

Evaluation of Safer Streets Initiative at Elgin December 2007

Moray Division

EVALUATION OF PROBLEM PROFILE

15 FEBRUARY 2008

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Document Reference: 25/08
Last Printed/Updated: 15 February 2008
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1. Introduction

Background

At the request of Sergeant Grant McCutcheon, Moray Council Local Authority Liaison Officer I was tasked to examine and evaluate the impact of the Safer Street Initiative which was carried on in Elgin during the early hours of Saturday and Sunday mornings between 08 December 2007 and 01 January 2008 to link in with the times that persons under the influence of alcohol would be moving between licensed premises or exiting the premises at the end of licensing hours. The object of the initiative was to reduce alcohol fuelled street violence.

In 2007, the Scottish Government provided a grant of £10,000 to Moray Community Safety Partnership. This was part of the Safer Streets initiative, which required the Partnership to produce a problem solving plan to tackle the issue of alcohol fuelled violence on our streets over the festive period. This was to be an evidence-led approach, based on a Problem Profile produced by the Grampian Police Analyst in Moray Division.

This problem profile was completed on 14 November 2007 and submitted to PS McCutcheon.

The profile produced, showed that the actual incidence of alcohol fuelled violence and disorder in Moray's principal town centres was actually higher in mid-summer than it was over the festive period. A series of partnership meetings was held to discuss the tactical approach to reducing alcohol fuelled violence and disorder on our streets from the period 8 December 2007 to 1 January 2008.

The focus of the activity was on the Elgin Town Centre area, and comprised the provision of late night public transport from Elgin to the towns of Forres and Buckie, between 0030 hrs and 0330 hours on Saturday and Sunday mornings throughout the period. The Partnership was also to provide taxi marshals to maintain order at the taxi rank on Elgin High Street.

These initiatives consumed the entire grant, and significant additional contributions were made by Moray Council, Grampian Fire and Rescue Service and NHS Grampian.

The purpose of this report is to establish whether incidents of alcohol fuelled violence and disorder were lower in the target area during the period of the initiative, than in previous year, and whether or not the provision of late night transport caused a displacement of violence and disorder to the towns of Forres and Buckie.

Search Criteria

In preparation of this problem profile information was sourced from the following organisations and Grampian Police systems:

- Business Object Version 6
- I Kap
- Crimefile
- Moray Council
- STORM Command and Control system.
- Stagecoach

The crimes which were included in this evaluation were:-Serous Assault, Petty Assault, Breach of the Peace, Drunk and Incapable, Drinking in a Public Place and Vandalism.

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Serious Assault | SOHD Code 4 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Petty Assault | SOHD Code 47/1 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Breach of the Peace | SOHD Code 47/2 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dunk and Incapable | SOHD Code 60/1 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consumption of Alcohol in a Public Place | SOHD Code 72/8 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vandalism | SOHD Code 33/1 |

The dates covered in this evaluation was Saturday 8 and Sunday 09 December 2007, Saturday 15 and Sunday 16 December 2007, Saturday 22 December and Sunday 23 December 2007 and Saturday 29 and Sunday 30 December 2007.

The times covered for incidents and statistics in the Elgin town centre was the period between 0001 hours and 0430 hours for each of the dates.

The location covered for the crimes was Elgin town centre and surrounding streets with particular attention to the areas around the main nightclub, Joannas, and the local taxi rank on High Street, Elgin.

A comparison was also made for the same period in 2006 for the same offences within the centre of Elgin

2. STAFFING AND COST OF INITIATIVE

The initiative involved the cost of employing three taxi marshals to monitor the taxi rank on High Street, Elgin between 0030 hours and 0430 hours on the early hours on Saturday and Sunday mornings which covered the busiest period for anti social behaviour crime in that area.

The buses were supplied by Stagecoach at Elgin and their remit was to convey persons from Elgin town centre to the surrounding towns for a flat fee of £3 this fare being subsidised by the money from the Scottish Government grant and other sources. The buses left Elgin bus station at 0030 hours, 0230 hours and 0320 hours.

Four marshals were employed to be on the buses which ran between Elgin bus station and Buckie, Keith and Forres to ensure that there were no problems encountered by Stagecoach staff. 2 marshals were travelling on each of the buses.

Two taxi marshals were employed to monitor the taxi rank in Elgin town centre

The total cost of the initiative was to be £10,000.

The Policing resources were not increased or affected buy this initiative and no officers were directly involved, although the work of the taxi marshals and the buses was monitored to ensure there were no problems. The area was also monitored by CCTV operators at Elgin Police Office.

3. RECORDED CRIMES

The following tables shows the number of anti social behaviour crimes recorded in Elgin town centre between 0030 hours and 0430 hours on each of the days that this operation was running. A comparison was made between these recorded figures and the corresponding dates in 2006.

2007

	08 Dec	09 Dec	15 Dec	16 Dec	22 Dec	23 Dec	29 Dec	30 Dec
Serious Assault	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Petty Assault	0	2	0	1	0	1	0	0
Breach of the Peace	1	1	0	3	2	0	0	0
Drunk and Incapable	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Drinking in a public Place	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vandalism	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Total	1	3	0	5	2	1	0	0

2006

	09 Dec	10 Dec	16 Dec	17 Dec	23 Dec	24 Dec	30 Dec	31 Dec
Serious Assault	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Petty Assault	0	2	2	2	0	0	0	2
Breach of the Peace	0	0	3	2	5	0	2	0
Drunk and Incapable	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Drinking in a public Place	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vandalism	0	0	1	1	3	0	0	1
Totals	0	3	6	5	8	0	2	3

- A total of **12** recorded crimes in the period of this initiative compared to **27** for the corresponding period last year.
- From the raw statistics it would be very difficult to state that the reduction was solely due to the initiative as other factors such as weather, police resourcing in the area and how busy licensed premises were should also be considered.
- There was no identified displacement of anti social behaviour crimes to the towns of Forres and Buckie following the buses taking patrons from Elgin. with no crimes offences identified as being linked to persons using the buses.

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

The following table shows the total number of crimes recorded in Moray Division in each of the above categories for the period 08 December 2007 to 31 December 2007 and the proportion of these which were in the Elgin area and the proportion which were linked to licensed premises or street crime.

	Moray Division	No Associated to Licensed premises	No of Street crimes	Elgin Beat Area	No Associated to Licensed premises	No of Street crimes
Serious Assault	4	3	1	0	0	0
Petty Assault	81	12	28	40	6	6
Breach of the Peace	110	2	45	44	1	18
Drunk and Incapable	2	0	0	1	0	0
Drinking in a public Place	3	0	3	2	0	2
Vandalism	95	2	13	29	1	7
Totals	295	19	90	116	8	33

4. STORM DATA

A query was carried out of the Force STORM command and control system to show the number and type of storm calls to the town centre area of Elgin between midnight and 0430 hours on each of the days of this initiative.

Day	Date	No of Town Centre Calls	Type of calls	Total for Division in Period
Saturday	08/12/2007	1	Youth Disorder	4
Sunday	09/12/2007	0	N/A	3
Saturday	15/12/2007	1	Disturbance	13
Sunday	16/12/2007	1	Disturbance	7
Saturday	22/12/2007	5	4 x Disturbance & 1 x Vandalism	9
Sunday	23/12/2007	2	2 x Disturbance	11
Saturday	29/12/2007	3	1 x Concern, 1 x Drunk female & 1 x Disturbance	6
Sunday	30/12/2007	3	1 x Concern, 1 x Assault & 1 x Disturbance	11
Total Calls		16		64

- **25%** of the STORM calls to the Elgin area during these periods were to the town centre area.
- **9** of the disturbance calls during this period were at or near to the main local nightclub Joannas in City Arms Close.
- A comparison was made of the STORM incident calls for the same period last year which showed that there was no appreciable difference in the number of calls to the town centre area with **17** recorded for the 2006 dates and **24%** of all Elgin incident calls were to the town centre.
- Data was also obtained from the towns where the buses were running to namely Forres and Buckie and there was no identified increase in anti social behaviour incidents in these towns following the arrival of the buses from Elgin.

5. CUSTODY/CELLFILE DATA

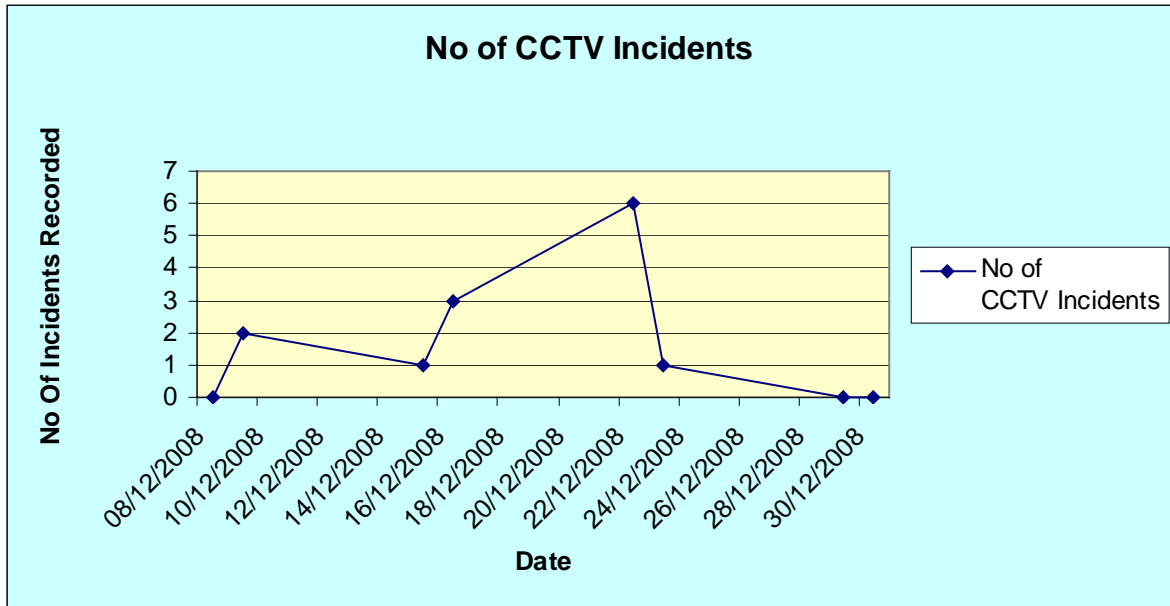
Data was sourced from the Force crimefile system relative to the number of persons detained or arrested for anti social behaviour crimes in the Elgin town centre area between midnight and 0430 on each of the initiative dates.

Date	No of custodies from Elgin Town Centre	Gender	Age	Crime	No of custodies for Moray Division
08/12/2007	1	Male	29	Breach of the Peace	9
09/12/2007	2	Male	19 & 35	Assault/Breach of the Peace	7
15/12/2007	0	-	-	-	13
16/12/2007	2	Male	19 & 23	Breach of the Peace & Breach of Bail	16
22/12/2007	3	Male	18,24 & 29	Assault and Breach of the Peace	15
23/12/2007	1	Male	18	Assault	8
29/12/2007	1	Male	19	Breach of the Peace	4
30/12/2007	0	-	-	-	12
Totals	10				84

- ❑ Only **12%** of all custodies in these period were from the town centre of Elgin for anti social behaviour crimes,
- ❑ All the custodies were male and all were under the influence of alcohol to some degree.
- ❑ The average age of the offenders in this period was **23** with the youngest being **18** and the eldest being **35**.
- ❑ The most common crime which resulted in an apprehension from the initiative area was Breach of the Peace.

6. CCTV Data

The area where the taxi marshals were deployed is on High Street Elgin at the end of City Arms Close. This area is monitored by the Moray Council/Grampian Police CCTV system. Operators are on duty within the Elgin Police office and direct resources to ongoing incidents. For the periods of the initiative the following graph shows the number of incidents were recorded on the specific dates and within the time periods by the CCTV operators.



- ❑ The majority of the incidents captures on the CCTV system related to fights which have been identified as ongoing and which officers were deployed to. Some of these fights were dispersed as they were of a minor nature and others resulted in the apprehension of the persons involved.
- ❑ Other incidents recorded were vandalism to property and general disturbances at the door of the Nightclub Joannas.
- ❑ CCTV footage is kept for a period of 28 days unless it forms part of a case being submitted to the Procurator Fiscal where details of the incident are recorded and retained for evidential purposes.
- ❑ The peak date for incidents identified by CCTV operators was Saturday 22 December 2008.

7. Police Resources

The following table shows the available Police resources in the Elgin beat area between midnight and 0400 on each of the initiative dates.

	08 Dec	09 Dec	15 Dec	16 Dec	22 Dec	23 Dec	29 Dec	30 Dec
Supervisory Officers	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Response Officers	12	12	13	14	9	11	11	11

The above resources are for all officers working in the Elgin Beat. Specific foot patrols are directed to the town centre area by Supervisors to target the main flash points for anti social behavior crime and alcohol fuelled violence. The area where the majority of patrons gather is High Street at the end of City Arms Close, where the main taxi rank is situated, and where persons exiting from the nightclub tend to gather.

8. Impact of Initiative

Negative:-

- ❑ The bus part of the initiative was not well received by the local taxi drivers at Elgin as they saw it as taking away their livelihood at their busiest time of the year.
- ❑ Each bus passenger was subsidised to the tune of £11 per person and it may be considered if this was cost effective.
- ❑ The bus company perceived that the advertising of the availability of the night buses was late and they felt that this impacted in a lower than anticipated uptake.

Positive:-

- ❑ There were no serious and violent alcohol related crimes in Elgin in the area covered by the initiative.
- ❑ The level of anti social behavior crime in Elgin town centre on the nights this initiative was running was very low and there was a reduction in this type of crime compared to last year. It would be difficult to establish if this was directly due to the initiative or other policing methods, however any lowering of anti social behavior crime in the town centre is a positive sign.
- ❑ The taxi marshals were well received by officers policing the town centre in Elgin and it is their opinion that they were very effective and something which should be considered on a more regular basis.
- ❑ There was no dispersion of alcohol fuelled violence from Elgin town centre to other areas where the buses were dropping off.
- ❑ There were no incidents on the buses although the buses did have marshals.
- ❑ The buses were used by 485 persons at a total cost of £5,000. This meant that a large number of persons were not hanging around the town centre for longer periods of time.