I am writing to make the Committee aware that on Monday 16 July I will be publishing the Scottish Government’s new strategy for the prevention of type 2 diabetes. I will be giving the opening address at the World Congress on Diabetes Prevention on this day and will be a timely opportunity to showcase the tremendous efforts that the people working in public services and across our communities in Scotland are taking to tackle the significant public health challenge of type 2 diabetes.

The type 2 diabetes prevention framework has been developed in collaboration with experts in obesity and diabetes, building on current best practice and aims to provide national guidance on weight management interventions for those identified as at risk of developing type 2 diabetes as well as those recently diagnosed. The former Cabinet Secretary, Shona Robison, wrote to this Committee in March this year to give an initial indication of what the prevention framework would address.

Prevention is priority one of the Diabetes Improvement Plan (2014) - to establish and implement approaches to support the prevention and early detection of type 2 diabetes, and to implement measures to promptly detect and prevent the complications of diabetes.

The prevention framework is one of the key actions in ‘A healthier future - Diet and Healthy Weight Delivery Plan’ which I launched earlier this month. Alongside other actions, this new strategic direction for type 2 diabetes will help make progress in achieving Outcome 3 – People have access to effective weight management services.

Initial plans for action in this area were presented in our consultation on diet and healthy weight last year, where the then Minister for Public Health announced funding of £42 million over the next 5 years to expand supported weight management interventions as a core part of treatment services for people with, or at risk of, type 2 diabetes. The overwhelming majority of responses to the consultation supported an expansion of provision and have helped to shape the framework.

The next step for the Scottish Government and our delivery partners will be to move to implementation. Five NHS Boards and their community partners have been identified as early adopters and will start implementation of the framework in 2018-19 supported by our
additional funding. I look forward to updating the Parliament on progress and will welcome the opportunity to take questions on this important new investment when Parliament is back in session.

I look forward to working together on this significant public health challenge.

JOE FITZPATRICK