



Department for
Digital, Culture,
Media & Sport



Cabinet Office

Damian Collins MP
Chair of the Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

TO2019/07410/DC
19 July 2019

Dear Damian

DIGITAL IDENTITY

We are writing to communicate our next steps for enabling the growth of a secure digital identity market in the UK.

The UK Government wants everyone to be able to have a secure digital identity that they can use for transactions across the economy, in both the private and public sector. While the UK has a world leading digital economy, a missing building block is the ability for individuals to easily prove their identity online. In order to realise this vision, building on existing collaboration and aligning with other organisations is essential.

In the UK, a wide range of evidence can be used to prove someone is who they say are. While this approach promotes social inclusion and privacy, it also provides a wide scope for every organisation, even in areas where there is prescriptive regulation, to devise their own rules and standards. This means that even when someone has proved their identity, they are often unable to reuse that identity and instead must resubmit documentation and be reverified. This lack of a consistent approach to identity verification is expensive and can also lead to weaknesses that damage our ability to combat fraud.

In October 2018, I (the Minister for Implementation) set out in a Written Ministerial Statement the need for a successful, standards-based, private sector led digital identity market that broadened the usage and application of digital identity in the UK.

As part of plans to achieve this, today we are publishing a call for evidence which will enable us to collaborate with industry and consumers to build the 'rules of the road' for a thriving and innovative digital identity market. Simultaneously, we will announce a pilot which will allow a small cohort of organisations to digitally check the validity of passports for a range of private sector services.

Copies of the call for evidence and a copy of this letter will be placed in the House library.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jeremy Wright". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J' and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

**RT HON JEREMY WRIGHT QC MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA & SPORT**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Oliver Dowden". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'O' and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

**RT HON OLIVER DOWDEN CBE MP
MINISTER FOR IMPLEMENTATION**