

Jane Hutt MS  
Minister for Social Justice

July 18 2023

Dear Jane

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

During the Senedd's Plenary debate on 28 June 2023, Committee Member Jane Dodds MS asked why some local authority Youth Justice Teams are able to successfully secure funding to train and employ speech and language therapists, when other local authorities are unable to do so (see paragraph 337 and 338 of the Record). The Committee learnt that Neath Port Talbot is one local authority which is prioritising SLCN in its youth justice team. The Committee's report underlines the need to eradicate the current postcode lottery and we therefore ask the Welsh Government to consider how the funding arrangements in Neath Port Talbot could be rolled-out more broadly, to ensure speech and language therapists (SLTs) are embedded within the youth justice system in other local authority areas.

Given the weight of evidence suggesting that the needs of young people with SLCN are not being adequately met and the lack of resources within NHS Wales to increase provision and training places for SLTs, we would welcome a commitment from the Welsh Government to look at alternative avenues for achieving this. We therefore ask whether you can commit to write to all local authorities and youth justice management boards in Wales encouraging them to invest in this area so that this example of best practice can be rolled out to all local authorities in Wales?

Many thanks for your assistance in helping us achieve better support for young people involved with Youth Justice.

Yours sincerely,



Jenny Rathbone MS

Chair, Equality and Social Justice Committee