we are clear, obviously, these hearings in particular on COVID are intended to be, from our point of view, a constructive endeavour to try to deem what the positive lessons are to date.

Are there any other any other contributions from any other witnesses in terms of ... Mr Hardy?

955 **Mr Hardy:** All I would like to say is just to pay tribute to the staff in Law Enforcement. They have been superb. I could sit here for hours and give stories about individuals, for example, who have moved out of the family home because they were so concerned about taking COVID potentially back to ill relatives or elderly relatives – they went and lived in isolation, but then came to work and delivered the services that they did. That is just one example.

960 I think the staff across Law Enforcement have really gone above and beyond in unprecedented circumstances and I just pay tribute to them.

The Chairman: Certainly. Mr De Carteret?

965 **Mr De Carteret:** Yes, similar from me, really, to all the staff. If I did not have the staff I would not have the service – and no service, we would have been seriously affected. Similar stories, I had a cadre of staff who willingly volunteered to stay inside the prison right from the outset if things became so serious that we had to guarantee minimum safe working levels. So hats off to them, really.

970

The Chairman: Mr Le Page?

975 **Mr Le Page:** Yes, I think from my point of view the lesson learnt is, it is about Guernsey Together. I know it was a title given, but certainly from our point of view it started in November last year where all of the stakeholders got together at the Peninsula Hotel for an exercise in pandemic

planning. All of those plans that were put into place then had to be brought out and used in early 2020. They proved to be effective, and they proved to be effective because there was a lot of work that went into planning what we would do.

980 Now is the time for the emergency response and we are still in that emergency, but now we have to deal with the business as usual in the Island, because COVID-19 is not going away any time soon. We hear from the experts that this will be around for a while. So now we need that next planning stage. We are not planning for the emergency any more, it needs to be Guernsey Together planning how we deal with this as an Island moving forward into businesses as usual.

985 So we are still dealing with the emergency, others are dealing with recovery and what we do going forward. I think that would be the next Scrutiny hearing in six months' time, to find out how that was successful.

The Chairman: We will leave that to our successors! *(Laughter)*

Mr Lewis, anything to add?

990

Mr Lewis: I think it has all been said, insofar as excellent service provided, a really good response. But to echo what the President said, I think in the future we need to be aware that our resources are going to be limited, because basically Guernsey will have less spare money and we are going to have to do the same service as we do with a little less money. And actually our aspirations, clearly we are going to have aspirations to Revive and Thrive but they have to be realistic things, realistic insofar as delivering both business as usual and our new innovative products or projects will sometimes come to a bit of conflict. But I think we are in a good place.

995

Deputy Merrett: What I would like to just ask is that business as usual will not be ... I am hoping that it will not be just more of the same, but that actually we will review what we have done in the past and we will try to build back – obviously another famous strapline – but better. When I hear 'business as usual' I think, oh, please we do not want that, really we need to ...

1000

I mean, this could be a catalyst for some amazing change in our community and I think that is what I would like to see going forward. Would you agree with that or do you think we need to go back to business as usual?

1005

Mr Lewis: I think business as usual means we deliver a service to the community. However, it might be packaged in a different way, it might be delivered with less people or it might be different with Teams meetings, etc. ... you continue to deliver the services but in a different way.

1010

The Chairman: In relation to Population Management, anything else to add? Thank you. Mr Le Ray, anything else?

Mr Le Ray: No, we faced challenges, we have overcome them and we continue to face them, and I am confident that we have got the right team to continue delivering the services that we do.

1015

The Chairman: All right, well, thank you very much. Thank you for attending, there will be a *Hansard* transcript of this hearing. Much appreciated, thank you for your time.

The Committee adjourned at 3.20 p.m. and resumed its sitting at 3.50 p.m. with new witnesses appearing on behalf of the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture.