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Edward Mountain MSP  
Convener  
Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1

02 October 2019

Dear Convener,

The UK Digital Economy Act 2017 includes an aim to support the digital transformation of government, enabling the delivery of better public services, research and statistics. Part 5 of the Act sets out powers to support the sharing of personal data between public authorities.

On 20 June 2018, Derek Mackay, Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Constitution appeared before the Committee to give evidence in relation to the Digital Government (Scottish Bodies) Regulations 2018. The Regulations added specified Scottish bodies to Schedule 4 of the Act, to enable those bodies where appropriate to share personal information to improve public service delivery.

On 25 June 2019, during Stage 3 of the Management of Offenders Bill, I said that before the end of the year further Regulations would be laid under the Act, to add Scottish public bodies to Schedules 7 and 8 of the Act so that they can use the debt or fraud powers to share data.

Given the Committee's involvement in the 2018 Regulations, I wanted to make you aware that while I remain committed to introducing these Regulations, given the responsible preparations we are having to make for a no deal EU Exit, I regret to say that they will not be laid this year. The intention is that they will be laid in the Spring of next year.

I am copying this letter to the Convener of the Justice Committee.

Best wishes,  
H. Yousaf  
HUMZA YOUSAF

