Young Female participant on the 8-week Fortitude course referred in by Claire Calder (SPF Key Worker) was identified as suffering from extreme social isolation bought on by anxiety and depression. Prior to commencing the course, she had not left her home for over 6 months.

Providing a positive experience of group-working and self-expression within a supportive communal environment that through continued attendance and participation on course would address issues of social isolation.

The young person was provided individual 1-2-1 personal mentorship by project facilitators and additional project support workers.

They were then encouraged through the established Fortitude methodology of exposing young people to creative music-making (with its acknowledged mental health benefits) and encouraging participants to utilise their own feelings when writing music (drawing on lived experience).

This was done in supportive groups settings where a collaborative, sensitive and encouraging environment was established by the facilitators and sustained by the other participants.

The young person not only completed the programme in full but also performed publicly at the final showcase, a feat previously unimaginable by her mother and those closest to her. Her mother reported as almost unrecognisable change in her demeanour including a massively improved self-confidence, self-esteem and feelings of wellbeing and happiness.

The young person’s mother took the opportunity to report directly to Councillor Harris the impact the course had had in the life of her daughter. In her own words she ‘couldn’t believe that she got on stage to sing’. She advocated for him to bring up the need for continued funding in future cabinet meetings which he agreed to do.