



Community Planning Aberdeen

Progress Report	Project End Report: 9.4 Reduce instances of public space youth anti-social behaviour as a result of appropriate and effective interventions in targeted areas by 10% by 2022.
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Governance Group	CPA Management Group – 22/03/2023

Purpose of the Report

This report presents the results of the LOIP Improvement Project Aim 9.4 which sought to reduce instances of public space youth anti-social behaviour as a result of appropriate and effective interventions in targeted areas by 10% by 2022.

Summary of Key Information

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Antisocial behaviour is defined as 'behaviour by a person which causes, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to persons not of the same household as the person' and is a wide-ranging issue which encompasses many aspects of criminal and non-criminal behaviour. The types of behaviour frequently listed range from vandalism and littering to noise and youth disorder. These are the type of behaviours that cause distress in communities and make them feel unsafe. By carrying out effective interventions and diversions we aim to reduce community harm without criminalising young people.
- 1.2 Strategies to tackle antisocial behaviour are underpinned by the principles of prevention and early intervention to provide solutions, reduce the likelihood and opportunity for offending and optimise outcomes for individuals who may otherwise involve themselves in this type of activity.
- 1.3 Any reduction in antisocial behaviour will improve the quality of life for people within that area, increase public confidence and enhance a positive sense of community for residents. This will also increase the collective will and ability of a community to tackle problems itself by increasing community resilience.
- 1.4 In February 2019, a test of change was instigated in the Northfield area of Aberdeen with the aim of reducing antisocial behaviour following an identified increase in this type of conduct in this area.

1.5 This created foundations for an effective strategy to tackle antisocial behaviour. The learning and outcomes from that project were used to inform this project to build on what had already been achieved and work towards a longer term outcome, for a significantly larger area.

2 IMPROVEMENT PROJECT AIM

2.1 Against this background, the CPA Board approved the project charter for the initiation of an improvement project which aimed to reduce instances of public space youth anti-social behaviour as a result of appropriate and effective interventions in targeted areas by 10% by 2022.

2.2 This change was selected due to impact antisocial behaviour has on our communities. The Covid-19 pandemic as this has a significant impact on the number of calls received due to national measures implemented.

3 WHAT CHANGES DID WE MAKE?

3.1 The project have tested a number of changes, namely:

- Formulation of a new Community Safety Partnership (CSP) process to address vulnerabilities quicker and one which can track repeated issues. Design and implementation of the Tesco Hub was a joint approach to address a spike in youth disorder in the local area. The Hub remains open and is now a permanent feature in the community, where youths are given the space and support to be creative. The Hub is a permanent change and is seen as the template for implementing similar projects in the City.
- Close partnership between Police and diversion providers through the Denis Law legacy Trust (DLLT) (Street Sport)
- Flagging system introduced to report incidents/hotspots and a mechanism for information sharing was introduced
- ASB letters are sent to youths identified as being involved in disorder.
- Operation Galaxite was trialled within the City Centre in response to escalating youth disorder within the area.

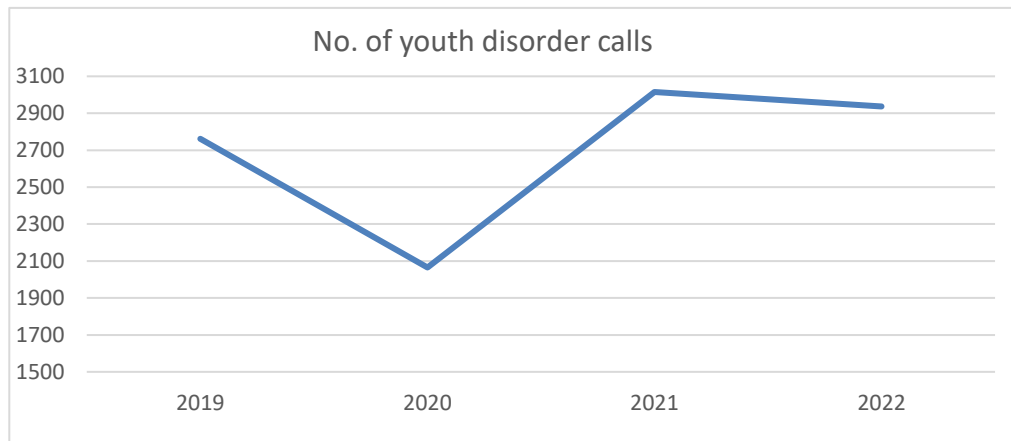
3.2 As well as the above the following changes are being developed at present:

- Formulation of a new CSP Tactical process where place based concerns are identified in a more specific way and both the issue and underlying causes are to be addressed. This process has been developed, but not yet been implemented. Although not in place, Police have made relationships so that the efficient sharing of data can take place, with Intervention Providers, to take action in the right place.
- Design of the Northfield Hub is progressing with partners. This will be a permanent structure in the Northfield area for youths to engage in activities to divert them from disorder.

3.3 Approval of the recommendation that the project continue with a revised aim will enable the above two changes to be tested and the impact reported on. Further changes, including ways to increase availability of and engagement with youth activity, will also be explored.

4 HAVE OUR CHANGES RESULTED IN IMPROVEMENT?

4.1 Whilst the aim has not been achieved, there has been a 2.6% reduction in calls since 2021 and positive outcomes from improvement activity that are reported on below. Following the pandemic, and the return to normal life, there was a reduction in youth disorder calls from 2021 to 2022 of 79. The yearly figure totals for Aberdeen City were:



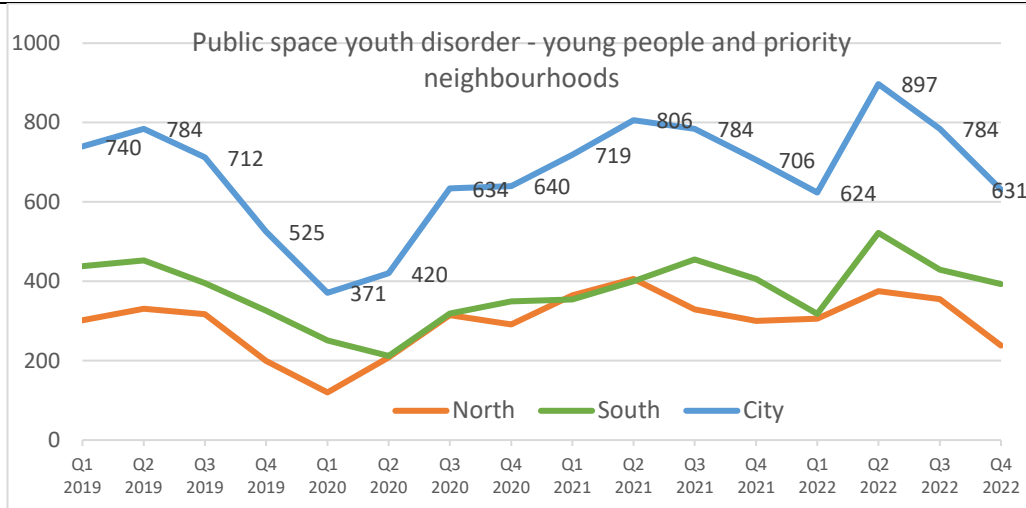
4.2 Following the impact the pandemic had on figures, it was decided to use the 2021 figures as base line data. Although there was a drop in calls between 2021 and 2022, this was not required 10%. There are a number of factors identified that may be linked to the rise in youth disorder since 2019:

1. Tolerance levels were reduced during covid, with large numbers of regulation breaches being reported. This reduction in tolerance has continued and the public are more likely to report instances of youths gathering, despite them not committing any offences. This is evident through the increase in repeat callers to Police which is assessed to be due to nervousness.
2. Free public transport for youths in Scotland has made it easier for them to travel to different areas of the city. This has been evidenced through work to identify where youths in the City Centre originated from.
3. Following the pandemic, there were less diversionary activities available to youths, such as youth clubs and other clubs etc.

4.3 The changes tested have had positive impacts:

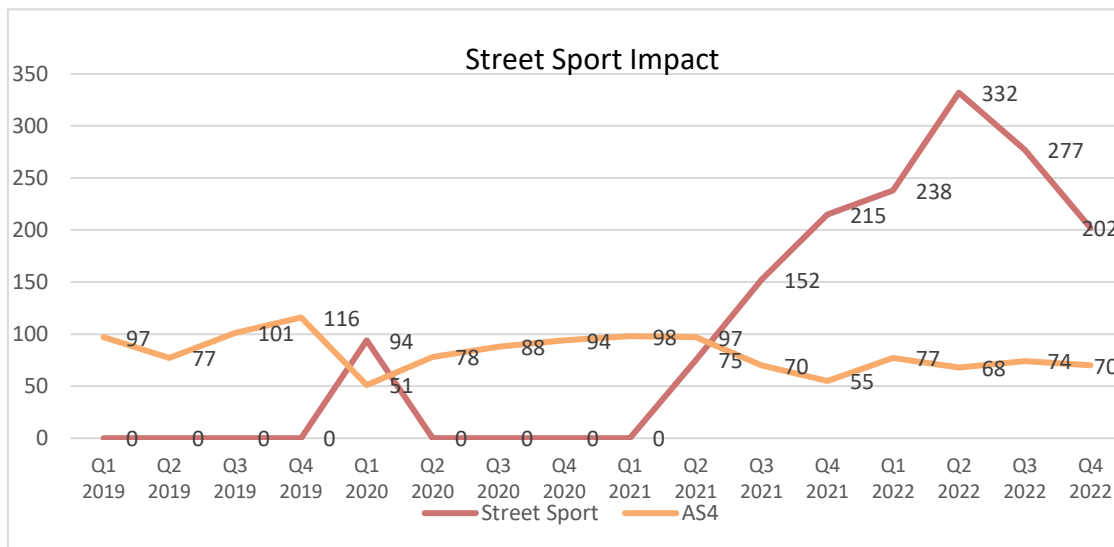
Formulation of a new Community Safety Partnership (CSP) process to address vulnerabilities quicker and one which can track repeated issues.

4.4 This enabled action to be taken to address emerging issues/trends. This will be implemented permanently and will be frequently reviewed and improved where suitable. The chart below shows the number of youth calls received on a quarterly basis from 2019 to 2022. The North/South splits also demonstrate that generally the follow the same trend.



Close partnership between Police and diversion providers through the DLLT (Street Sport)

4.5 This resulted in positive change in response to youth disorder in areas. Data showed that generally when attendance was high at Street Sport sessions, the youth disorder calls in that area reduced. Information sharing has been key in order for Street Sport to deploy to areas where youth disorder calls were rising. This is a permanent change and work will remain ongoing to support DLLT. The chart below shows the number of youth calls in the AS4 (Sheddocksley) area compared to the Street Sport attendance figures for the same time. The chart generally indicates that the higher the attendance, the lower the calls.

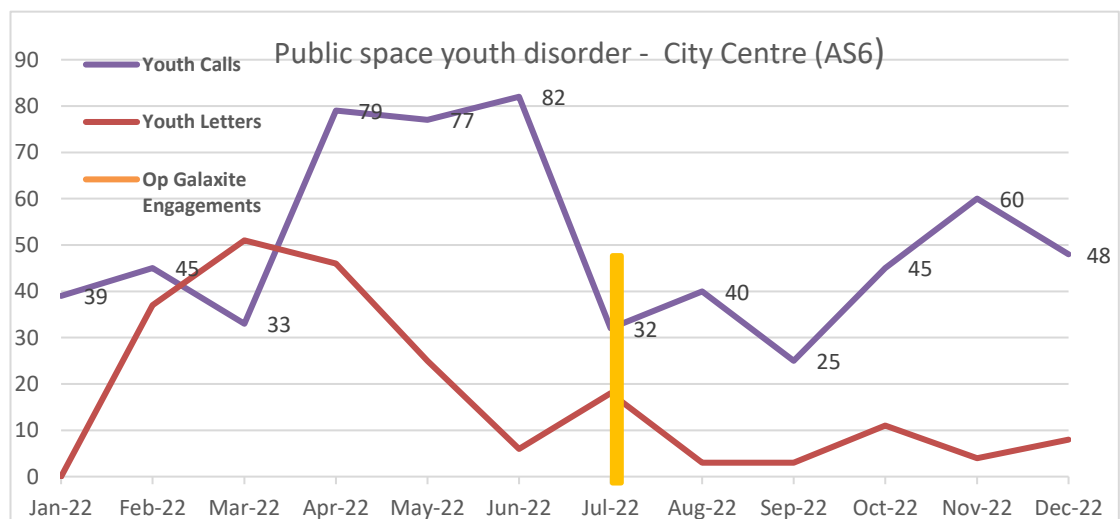


Flagging system introduced to report incidents/hotspots and a mechanism for information sharing was introduced.

4.6 All youth calls are reviewed by Police and recorded in order for the data to be analysed. Trends are identified and information is shared with Community Policing Teams and Partners in order for action to be taken at the relevant time and place. This is now a permanent practice.

4.7 ASB letters are sent to youths identified as being involved in disorder
 These youths are identified via the above flagging system and data is recorded to monitor the involvement each youth has in incidents and which area these incidents occurred. There is an accompanying escalation process should the same youth be involved in multiple incidents. Data showed that generally one letter was enough to halt the youth's involvement in disorder.

4.8 Operation Galaxite
 Operation Galaxite was trialed within the City Centre in response to escalating youth disorder within the area. The Operation ran for the month of July in 2022 and 48 positive engagements with youths were recorded and the youth disorder calls for the City Centre was 32. For reference, the month prior to Operation Galaxite, the youth disorder calls were 82. Learning points were taken from this Operation and work is ongoing to implement a long term adaptation of this. The chart below is a snapshot from 2021 to demonstrate the impact Operation Galaxite was found to have in the City Centre area (AS6). Included in the chart are the number of youth ASB letters that were issued during that time which generally shows that the months in which letters were sent out, there was a drop in youth calls.



5 HOW WILL WE SUSTAIN THESE IMPROVEMENTS?

5.1 New CSP processes form part of daily and monthly working practices. These processes are subject of reviews and will be altered if improvements are identified.

5.2 The flagging system and ASB letters are a result of call monitoring on a daily basis, which is part of core roles of relevant staff. Proactive work is done to identify youths involved in disorder.

5.3 The work done at the Tesco Hub is recognised as best practice and the introduction of the Northfield Hub is expected to have a positive result on disorder. Through partnership working, it is a shared priority to ensure the longevity of these, and any future Hubs.

5.4	The DLLT is recognised for the difference made with youths. Support will continue to be provided to the DLLT by partners, which include representatives of Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service being members of the Management Group.
5.5	Plans are ongoing to introduce a long term and sustainable version of Operation Galaxite within Aberdeen City Centre. If there is continued success, this template could be implemented in other areas of the City.
6	HOW WILL WE MONITOR THESE IMPROVEMENTS?
6.1	The data relating to this charter will continue to be monitored as standard working practice within Partnerships, Preventions & Interventions. Trends will be monitored monthly to identify problem areas and highlight these to the relevant CPTs for plans to be put in place.
6.2	Should the recommendations be approved, the data recorded will continue to be monitored and reported to the Children’s Services Board, as well as added to the Outcomes Framework/Improvement programme Dashboard to ensure that performance continues.
7	OPPORTUNITIES FOR SCALE UP AND SPREAD
7.1	The practices implemented throughout the charter are suitable for tailoring to other areas of business. The core function is ensuring we are aware of call patterns/trends in order to ensure an accurate understanding is held. Thereafter, action can be taken to address issues. This could be letters, highlighting issues to partners via the CSP, or initiating an Operation to directly address the problem.
7.2	The impact of youth community activities is evident as described above. Youth community activities such as StreetSport could be spread to other areas of the city and should the aim be revised, this will be actively taken forward through the volunteer led model described in the project end report for aim “Increase by 50% the number of 10 to 16 year olds in target areas of the city who access youth community activity by 2023.”

Recommendations for Action

It is recommended that the CPA Board:

- i) Acknowledge the positive outcomes achieved to date as a result of the improvement activity and to agree that youth anti-social behaviour remain a priority and that the project continue with a revised aim of “Reduce by 15% the number of instances of youth anti-social behaviour calls to Police Scotland by 2025.” as proposed within the draft revised Children’s Services Plan 2023-26;
- ii) Note that the improvement activity described at 3.2 which has not yet been tested will be taken forward and reported under the revised aim should the proposal be approved; and
- iii) Note the opportunities for scaling up and spread to other areas of the improvements tested to date.

Opportunities and Risks

Opportunities

- To build a network of volunteers across the city who take responsibility for running community-based youth activities that leads to increased youth participation and reduction in anti-social behaviour
- To adapt SFRS 'fire setters' intervention and re-education scheme for different organisations to educate and work towards reducing anti-social behaviour.
- For children and young people to support the development of new and existing youth activities.
- To learn from the successful changes of this project and apply to other offences
- To build an early intervention model of youth work provision that focuses on areas with highest need.

Risks

- Not having the capacity to offer support across the city to volunteers.
- Media reporting stigmatising youths – engagement with communities and opportunities for youths to tell their stories (EG using SHMU FM)
- Resources to successfully implement projects
- Finance to improve environmental matters

Consultation

Stretch Outcome 9 Sub Group
Children's Services Board

Background Papers

The following papers were used in the preparation of this report.

- LOIP 2026-26
- 9.2 Project Charter

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