

## **Guernsey Can Build Back Better**

As Guernsey emerges from lockdown, it is clear that the economy and the business world will not just automatically reset to normal, especially if there is a global recession. Guernsey business, alongside government, will need to work harder and more imaginatively to grow the economy, thus preserving and creating jobs and generating tax revenues to fund public services.

There are many opportunities to be explored regarding how the economy can be grown, but we should consider what we have learnt from lockdown that can enable greater productivity and flexibility.

Businesses have learnt that working from home can work; in fact, probably much better than many people thought, and many actually prefer it. This does not mean the end of the office, because that shared space is still important for collaboration and creativity, but the lessons of lockdown are:

- Working from home can make jobs more accessible to people with disabilities and to working parents;
- It enables flexibility in working patterns that in turn enables us to better serve global markets across multiple time zones;
- It removes barriers to growth, such as lack of office space;
- It helps combat the scourge of “presenteeism”.

Looking beyond that, there has been a surge in online and remote learning. For Guernsey, this opens up access to a wide range of high-quality professional education.

However, all these require the necessary infrastructure. This means islandwide super-connectivity (either fibre or 5G available in every home). There will still be a need to travel and for our clients to come here. The report on the runway extension indicates that there may be economic benefits. It would also enable an upgrade to landing systems to combat fog problems.

Finally, we need to promote the island as a safe, stable and respected place to do business.

Tony Mancini, GIBA Chair