



### Saving lives and livelihoods



COVID-19 infection rates have been increasing over the past month and the Government's Test and Trace system continues to underperform. We have seen large parts of the country facing further restrictions to stop the spread of the virus. Hull moved from Tier One to Tier Two on Saturday 31st October and now we know there will be a second national lockdown from Thursday 5th November until 2nd December. In questioning the Health Secretary Matt Hancock in the Commons, I have raised concerns about the way negotiations with local areas have often involved last minute consultation and bullying by the Government, as we saw in Greater Manchester, rather than a genuine partnership approach to tackling COVID-19. In the Commons, I also directly challenged the Prime Minister about why we are not testing all students and staff at universities, as UEA and Cambridge have been doing. This is in light of the World Health Organisation telling countries to 'Test, Test, Test' and many young people being asymptomatic.

We know that the furlough scheme will now be extended until December but there is a continuing battle to support those sectors of the economy that are struggling the most, such as hospitality and leisure. In Hull in recent weeks we have heard of potential jobs losses at Hull Trains, P&O and Cineworld. I fear that there will be many more over the next few months. Alongside the battle to defeat COVID itself, and even without the possible results of a No Deal Brexit, campaigns against job losses and a renewed wave of austerity cuts will be a dominant theme over the coming months.



### Solidarity with BBC Persia staff

I had the interesting experience this month of chairing an online Zoom meeting for the British Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union on the persecution of BBC Persian staff and their families in Iran. The panel included Rana Rahimpour of BBC Persia, BBC World Affairs Editor John Simpson and Former BBC Chair Lord Michael Grade. It was a special inspiration to hear from former hostage Terry Waite during the meeting as well.



### Is this really devolution?

Six years ago the 'Northern Powerhouse' was launched, with much hype about devolved powers and new investment. There have been years of discussions between Whitehall officials, Ministers and council Leaders about devolution for the Humber. It now appears that the South Bank will link up with Lincolnshire rather than the economic area around the Humber - with all its potential. In return for devolved powers over regeneration issues, the Government has insisted on a 'one size fits all' elected mayor model for us in Hull and the East Riding. I am increasingly concerned about exactly what devolved powers from Whitehall to the Humber are on offer and how this balances the powers that Hull City Council will lose. The Government's recent bullying towards elected mayors raises questions about how genuine the 'devolution' on offer is and a national media report last weekend suggested that Ministers were now considering abandoning further devolution to the North altogether. However, until we get clear news of any change in the Government's intentions we are now being asked to accept permanent and significant changes to the system of local government in Hull within the next few years. I hope that the wider Hull public will have a chance to have their say.



### Unity in Community

It was a pleasure to visit the team at Unity in Community at their new offices in Greenwood Avenue. I have long been impressed by the work they do to help the community in North Hull and Orchard Park, especially in the current tough times, and I was briefed about their plans for new social housing.



### Who's your favourite local small business?

My competition for Small Business Saturday, on 5 December this year, is up and running. You can vote for the small local independent business that you think has been providing great service to the community during a very difficult year in Hull through my website at [www.dianajohnson.co.uk](http://www.dianajohnson.co.uk)



### Fighting Holiday Hunger

I have campaigned for years on healthy school food and Holiday Hunger. When the Government voted down Labour's recent attempt to extend Free School Meals for the October half-term and Christmas holidays, it was one of the most depressing moments of a terrible year. However, inspired by footballer Marcus Rashford's campaigning work, there is a growing list of Hull businesses and others coming forward to help stop children going hungry.



### Support Hull's RSPCA

I am a patron of the RSPCA Hull and East Riding Branch. Their centre in Clough Road has been in the heart of the community in Hull for 82 years - but it needs modernisation work. They are now £250K away from their £1m fundraising target to complete the work that is needed. To donate go to <https://www.justgiving.com/rspcahulleastriding> or get in touch at [enquiries@rspcahull.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@rspcahull.org.uk) if you think you can help.

**Here to Help**

Although I am unable to hold face-to-face advice surgeries at the moment during the COVID-19 pandemic, I can still take up issues for Hull North constituents.

You can contact me by either e-mailing [johnsond@parliament.uk](mailto:johnsond@parliament.uk) or calling 01482 319135

**DIANA JOHNSON** LABOUR MP FOR HULL NORTH

[@DianaJohnsonMP](#)  
[/DianaJohnsonHullNorth](#)

[dianajohnson.co.uk](http://dianajohnson.co.uk)  
[unsubscribe](#)

