

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHIEF MINISTER
BY DEPUTY R.J. WARD OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 30th JUNE 2020**

Question

Will the Chief Minister advise what political decision-making process is followed for receipt, and deciding upon, health advice from the Scientific and Technical Advisory Cell (S.T.A.C.) in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic and, in particular –

- (a) are individual Ministers able to make decisions separate from, or contrary to, the advice;
- (b) what collective consultation, if any, is undertaken with the Council of Ministers; and
- (c) how is a final position decided in relation to physical distancing and who has the final say politically on the decisions made?

Answer

- (a) Throughout this crisis Ministers have considered, and consistently taken decisions in line with, medical advice. Notwithstanding that, Ministers are the decision-makers, not our valued medical professionals.
- (b) As part of wide and extensive governance processes, matters of wide importance have been considered by the Council of Ministers, including matters such as: travel advice; schools, including phased approach to reopening; physical distancing; shielding; the Stay at Home instruction; the COVID-19 Strategy; and the subsequent move through the levels; emergency legislation; payroll support scheme; the covid-related emergency benefit scheme; construction industry permit system; the nightingale wing; reporting of deaths; ethical framework; and testing and tracing.
- (c) The physical distancing guidance has been considered and endorsed by the Council of Ministers, following consideration by the Competent Authority Ministers and the Emergencies Council, but the statutory responsibilities have been exercised by the Minister for Health and Social Services.
- (d) For example, the most recent decision on physical distancing was endorsed by the Competent Authority Ministers on the 23rd June, and by the Council of Ministers on the 24th June, and noted by Emergencies Council on the 25th June. The Health and Social Services Minister then signed an Order on the 25th June to remove the offences for refusing to obey a direction to move to 2 metres apart.