

Youth Justice Summit on Speech, Language and Communication
24 January 2024, at 10:00am – 12:45pm
Via TEAMS

Attendees

Alison Lott (AL) (Chair)	Lead for Youth Justice, Welsh Government
Pippa Cotterill (PC)	Head of the Wales Office for the Royal College of Speech and Language therapist
Diz Minnit (DM)	Head of Youth Justice and Support Service, Milton Keynes, Youth Justice Service
Alison Davies (AD)	Neath Port Talbot YJS
Vitoria Harris (VH)	RCSLT
Kim Jenkins (KJ)	Neath Port Talbot YJS
Amanda Turner (AT)	Neath Port Talbot YJS
Keith Towler	Board Member for Youth Justice Board (YJB)
Lynzi Jarman	Director of Innovation & Engagement, YJB
Darren Trollope	Head of Oversight Wales, YJB
Sarah Evans	Youth Justice Team, Welsh Government
Helen Nolan	Youth Justice Team, Welsh Government
Emma Coles	Deputy Director Workforce and Organisational Development, Health, Welsh Government
Mark Bradley	Head of Rehabilitation Care and Support
Ana Laing	Social Services, Welsh Government
Stephen Wood	Gwynedd Youth Justice Service
David Richmond	Youth Custody Service
Natalie Holohan	Cardiff CC
Ashley Evans	Hillside Secure Children's Home
Jon Jones	Early Years, Welsh Government
Catherine Page	Early Years, Welsh Government
Ceri Jones	Education, Welsh Government
Caroline Walters	RCSLT
Annet Irvine	Rhondda Cynon Taff CC
Sian Rees	South Wales OPCC
Lisa Morgan	Powys CC
Natalie Aitken	Cardiff & Vale UHB
Julia Dinley	Cardiff and Vale UHB
Professor Karen Bryan	York St John University
Kate MacGregor	Caerphilly YJS
Kate Parfitt	Newport YJS
Kevin Reeves	Bridgend YJS
Angharad Thomas	Cardiff YJS
Gill Adams	Carmarthenshire YJS
John Callow	Ceredigion YJS
Joanne Llewellyn	Merthyr Tydfil YJS
Jay McCabe	Newport YJS
Steve Davies	Pembrokeshire YJS
Lyndon Lewis	Cwm Taf YJS

Victoria Ruff-Cock
Phillipa Elliot
Donna Dickenson
K Davies

Powys CC
Swansea YJS
Wrexham YJS
Vale of Glamorgan

Agenda item 1 - Welcome and introductions

1.1 AL welcomed everyone to the youth justice summit. She advised that in April 2023 the Senedd Equality and Social Justice Committee's published their report '60% - Giving them a voice' on speech, language and communication needs in the youth justice system which set out 7 recommendations.

1.2 Although speech language and communication is in the Health and Social Services portfolio, the Welsh Government response to the report was provided by the Minister for Social Justice and Chief Whip as the recommendations interfaced with a number of portfolios including that of the Minister for Education and Welsh Language. The Summit had been arranged in response to recommendation 1 set out below:

We recommend that the Welsh Government convene a summit of key stakeholders working in the sector with the aim of formulating a new workstream looking specifically at the impact of SLCN on children and young people and the link to the involvement of most young people involved with the youth justice system. The summit and concomitant workstream should be finalised before the end of 2023 and include realistic actions, measurable targets, and a timeline for their completion within the All-Wales Justice Board forward work programme. [60% - Giving them a voice \(senedd.wales\)](https://www.senedd.wales)

1.3 The intention of the Summit was to lead to a consistent and accessible approach across Wales, improving the outcomes of children and young people with Speech Language and Communication Needs (SLCN).

1.4 AL added that to support the summit Karin Phillips, Deputy Director of Community Safety at Welsh Government wrote on 2 November to Directors of Education and Social Services seeking information about the current delivery and funding position for SLCN within youth justice services, highlighting any issues and best practice. AL thanked everyone who had responded and advised the information had been helpful and would be considered in more detail in the coming weeks.

Agenda item 2 – Purpose of Summit

2.1 PC introduced herself advising she was head of the Wales Office for the Royal College of Speech and Language therapist (RCSLT) and also the deputy head of speech and language therapy in Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, and in that role she line manages speech and language therapists who work in youth justice services.

2.1 The RCSLT is the professional body for speech and language therapists, speech and language therapy students and support workers working in the UK and has around 650 Members in Wales, out of about 20,000 across the UK. The College

promotes excellence in practice and influences health, education, care and justice policies. The College want more speech and language therapists to be trained in Wales, building on the 49 speech, language and communication therapists (SLCT) currently trained each year.

2.3 PC reiterated the purpose of the summit was to ensure we were all meeting the needs of children and young people who access youth justice services. Youth justice services' speech and language couldn't be considered in isolation. Early years development, early years, settings, schools and educational settings and preventative work needed to be included. She referred to 'Talk with me', the Welsh Government campaign, primarily looking at the early years. The campaign provides information to parents and carers and early years practitioners and beyond about speech, language, communication needs and development.

2.4 PC stressed the importance of language as its used in everything people do. For example, problem solving, assessing situations, and knowing when and how to ask for help. All of which are vital when we make decisions about what we're going to do and how we respond to situations. We need to apply that to the young people and the and the children in services. And that might be different decisions that they make from the ones that people without speech language communication difficulties may make. Decisions made could lead to school exclusions, pupil absence etc.

Agenda item 3 – Presentation - Neath Port Talbot Youth Justice Service (YJS) Regional approach Ali Davies/Amanda Turner and Kim Jenkins

3.1 AD, AT and KJ presented on how they managed to embed speech and language into their youth justice service at Neath Port Talbot and gave an overview of how they achieved this. This included an overview of the current service model, the road map of what they achieved, how they went about getting funding, talking about recruitment and Service Level Agreements (SLA) and the role and outcome and impact on speech and language provision.

3.2 AL thanked AD, AT and KJ for their detailed and interesting presentation.

Agenda item 4- Milton Keynes YJS approach by Diz Minnit

4.1 DM introduced himself and advised he had been the speech and language lead and YJS Manager at Milton Keynes since 2007. He referred to Professor Karen Bryant's original research, which found that 60% of children and young people were showing as having a SLCN within mainstream youth justice.

4.2 DM's presentation covered, funding, staffing, assessment of every child (screening out rather than in), the promoting reintegration, reducing exclusion model introduced in 2023, which was around the work they were doing going out into secondary and primary schools.

4.3 AL thanked DM for his interesting presentation and invited participants to ask any questions they had following the last presentations.

4.4 In response to a question regarding barriers to setting up the Milton Keynes model DM stressed the need for data, sound evidence and research to build argument, being able to show the bigger picture and where if possible show any savings which could be made by doing things differently and in partnership with others.

4.5 Other comments raised following the presentations included:

- Importance of children having their SLCN identified, pre-school and plans put in place to help them.
- Lack of SCLT provision in some areas meant that some YJS services no longer had and SCLT.
- Importance of bringing health and youth justice together.
- Importance of training YJS staff.
- Questioned how the commissioning of SCLN will align with new Welsh Government Additional Learning Needs (ALN) legislation and what investment the Health Board may be required to make in this area under their statutory duties under the new legislation.
- Governance, support and challenge by the YJS management board were crucial in maintaining the SLA in Neath Port Talbot YJS.

Agenda item 5 - The Box – online training tool presented by Victoria Harris

5.1 AL invited VH to present on the online training tool 'The Box'. VH talked about 'The Box' and other resources which were available and ran through the tool online [The Box – free online training | RCSLT](#). The Box is a piece of online learning, designed to help professionals working in the justice sector to identify clients who have may have SLCN. It's also a set of tools to support those people if they are identified with needs. For example, visual and communication strategies that will support everybody. It will help people to understand how the SLCN might impact on clients. It's 10 modules and each has submodules and is free and online. While The Box has been online since 2003, since 2021 over 3000 people have passed at least one submodule.

5.2 AL thanks VH for her presentation and advised all presentations would be shared with participants along with the notes from the summit.

Agenda item 6 – Feedback from First breakout session on Barriers and mitigations

6.1 There were 6 breakout groups on teams and each fed back on their discussions. Themes from sessions are listed below:

Barriers

- Funding, and in particular short-term nature of funding, how difficult that can be in terms of commissioning services
- Availability of SLCTs and how commissioning is accessed
- How to increase funding from Welsh Government when some recommendations of the report have been rejected.
- Need for SLCN to be in the Welsh Language and other languages
- Lack of collaboration between health and education right at the beginning
- Access to SLCT a post code lottery
- The issue is wider than just youth justice

Mitigations

- Bringing funding pots together

- Sufficiently leveraging the fact that this is an area on the edge of devolution
- Importance of data which presents a picture of the impact of services and how powerful it can be
- Using the evidence to demonstrate the cost benefit analysis
- Importance of case studies to use as evidence as well as data
- Looking holistically, viewing this as a whole system issue across portfolios rather than a justice issue
- Longer term planning needed
- Utilising other grants, such as youth support grants, Promoting Positive Engagement to those at risk of offending (PPE) with a caution that could have an adverse impact on broader prevention activities for example.
- Multi-agency meeting between health, education, youth justice and others to work collaboratively
- Sentencing based on cognitive age rather than chronological age, which is quite a major step forward
- Calls for an Action Plan to bring everyone together
- Take an integrated thinking approach
- Role of the YJS Management board and in particular those members from health and education
- A lead on SLCN at the Welsh Government

Agenda item 7 – Feedback from Second breakout session on Resources/opportunities available

7.1 There were 6 breakout groups on teams and each fed back on their discussions. Themes from sessions are listed below:

Resources

- The Box – excellent online tool for assessments, but mindful of being able to follow-up with SCLT provision

Opportunities

- Consider the Milton Keynes model - promoting reintegration, reducing exclusion
- Look at the different funding/budgets sitting in different pools and link up
- Share provision of services
- YJS managers as they are really innovative in how they use funding currently within the constraints that they have.
- Partnership, a regional approach, potentially have an opportunity to mitigate against some of those funding concerns
- Role of Regional Partnership Boards
- Possibility about piloting, having a couple of SLCT in every service for two years and then reviewing the outcomes and perhaps commissioning a university researcher to do that.
- Pooling cross- government department budgets

Agenda item 8 – Closing remarks – Pippa Cotterill

8.1 Closing the summit PC commented it was hugely positive to see and hear and feel the enthusiasm of participants at the summit. There was so much that had come out of the discussion about both the big picture things but also about the detail which was really helpful and important. As the RCSLT they would keep pushing on this across the whole spectrum of ages and stages.

8.2 PC added the discussions had been useful to share information about other resources available, governance arrangements the YJS and also the regional partnership boards, showing there are a lot of links across areas. PC called for a multi-cross-department meeting between health, education and others as SCLN is not just a health issue. **ACTION**

8.3 PC and AL thanked all those who attended and for their time and participation, and particularly those who had presented.