

Fact Sheet 7

COP26 – Public Attitudes Survey

Why conduct public attitudes surveying?

The Scottish Police Authority (SPA) maintains, supports and provides governance and oversight to policing in Scotland. Insight from independent public attitudes surveying, commissioned by the Authority, is an essential element of supporting delivery of this function, and building the Authority's understanding of public experience and perception of policing.

How did we approach our COP26 public attitudes survey?

In November 2021, the Authority commissioned The Diffley Partnership to run a survey of over 1,000 residents in the G postcode area (covering Greater Glasgow) via the [ScotPulse](#) online research panel with questions focused on policing during COP26.

Insights

- The majority (60%) of all respondents supported the policing approach to COP26
- Women were more supportive of the policing approach than men
- Younger respondents (16-34) were less supportive/positive than older respondents
- A large majority of all respondents think that the policing of campaigners and protestors at events like COP26 is a difficult challenge for the police (77%) and that Police Scotland performed well in making sure marches and protests during conference were well organised (63%) and participants had their voices heard (65%)
- The majority felt that Police Scotland had done well to limit any additional disruption caused by peaceful but unlawful protest tactics such as road blocking (56%)
- A significant proportion of respondents selected 'don't know' or 'no view' on each question; and
- Only between 3-4% of respondents had direct experience of participation in events, protests or marches during COP26.

Key Findings

COP26 policing approach

The majority (60%) of all respondents supported the policing approach to COP26. However this increases to 79% when those who answered “don’t know/no view” are removed from the total.

| | Total |
|--|--------------|
| I fully support/support the approach taken by the police | 60% |
| I do not/strongly do not support the approach taken by the police | 16% |
| Don’t know/no view | 24% |

Females were slightly more likely to support the policing approach taken during COP26 than males (61% to 58%), although this increases to 84% and 75% when don’t know/no view answers are removed.

| | Male | Female |
|--|-------------|---------------|
| I fully support/support the approach taken by the police | 58% | 61% |
| I do not/strongly do not support the approach taken by the police | 19% | 12% |
| Don’t know/no view | 23% | 27% |

Support also increased with age, with 40% of respondents aged 16-34 fully supporting or supporting the approach compared to 77% of respondents aged 65+. While support among 16-34 year olds was 40%, this is still the most frequent response and higher than those reporting a lack of support (26%). When don’t know/no view answers are removed support increases to 60% of 16-34 year olds, 81% of 35-44 year olds, 85% of 45 – 54 year olds, 88% of 55-64 year olds and 92% of over 65s.

| | 16-34 | 35-44 | 45-54 | 55-64 | 65+ |
|--|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------|
| I fully support/support the approach taken by the police | 40% | 61% | 65% | 73% | 77% |
| I do not/strongly do not support the approach taken by the police | 26% | 15% | 11% | 10% | 7% |
| Don’t Know/no view | 34% | 24% | 24% | 17% | 16% |

COP26 policing performance

Respondents were asked how well or poorly Police Scotland performed against four deliverables.

A majority of respondents felt Police Scotland delivered a safe conference for the people of Glasgow and outside visitors (71% and 72%), that Police Scotland ensured marches and protests were well organised and that those participating in marches and protests were allowed to make their voices heard (63% and 65%).

When don't know/no view responses are removed this becomes: Police Scotland delivered a safe conference for the people of Glasgow and outside visitors (84% and 89%), and that Police Scotland ensured marches and protests were well organised and that those participating in marches and protests were allowed to make their voices heard (83% and 84%).

Table 4: Policing Performance (%)

| | | Total |
|---|-------------------------|--------------|
| Delivering a safe conference for the people of Glasgow | Very/Fairly well | 71% |
| | Very/Fairly poorly | 14% |
| | Don't know | 15% |
| Delivering a safe conference for outside visitors including delegates and protestors | Very/Fairly well | 72% |
| | Very/Fairly poorly | 9% |
| | Don't know | 19% |
| Making sure marches and protests during the conference were well organised | Very/Fairly well | 63% |
| | Very/Fairly poorly | 13% |
| | Don't know | 24% |
| Making sure that those on marches and protests were allowed to make their voices heard | Very/Fairly well | 65% |
| | Very/Fairly poorly | 12% |
| | Don't know | 23% |

The majority of respondents felt Police Scotland performed 'Very/Fairly well' regardless of gender across the four deliverables. However, females were more likely than males to select 'Very/Fairly well'. When don't know/no view answers are removed female support ranges from 89% to 95% and males support from 76% to 84%.

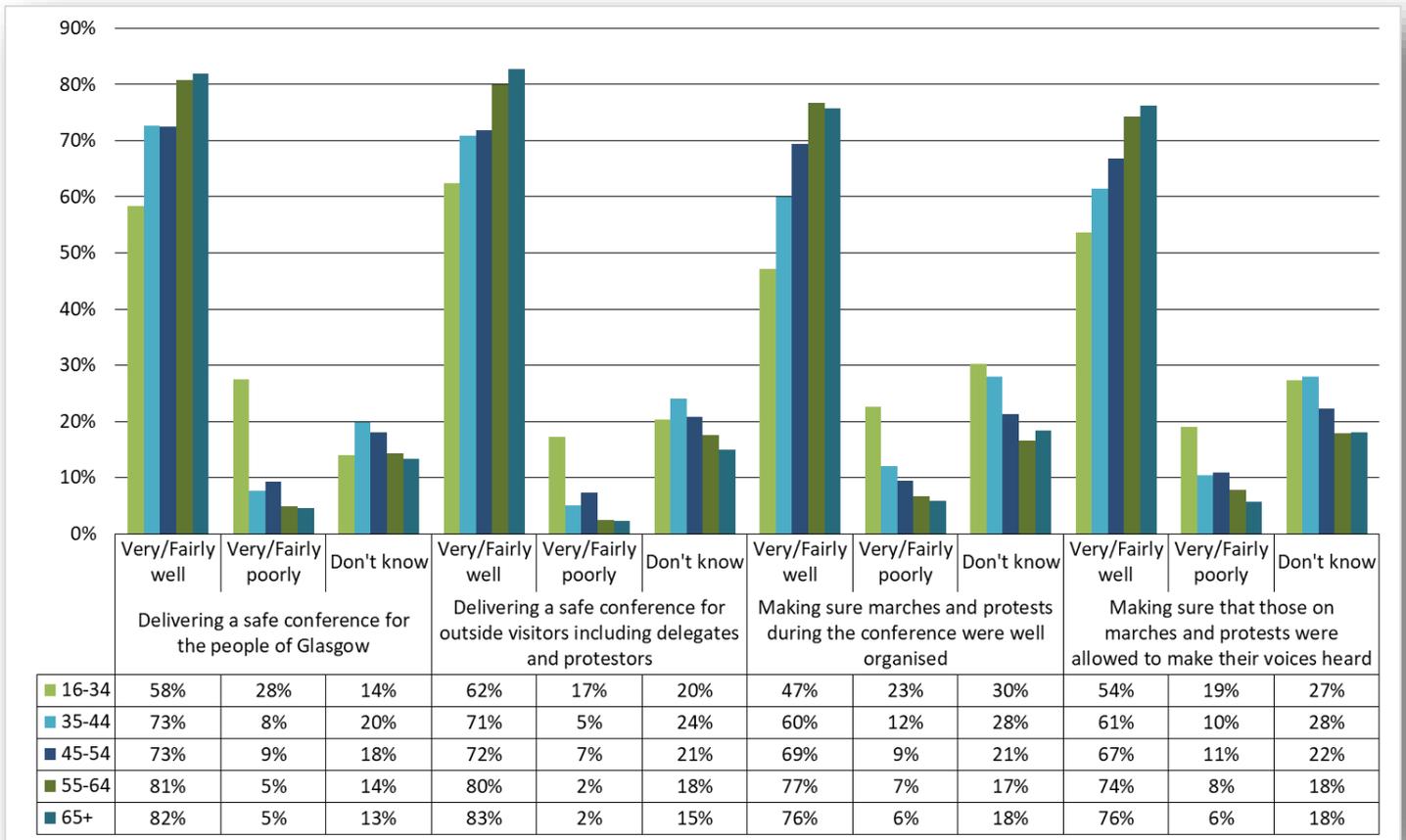
Table 5: Policing Performance - Gender (%)

| | | Male | Female |
|---|-------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Delivering a safe conference for the people of Glasgow | Very/Fairly well | 70% | 72% |
| | Very/Fairly poorly | 18% | 9% |
| | Don't know | 12% | 19% |
| Delivering a safe conference for outside visitors including delegates and protestors | Very/Fairly well | 71% | 73% |
| | Very/Fairly poorly | 14% | 4% |
| | Don't know | 15% | 23% |
| Making sure marches and protests during the conference were well organised | Very/Fairly well | 58% | 67% |
| | Very/Fairly poorly | 19% | 8% |
| | Don't know | 23% | 25% |
| Making sure that those on marches and protests were allowed to make their voices heard | Very/Fairly well | 60% | 69% |
| | Very/Fairly poorly | 17% | 8% |
| | Don't know | 23% | 23% |

A higher proportion of respondents felt Police Scotland performed 'Very/Fairly well' regardless of age across the four deliverables. However, in general, older respondents were more likely to select 'Very/Fairly well' than younger, with a difference of 20 percentage points or more between age groups 16-34 and 65+ across all the deliverables.

When don't know/no view answers are removed support ranges from 68% to 78% in the 16-34 age group, 83% to 93% in the 35-44 age group, 86% to 91% in the 45-54 age group, 91% to 97% in the 55-64 age group and 93% to 97% in the over 65 age group.

Figure 1: Policing Performance – Age (%)



Limiting additional disruption

Respondents were asked how well Police Scotland did at limiting any **additional** disruption caused by peaceful, but unlawful, protests. 56% of respondents thought Police Scotland did 'Very/Fairly well' and this increases to 68% if those who answered don't know / no view are removed from the total.

| | Total |
|---------------------------|--------------|
| Very/Fairly well | 56% |
| Very/Fairly poorly | 26% |
| Don't know | 18% |

The majority of respondents felt Police Scotland did 'Very/Fairly well' at limiting additional disruption regardless of gender. Females were more likely to select 'Very/Fairly well' than males. When don't know answers are removed 74% of females selected 'Very/Fairly well', and 63% of males.

| | Male | Female |
|---------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Very/Fairly well | 54% | 58% |
| Very/Fairly poorly | 32% | 21% |
| Don't know | 14% | 21% |

The majority of respondents aged over 35 felt that Police Scotland had done 'Very/Fairly well' at limiting additional disruption, however a higher proportion of age group 16-34 felt that Police Scotland had done 'Very/Fairly poorly'.

When don't know/no view answers are removed support increases to 47% in the 16-34 age group, 71% in the 35-44 age group, 79% in the 45-54 age group, 80% in the 55-64 age group and 83% in the over 65 age group.

| Table 8: Limiting Additional Disruption - Age (%) | 16-34 | 35-44 | 45-54 | 55-64 | 65+ |
|--|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------|
| Very/Fairly well | 39% | 55% | 65% | 67% | 70% |
| Very/Fairly poorly | 44% | 22% | 17% | 17% | 14% |
| Don't know | 17% | 23% | 18% | 16% | 16% |

Policing of Competing Interests

54% of respondents 'Strongly/Tend to agree' that Police Scotland approached the policing of COP26 in a way that recognised the range of competing interests involved, increasing to 66% when don't know/no view answers are removed.

77% of respondents 'Strongly/Tend to agree' that the policing of campaigners and protesters at major events like COP26 is a difficult challenge, increasing to 83% when those who answered don't know/no view are removed.

| Table 9: Recognition of Competing Interests and Difficulty of Policing (%) | | Total |
|--|-------------------------------|--------------|
| Police Scotland approached the policing of COP26 in a way that recognised the range of competing interests involved | Strongly/Tend to agree | 54% |
| | Neither agree nor disagree | 16% |
| | Strongly/Tend to disagree | 13% |
| | Don't know | 17% |
| Policing campaigners and protesters at events like COP26 is a difficult challenge for police forces. | Strongly/Tend to agree | 77% |
| | Neither agree nor disagree | 9% |
| | Strongly/Tend to disagree | 7% |
| | Don't know | 7% |

The majority of respondents, regardless of gender, 'Strongly/Tend to agree' that Police Scotland approached the policing of COP26 in a way that recognised the range of competing interests involved and that the policing of campaigners is a difficult challenge for police forces. Females were more likely to 'Strongly/Tend to agree' than males to both statements.

When don't know/no view answers are removed female agreement increased to 71% in relation to recognising competing interests and 85% in relation to recognising the difficulty of the challenge. For males, this increased to 61% and 80% respectively.

Notably, agreement was substantially higher for recognising the difficulty than for balancing competing interests.

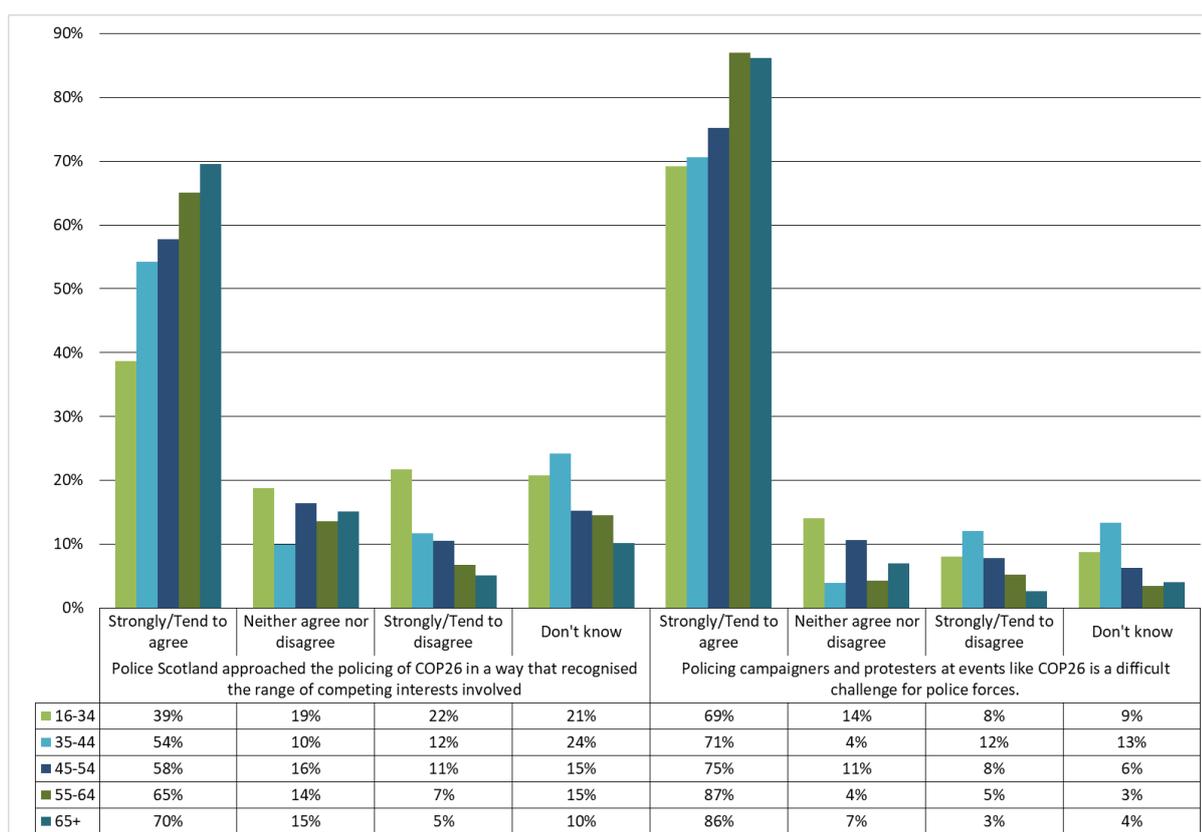
| Table 10: Recognition of Competing Interests and Difficulty of Policing – Gender (%) | | Male | Female |
|--|-------------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Police Scotland approached the policing of COP26 in a way that recognised the range of competing interests involved | Strongly/Tend to agree | 52% | 56% |
| | Neither agree nor disagree | 17% | 15% |
| | Strongly/Tend to disagree | 17% | 9% |
| | Don't know | 14% | 20% |
| Policing campaigners and protesters at events like COP26 is a difficult challenge for police forces. | Strongly/Tend to agree | 75% | 78% |
| | Neither agree nor disagree | 10% | 8% |
| | Strongly/Tend to disagree | 9% | 5% |
| | Don't know | 6% | 9% |

Figure 2, below, shows that a higher proportion of respondents regardless of age 'Strongly/Tend to agree' that Police Scotland approached the policing of COP26 in a way that recognised the range of competing interests involved and that policing campaigners at events like COP26 is a difficult challenge for police forces.

The likelihood of selecting 'Strongly/Tend to agree' increased as the age categories increased for both statements. There was a 31 percentage point difference between age groups 16-34 and 65+ on those who agreed the policing approach recognised the range of competing interests involved. When don't know/no view answers are removed, support ranges from 49% of 16-34 year olds to 77% of over 65s.

There was also a 17 percentage point difference between age groups 16-34 and 65+ on those who agreed policing campaigners and protesters is a difficult challenge for police forces at events like COP26. When don't know/no view answers are removed, support ranges from 76% of 16-34 year olds to 90% of those over 55

Figure 2: Recognition of Competing Interests and Difficulty of Policing – Age (%)



Looking Forward

This polling activity informs work being carried out by the SPA and Police Scotland, with partners, to reflect on lessons learned from the policing of COP26. Additionally, a wider SPA programme of polling is in place, to gather general views and perceptions as well as focusing on specific topics. This provides insights and evidence to support the Authority in its aspiration, with Police Scotland, to build and maintain public confidence in policing.

Technical Details

The survey was designed by the SPA with support from Diffley Partnership and delivered through the ScotPulse Online Panel. The survey, carried out from 24 – 28 November 2021, received 1,009 responses from the adult population, aged 16+, across the G postcode area.

The analysis in this factsheet is descriptive and the findings are not generalizable to the Scottish population. To explore the results for yourself please visit the SPA website [here](#) for access to data tables.

Keeping up to date

To keep up to date with our work, please keep an eye on the Scottish Police Authority's [website](#) where you can find papers and watch livestream committee discussions, or follow us on Twitter @ScotPolAuth and LinkedIn @ScottishPoliceAuthority

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