

Jane Hutt MS
Minister for Social Justice and Chief Whip

12 October 2023

Dear Jane,

Speech and Language Therapists (SLTs) within Welsh Youth Justice Teams

Thank you for your letter of 11 August 2023, which we noted on 11 September.

We are grateful to you for confirming that the Stakeholder Summit will take place this autumn. In terms of progress with arrangements for the Summit it would be helpful if you could please confirm the timetable you are working towards including the exact date that the Summit will take place. We would also like to request a note of its deliberations and outcomes in due course and at your earliest convenience.

We were disappointed that you suggested it would not be appropriate for you to write to local authority youth offending teams across Wales on the grounds that justice is not currently devolved. We would urge you to reconsider this position, particularly given that youth offending teams also receive support from the Welsh Government via local authorities. Failing that, we would like to suggest you write to all local authority Directors of Education as an alternative option, in light of the key role that local authorities play in commissioning youth justice services, including youth offending teams, within their geographic areas. This, as you will be aware, involves identifying the needs of young offenders and ensuring that appropriate services and interventions are in place to address those needs.

We firmly believe it would be a missed opportunity if the innovative good practice taking place in Neath Port Talbot is not highlighted for others to consider, given the benefits it can bring to this disadvantaged group of young people and their future prospects.

We look forward to a response and your continued engagement – and that of the Minister for Health and Social Services - on this important issue.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background. The signature reads "Jenny Rathbone" in a cursive, flowing script.

Jenny Rathbone MS

Chair, Equality and Social Justice Committee

