



Eich cyf/Your ref: JH NM **REDACTEDS40**
Ein cyf/Our ref: DB/00112/25

Jane Hutt MS
Member of the Senedd for the Vale of Glamorgan
115 High Street
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Jane.hutt@senedd.wales

10 March 2025

Dear Jane,

Thank you for your letter of 18 February on behalf of a constituent about the withdrawal of the Reflect Service in the Vale of Glamorgan.

Welsh Government understand the importance of early intervention and prevention in helping reduce the number of children and young people who become looked after. This approach underpins the range of Programme for Government commitments we are taking forward to radically transform children's services in Wales. Our investment is focused on early intervention and prevention, to see fewer children and young people entering care. For those children in care, we want their stay to be as short as possible and close to home, so they can continue to be part of their community. From the outset the Reflect programme has been about early intervention and prevention, to keep families together where possible.

I know the Reflect Service has provided valuable support to many women and their partners across Wales. Following the success of Reflect in Newport in 2018 we allocated £850,000 a year to support the roll-out of the Reflect programme across Wales. The funding has now transferred to the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) and local authorities determine how they provide the service in their local context.

I understand the Cardiff and Vale regional contract with Barnardo's for the Reflect Service expired and the authorities consulted with partners about their service model. The Vale of Glamorgan decided to pursue an alternative model, which includes a range of services such as:

- Access to peer-to-peer support groups based on parental advocacy models. Access to support workers based in Early Help services, outside of statutory services.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

- Access to support workers based in Early Help services, outside of statutory services.
- Access to wider community-based services, including tenancy support and domestic abuse support.
- Referral to Health services, such as those for mental and emotional health, substance abuse, and contraception and sexual health advice. As your constituent has benefited from support herself and is keen to share her experience with others through her volunteer work, I would suggest she contact the Vale of Glamorgan to explore whether she can still continue to offer her invaluable support as a peer mentor under the new arrangement.

Yours sincerely

Dawn Bowden AS/MS

Y Gweinidog Plant a Gofal Cymdeithasol
Minister for Children and Social Care

To: Minister for Children and Social Care

DB/00112/25CC: **REDACTEDS40**

From: **REDACTEDS40**

Improving Outcomes for Children

REDACTEDS40

REDACTEDS40

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REDACTEDS40

Ext: **REDACTEDS40**

Social Services Government

Date: 3 March 2025

Business

DB/00112/25 – Jane Hutt MS, on behalf of constituent REDACTEDS40 about withdrawal of Reflect Service the Vale of Glamorgan

1. Jane Hutt MS emailed the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care on 18 February highlighting the views of constituent **REDACTEDS40** about the withdrawal of the Reflect Service to families in the Vale of Glamorgan.
2. The Reflect Service, which started as a Barnardo's partnership programme with Newport, provides support to women (and partners) that have had one or more children permanently removed from their care.
3. The Welsh Government rolled out the programme across Wales in 2017-18 by funding each local authority directly for Reflect, we then moved to fund local authorities to deliver Reflect through the Revenue Support Grant (RSG).
4. We know some local authorities have decided not to continue running Reflect in its original form but will provide support for the same cohort of women through alternative approaches. To gain a greater understanding we wrote to all local authorities in December 2024 to find out how they were using the Reflect monies.
5. Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan Council explained their contract with Barnardo's for Reflect expired. Following developments in their Early Help and Prevention Services, and close working relationships with Health, Housing and specialist Domestic Abuse services, they decided to move to an alternative model of service delivery, developing a local offer.
6. These offers will not be provided as a standalone service, but from a range of services. Key features are likely to include:
 - Access to peer-to-peer support groups currently being developed in both local authority areas. These are parental advocacy models.
 - Access to support workers based in Early Help services, outside of statutory services.
 - Access to wider community-based services, including tenancy support and domestic abuse support.
 - Referral to Health services, such as those for mental and emotional health, substance abuse, and contraception and sexual health advice.
 - Identifying where joint working opportunities with Barnardo's may arise.
7. They worked with Barnardo's on the change-over to minimise the impact on parents affected by the change.
8. We are not clear how effective this alternative model has been and whether women in this cohort feel supported to build resilience and make the changes needed to lower the likelihood of their future children coming into care.

9. The draft letter for your approval explains that while we understand that the Reflect programme has been beneficial we understand that local authorities may wish to provide support in different ways to this cohort of women, tailored to their own particular context.