

2020.04.21

**2 Deputy G.J. Truscott of St. Brelade of the Minister for Home Affairs regarding the measures taken at H.M.P. La Moye against Coronavirus: (OQ.107/2020)**

Will the Minister advise the Assembly whether H.M.P. (Her Majesty's Prison) La Moye has adequate personal protective equipment provision and whether testing for coronavirus will be carried out on all staff and inmates?

**Connétable L. Norman of St. Clement (The Minister for Home Affairs):**

In answering the question I would like to publicly thank all of the staff in the emergency and front line services; that is the prison, police, customs and immigration, fire and ambulance, for their work in tackling the coronavirus pandemic. I am sure all Members will agree with me that they are doing an excellent job in very challenging circumstances. But to directly answer the question, I can advise the Deputy that the Prison Service has adequate personal protection equipment for any eventuality, as do all the Home Affairs services. I can also advise that all services, including the prison, are first in the queue for testing after patients and health workers.

**3.2.1 Deputy G.J. Truscott:**

Plainly it is of paramount importance that the virus is kept out of the prison. On 26th March the U.K. (United Kingdom) Government issued updated guidance for COVID-19 in prisons and other prescribed places of detention. Could the Minister confirm that H.M.P. La Moye will be adopting those very stringent guidelines outlined in the paper and, if not, could the Minister explain why not?

**The Connétable of St. Clement:**

The prison has taken very active steps from very early days to protect both the staff and the prisoners at La Moye. That included stopping all visits, having courts dealt with over video link, isolating those prisoners who might be vulnerable because of a certain age or underlying health conditions. So far so good; no cases have been reported at the prison.

**3.2.2 Deputy S.M. Ahier:**

With more than 250 prisoners in the U.K. testing positive for COVID-19 has the Minister considered early release for non-violent offenders to relieve the pressure on prison staff during the epidemic?

**The Connétable of St. Clement:**

The answer to that is yes. I will be signing appropriate orders today to enable prisoners to be released on licence early to reduce the prison population if this becomes necessary.

**Deputy S.M. Ahier:**

That is very reassuring. Thank you, Minister.

**3.2.3 Deputy G.J. Truscott:**

We are indeed fortunate to have such a well run prison. Will the Minister - and he already has - join me and the rest of the Assembly to publicly thank the Governor, his officers and staff for all their efforts and professional dedication to the cause? They have our total admiration and respect, as do all our front line workers in the Island. We are indebted to them all for helping us all to keep safe and well at this difficult time.

**The Connétable of St. Clement:**

I certainly do that. In fact, I said so in the preamble to the answer to the question. I also contacted all of our front line staff by email last week to thank them and to wish them well in the weeks ahead.