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Deputy Rob Ward

Chair, Safer Travel Guidelines Review Panel

BY EMAIL

Friday, 25 June 2021

PUBLIC HEARING – OUTSTANDING QUESTIONS

1. What is the cost to Government for each COVID test that passengers have when they arrive in Jersey?

Due to the way costs are recorded, it is not possible to calculate a cost per test for arriving passengers only.

From March 2020 to April 2021, 369,907 tests have been conducted and the total costs recorded in the financial system up to 30 April 2021 for both phase 1 and phase 2 of the testing and tracing programme is £27,323,519, therefore the average cost to Government per test is £74. We have further invested in our testing regime by building our own testing capability, which will begin to process tests during July. This will significantly reduce our overall cost per test when fully functional.

2. The Panel notes that while businesses cases are being finalised for the final quarters of 2021, the Treasury Minister has provided a Letter of Comfort for £15m funding in Q3 / Q4 2021.

- a. Please detail how this figure has been calculated and what is included in those costs?
- b. How does this compare with the funding level for Q1 and Q2 of 2021?
- c. What options are being considered for the source of this funding?

a. The £15 million was calculated as follows:

	£
Testing budget for January and February	6,800,000
New testing strategy – March to June	11,100,000
New testing strategy – July to December	15,200,000
Total costs of testing	33,100,000
Other costs c£1m per month	12,000,000
Total estimated overall programme costs	45,100,000
Less Government Plan 2021-2024 funding	(30,000,000)
Total additional requirement	15,100,000

Table 1

To describe the rows above:

Testing budget for January and February - £6.8m

This comprises the direct costs of test processing from within the on-island laboratory (budgeted at an average of 2,000 PCR tests per day), staff costs to resource the testing centres, HCS testing and helpline teams and the bookings team and other costs associated with running the testing centres.

New testing strategy - £26.3m

Indicative costs were calculated to inform the decision made by the Competent Authorities Ministers to approve the new testing strategy in March 2021, as summarised below:

Testing Programme	Type of test	Volumes	£
Active Cases	PCR	22,572	1,947,697
Safe Places	PCR	71,728	6,569,115
	Diasorin	234,572	
Community	PCR	47,665	2,788,768
	LFD	501,128	
Travel	PCR	351,036	14,996,123
Total		1,228,701	26,301,703

Table 2

Other costs c£1m per month - £12m

Other costs include programme management, contact tracing, monitoring and enforcement, exposure notification app and IT costs.

- b. As can be seen in table 1 above, the total indicative amount needed for Q3 and Q4 is £21.2 million. This comprises the £15.2m for the new testing strategy plus £1m per month for six months. The £15 million for which the Letter of Comfort has been secured is the balance needed to continue to fund the testing and tracing programme for the remainder of 2021, as noted in table 1. The detailed business cases are currently being finalised.

The current estimated actual costs of the testing and tracing programme for Q1 and Q2 are £23.9 million.

- c. The current assumption for the source of this funding is the Covid Reserve. Charging for testing is being discussed, but the correct timing is crucial. The position to date is not to charge, which has been considered by Ministers and it has been decided not to introduce charging at this stage, albeit stating they would keep this under review.

3. Will the COVID Alert app be actively promoted to visitors on arrival in Jersey?

a. How is it being communicated?

Following the launch of the COVID app last year, we will be having a second marketing campaign due to commence shortly to promote the application to visitors when they arrive via the airport, harbour and in tourist accommodation. We are currently planning the activities and the creative production of the materials.

It has just been confirmed that a budget of £15,000 has been allocated for this second phase (the amount is the same as the launch communications regarding the app).

b. How will take up be monitored?

We continue to monitor many datapoints related to the Jersey COVID Alert App, including Google Play Store and Apple App Store downloads, and successful registrations after downloading. For those that opt-in to sharing this information, we also have statistics on the number of *Exposure Notifications* (contact tracing events).

c. Do you anticipate any progress on pan-European operability prior to 28th May? If not do you have a progress timeline?

The App remains interoperable across the common travel area (except ROI) and this service is functioning well.

Colleagues across the devolved administrations regularly raise the issue of pan-European interoperability with the EU Commission. ROI have also raised this internally on our behalf. There are no significant technical barriers to achieving this, however it has been made clear that this is not a priority for the EU and making progress on this over the summer months appears at this stage to be unlikely.

Yours sincerely,



Senator John Le Fondré
Chief Minister