SCOTTISH POLICE AUTHORITY
ÙGHDARRAS POILIS NA H-ALBA

Authority Meeting
24 September 2026

Item 9: Digital Strategy
Presenter: Andrew Hendry, CDIO
Appendix: Appendix A – Digital Strategy Reimagined
Appendix B – Digital Strategy Insight Pack

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present the Police Scotland Digital Strategy Refresh – Digital Re-imagined 2025-2028, to the SPA Authority for review and approval.

Recommendation

For Approval

Strategic Alignment

Strategic outcome(s)	This report supports a number of strategic objectives and outcomes as illustrated within Our 2030 vision
Risk alignment	The contents of this refreshed Digital Strategy have been assessed against our existing Risk profile at both an Organisational and Functional level.
Prior governance	The Digital strategy Refresh – Digital Re-imagined 2025-2028 was formally approved by PSoS Force Executive on 17th June 2026. It was previously approved by the PSoS Data and Digital Board prior to Force Executive.
Stakeholder engagement	The development of the Digital Strategy Refresh has been undertaken by senior leaders within the CDIO function and has been presented by the CDIO at a PSoS Senior Leaders Engagement session.

	We have formally engaged with industry Insight, who have reviewed and provided feedback on the Digital Strategy Refresh. Consultation with members of the public was also completed and is included within appendix.

Implications

Community	✓	Data & Privacy	✓	Environmental	✓
Equalities & Human Rights	✓	Financial	✓	Health, Safety & Wellbeing	✓
Legal	✓	Workforce	✓		

1 Report Detail

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Police Scotland's refreshed **Digital, Data and Technology (DDaT) Strategy 2025–2028 – "Digital Reimagined"** provides the blueprint for how digital capability will enable the organisation to deliver *Vision 2030*: a policing service that is modern, sustainable and trusted by every community in Scotland.

1.1.2 The strategy reflects national direction, aligning with the **National Policing Digital Strategy 2025**, **NPCC Policing's Problem Book**, and the **Scottish Government's Digital Strategy – Realising Scotland's Full Potential in a Digital World**. It emphasises ethical data use, resilient infrastructure, strong governance and inclusive service design.

1.1.3 The current Digital Strategy, approved in 2023, was underpinned with a Strategic Outline Business Case that considered elements including investment profile, priorities, risks, and delivery assurance. Given that this latest Strategy is a refresh of the 2023 version it was determined that a new SOBC was not required.

1.2. Strategic Ambition

1.2.1 The Strategy sets four organisation-wide ambitions:

1. **New and innovative solutions to prevent and detect crime** – Enhancing investigative capabilities, unlocking digital evidence, enabling data-driven insights, and developing new overt and covert tools.
2. **Digital reimagination to maximise officer and staff efficiency** – Automating processes, modernising workflows and estates, improving mobility and strengthening demand/productivity insight.
3. **Reform the citizen experience and engagement** – Expanding digital channels, enhancing accessibility, improving victim support, modernising custody, and providing tailored responses.
4. **Enhance multi-agency collaboration and partnerships** – Linking cross-sector data, enabling early intervention, supporting national policing programmes, and increasing preventative capability.

1.3 Strategic Enablers

1.3.1 Delivery relies on eight enabling pillars:

- Data foundations and exploitation
- Continuous innovation and product-driven evolution

- Cyber resilience
- Digital skills development
- AI and automation
- Investment and prioritisation
- Enterprise architecture and integrated design
- People-centred, values-driven and sustainable solutions

1.3.2 These enablers ensure security, integration, consistency and readiness for emerging needs, while embedding a culture of innovation.

1.3.3 Beyond the delivery of the first phase of Vision 2030, Police Scotland will continue to expand its use of digital, data and technology to improve public services, strengthen prevention activity, increase automation, support workforce modernisation and enable more effective multi-agency working. The refreshed strategy provides a framework for sustained transformation through to 2028 and beyond.

1.4 Strategic Outcomes and Benefits

1.4.1 The refreshed Digital Strategy is intended to deliver tangible benefits for communities, officers, staff and partner agencies. By December 2028 the organisation will have strengthened its ability to deliver modern, accessible and efficient policing services supported by data-driven decision making, resilient technology platforms and innovative digital capabilities.

1.4.2 Expected benefits include improved public access to policing services through expanded digital channels, enhanced support for victims throughout their journey, increased operational productivity through automation and streamlined processes, improved use of digital evidence and intelligence, and greater collaboration with justice, emergency services and public sector partners.

1.4.3 The Strategy will also strengthen the organisation's ability to respond to emerging challenges including cyber-related crime, increasing volumes of digital evidence, growing public expectations of digital services and the need to operate effectively within constrained financial environments.

1.5 Roadmap

1.5.1 The roadmap to 2028 outlines progressive enhancement of core DDaT capabilities, including digital evidence, AI-enabled triage, data platforms, mobility, modernised contact handling, national applications and Estates/People Strategy alignment.

1.5.2 This refreshed Digital Strategy sets out the organisation's digital ambitions and priorities for the period to December 2028. While aligned to current and future business planning cycles, the strategy is intended to provide a stable strategic framework capable of adapting to changes in operational demand, technology, legislation and funding.

1.6 Delivery and Assurance

1.6.1 Delivery of the refreshed Digital Strategy will be overseen through existing governance structures including the Data and Digital Board, Force Executive and relevant programme and project governance arrangements.

1.6.2 Progress will be monitored through a combination of programme reporting, benefits realisation activity, financial oversight and risk management processes. Strategic priorities will continue to be reviewed regularly to ensure alignments with organisational objectives, operational demand and available resources.

1.6.3 Individual projects and programmes delivered under the Strategy will be required to demonstrate clear alignment with organisational priorities, defined benefits, affordability and measurable outcomes. Regular reporting will provide assurance regarding delivery progress, risks, dependencies and achievement of expected benefits.

1.6.4 Where delivery risks or emerging issues arise, these will be escalated through established governance arrangements to support timely decision making and corrective action.

1.7 Investment

1.7.1 **The refreshed Strategy does not in itself create new financial commitments.** Rather, it provides the strategic framework within which future investment decisions will be considered and prioritised. Individual programmes and projects will continue to be subject to robust business case development, affordability assessment and formal governance approval process. This approach ensures that investment remains aligned to organisational priorities, statutory responsibilities and the delivery of measurable public value.

1.7.2 The 2023 Outline Business Case estimated **£380m investment (2023–2028)**. To date, **£114m** has been delivered, supporting core infrastructure, body-worn video, digital evidence sharing and operational systems. No new financial assessment has been undertaken as part of the refresh exercise. The Strategy will link directly to the Medium-Term Financial Plan that Police Scotland is planning to present to the Authority. To deliver the Digital Strategy, business cases for

individual initiatives will be created according to financial thresholds, which will detail investment costs and benefits.

1.7.3 This investment has supported key technology successes, including maintaining a secure and resilient infrastructure and supporting critical services and applications used daily by our officers and staff. However, during this period, significant technology investment has been deferred, including Command and Control Solution Replacement and the procurement of the Enabling Services Transformation (Core EcoSystem).

These two programmes will enter their respective formal procurement phases in 26/27 and 27/28 and represent significant investment, opportunity cost and risk for the Organisation.

1.7.4 Key priorities for 2026/27 and the current phase of Vision 2030 delivery include:

- Ongoing rollout & development of Body Worn Video
- Further improvements to our Core Operating Systems, Criminal History and National Intelligence databases
- Continued modernisation of our Contact systems to provide a more responsive and user-focused service, including self-service options
- Continued investment in AI-driven automation to eliminate duplication and improve processes
- Maximising the use and value of data and data insights

1.7.5 We also anticipate ongoing support from the Scottish Government to fund the rollout of the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP), which will replace the existing Airwave network with a new mobile network providing secure voice and broadband data services to emergency services.

1.7.6 The changing nature of technology is impacting the type of investment required, with trends towards Software as a Service (SaaS) and cloud-based solutions resulting in decreased capital expenditure (Capex) requirements and increased operational expenditure (Opex) requirements.

1.7.7 To ensure that the policing model and Vision 2030 are delivered, we must continue to unlock the value of digital, data and enabling technology, while maintaining public trust and confidence in their ethical and responsible use.

1.7.8 Over the last decade, digital, technology and data have become integral to policing's ability to deliver an effective and efficient service. The

service must continue to rely on data and technology to transform our ability to capture evidence and protect the public.

1.7.9 The need for prioritised investment in digital, data and technology continues to grow. Alongside this, we must find effective mechanisms to prioritise and manage demand. To deliver ongoing value for money, we must create opportunities for greater collaboration between police, partners and industry, learning lessons and taking action where necessary.

1.7.10 The broader policing landscape will continue to evolve. Police reform creates the opportunity and demand for a focus on providing digital capabilities that are effective and efficient at serving the sector's data and technology needs, guided by the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) Science and Technology and Digital strategies.

1.7.11 Our digital ambitions, enabling pillars and underpinning priorities are clearly defined and designed to be used by the sector, informing decisions at every level across policing. This strategy provides a clear summary of our digital ambition and aspiration – our roadmap and what we intend to achieve by 2030.

1.8 Key Risks and Mitigations

1.8.1 Delivery of the refreshed Digital Strategy is dependent upon a number of critical factors including investment, workforce capability, supplier markets, programme capacity and effective governance.

1.8.2 Key strategic risks include:

- Continued financial pressure and competing organisational priorities impacting investment and delivery timelines
- The complexity and scale of major programmes including Command and Control replacement and Core Ecosystem procurement activity.
- The increasing cyber threat landscape and the need to maintain resilient and secure digital services
- Challenges associated with recruiting, retaining and developing specialist digital and data skills
- Maintaining public confidence in the ethical and responsible use of data, digital technologies, artificial intelligence and automation.

These risks will be actively managed through established organisational risk management arrangements, robust governance, continuous assurance activity and regular review of strategic priorities.

1.9 Summary

1.9.1 The refreshed Digital Strategy provides a clear and realistic roadmap for how digital capability, data and technology will enable Police

Scotland to deliver Vision 2030. It balances ambition with practical delivery considerations, recognises the financial and operational challenges facing the organisation and establishes a framework through which future investment can be prioritised, governed and assured. Continued delivery of this Strategy will be essential to maintaining public trust and confidence, supporting operational effectiveness and ensuring the organisation remains capable of responding to future policing demands.

2 Strategic alignment detail

2.1 Strategic alignment to strategic police plan and other key enabling strategies

Strategic outcome(s)	This report supports a number of strategic objectives and outcomes as illustrated within Our 2030 vision

2.2 Alignment to risk register and risk appetite

Risk alignment	The Digital Strategy aligns with the following risks; S1A0001 Vision 2030 – Delivery of Digital Capabilities and S1A0002 Cyber Resilience.

2.3 Prior governance

Prior governance	The draft Digital Strategy Refresh – Digital Re-imagined 2025-2027 was formally approved by PSoS Force Executive on 17th June 2026. It was previously approved by the PSoS Data and Digital Board prior to Force Executive.

2.4 Stakeholder engagement

Stakeholder engagement	The development of the Digital Strategy Refresh has been undertaken by senior leaders within the CDIO function, and has been presented by the CDIO at a PSoS Senior Leaders Engagement session. We have formally engaged with industry bodies, who have reviewed and provided feedback on the Digital Strategy Refresh. The Draft Digital Strategy Refresh was presented to members of the PSoS Data and Digital Board and all feedback incorporated. Socialisation with members of the public has taken place via the PSoS Insight and Engagement Team. The results of this public socialisation and engagement exercise are summarised later in the report.

3 Implications detail

Community	✓	Data & Privacy	✓	Environmental	✓
Equalities & Human Rights	✓	Financial	✓	Health, Safety & Wellbeing	✓
Legal	✓	Workforce	✓		

3.1 Summary Implications

Police Scotland's Vision 2030 sets a clear, shared ambition for the organisation and guides strategic decisions on investment and priorities.

The refreshed Digital Strategy is pivotal to achieving Vision 2030 and supports the organisation's strategic priorities through to 2028.

The Digital Strategy will embed technology, data, and innovation across all aspects of policing.

This approach underpins the delivery of Vision 2030 by modernising systems, enabling data-driven decision-making and improving operational efficiency. The Digital Division ensures that digital capability is not an add-on but the foundation for frontline policing and community engagement.

There are a number of programmes supporting the delivery Vision 2030 and the Digital Strategy refresh aligns fully with these, driving progress on key priorities such as:

- **Frontline Policing and Communities**: Police Scotland is committed to ensuring every community has identifiable local officers. This involves increasing the capacity of local teams and emphasising prevention and problem-solving at the community level.
- **Victim Support**: The vision is to ensure victims are fully heard and supported, with a service that is more tailored to their needs through a trauma-informed approach.
- **Workforce Modernisation**: The strategy aims to create a more inclusive, anti-racist and anti-discriminatory organisation. It focuses on improving employee welfare and wellbeing and empowering a diverse workforce with better training and development. This includes giving a greater role to police staff in jobs that don't require policing powers.
- **Operational Efficiency**: The plan seeks to make the service more efficient and productive to deliver value for money and invest more in frontline policing. This involves a strategic review of police estates (buildings) and an effort to become a more data-driven organisation.

- **Technology, Data and Innovation:** The strategy supports the ongoing delivery of Vision 2030 by placing technology, data and innovation at the heart of organisational transformation, to improve efficiency, tackle emerging threats like cybercrime and modernise the force. The goal is to move from "doing digital" to "being digital."

3.2 Community

There will be community interest in the content of the Digital Strategy – Digital Re-imagined, and the Strategy will deliver a range of community benefits associated with improved outcomes, public contact and access to police services.

This ambition focuses on rethinking how people engage with policing; not only in improving traditional communication channels but recognising and responding to the digital environment that communities operate within and Police Scotland must respond to. The experience and engagement with a citizen must be considered beyond the initial contact in seeking advice or reporting a crime, it extends throughout the journey of a victim, witnesses, or accused. Digital solutions must be considered across all interactions to support the delivery of new and reformed services that align to the organisation's values.

In conjunction with colleagues from our Insight and Engagement Team we developed a survey via our public engagement hub. The survey ran between 30th July and 27th August. The survey was designed to test support for the strategic aims of the Strategy, and to understand respondents' needs and experiences, priorities and challenges.

Over 1,100 responses were submitted, with the overwhelming majority of respondents being supportive of the direction of travel and proposals.

A summary 'Insight Pack' is appended to this report, and the headline themes, all of which are effectively covered within the Digital Strategy, included the following:

- **Trust, Transparency & Legitimacy –** Technology will only be accepted if the Public trusts Police Scotland and see how the technology is being used and what it is achieving.

- **Improving Policing Capabilities –** Positive expectations that digital, data and technology could improve crime detection, prevention, collaboration and free officers' time for community-facing activities.

- **Human Presence & Traditional Policing –** Concerns that technology could lead to fewer officers on the streets or shift attention away from "real" community issues.

- **Technology Implementation & Capability –** Questions about whether Police Scotland has the capability to implement technology effectively, robustly and ethically.

- **Security and Digital Risk –** Concerns about information security and the potential dangers associated with Police Scotland holding and using more technology/data.

- **Uncertainty/Lack of Understanding–** Some respondents don't feel sufficiently informed to judge the impact.

The draft Digital Strategy was reviewed against the analysis contained within the Insight exercise, and amendments made in line with the suggested recommendations.

Should the Digital Strategy be approved by SPA Board, in conjunction with colleagues from PSoS Insight and Engagement, we will formally close the engagement with the production and publication of a 'we asked, you said, we did' response to comments and feedback received.

3.3 Data and Privacy

Data is one of our key strategic enablers and the Digital Strategy outlines our plans to develop the management and governance services around our data assets to deliver Data Foundations, Data Provisioning and, ultimately, Data Exploitation. Ethical use of data and technology platforms, and both legal compliance and public confidence in data-driven solutions are vital elements of the Digital Strategy.

Artificial intelligence and automation present significant opportunities to improve efficiency, decision making and service delivery across policing. However, their use must be underpinned by strong governance, transparency and public trust. All AI-enabled solutions will be subject to appropriate legal, ethical, privacy, equality, human rights, and operational assessments prior to implementation. Appropriate oversight arrangements will be maintained to ensure that emerging technologies are deployed responsibly and in a manner consistent with Police Scotland's values and public expectations.

3.4 Environmental

The refreshed Digital Strategy will make a positive contribution towards environmental sustainability objectives by reducing reliance on physical processes, improving utilisation of the estate, and enabling more efficient ways of working.

Digitisation of records, forms, case files, and evidence management processes will reduce paper consumption, printing requirements,

storage demands and associated waste. Increased use of digital collaboration tools, remote working capabilities and mobile technology will reduce travel requirements and associated carbon emissions whilst improving workforce productivity.

Modern digital infrastructure, cloud-based services, and improved utilisation of data will enable more effective management of energy consumption across police buildings and technology services. Through sustainable procurement, improved asset management and extended technology lifecycles, the Strategy will support wider public sector commitments relating to sustainability and environmental responsibility.

3.5 Equalities and Human Rights

A revised EqHRIA has been completed to support this refreshed Digital Strategy. This is currently with HR for review. We have also developed an accessible version of the Digital Strategy and this is being reviewed by Corporate Communications.

3.6 Financial

Resources are finite, and digital initiatives must compete with other operational priorities. Without clear investment strategies and prioritisation frameworks, transformation efforts risk fragmentation or under- delivery.

Strategic investment and prioritisation ensure:

- Alignment with Vision 2030 organisational goals and public safety outcomes
- Value for money and measurable ROI
- Focus on high-impact initiatives (e.g., national platforms, interoperability)
- Resilience in funding models across budget cycles.

To ensure transparency and accountability in the use of public funds, all digital investment decisions will be subject to robust governance processes. This includes:

- Alignment with national and local policing priorities.
- Regular review and challenge of business cases to ensure value for money.
- Ongoing monitoring of benefits realisation and risk management.
- Engagement with external auditors and stakeholders to provide assurance.

We will also seek to diversify funding sources where appropriate, including exploring opportunities for joint investment with other emergency services, public sector partners, and industry.

Finance colleagues are currently finalising our Medium-Term Finance Plan (MTFP) alongside the budget submission for 27/28 and both contain significant detail relating to Digital investment – both People/Capacity and Technology/Capability.

3.7 Health, Safety and Wellbeing

The Health, Safety and Wellbeing of officers and staff is central to Vision 2030 and this Refreshed Digital Strategy can make a significant contribution to the workforce as outlined at 3.9.

3.8 Legal

The Legal implications associated with this Refreshed Digital strategy are most likely to emerge through standard Procurement and Contract Management practice.

3.9 Workforce

This ambition calls for a complete reimagining of how officers and staff work, powered by digital transformation. Technology has the power to now move beyond incremental improvements or digitising existing processes and instead introduce entirely new ways of working.

Priority will be given to critical but inefficient processes that impact operational officer, staff, and resource intensive corporate functions. Digital Reimagined unlocks Police Scotland's potential to thrive whilst managing budget and resources efficiently.

It is acknowledged that, across the CDIO portfolio, work is progressing on a new proposed Target Operating Model for Digital and Data. The ToM places a focus on people, capability and capacity, and this needs to be aligned with the technology. Our ToM proposal is entering the development of a formal Investment Case and will be subject to JNCC, PSoS and SPA scrutiny in due course. A reimagined delivery and operating model are essential to enabling the right environment and ensuring our people thrive and deliver the benefits of Vision 2030.

Digital Reimagined

Digital, Data and Technology Strategy

2025-2028

POLICE SCOTLAND
Keeping people safe
POILEAS ALBA

OFFICIAL

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OFFICIAL

Foreword from Chief Constable

I want policing in Scotland to deliver more effectively and efficiently for our communities.

Lawful, ethical, and proportionate use of developments in digital, data, and technology can enable our frontline and our partners to achieve better outcomes for the public, at better value to the public purse.

We have a positive duty to seize opportunities to make it easier for people to contact us, use technologies to investigate criminality, to identify and safeguard victims and bring offenders to justice, and to make best use of data to solve problems and prevent crime.

We can maximise these benefits by working with partners, and Police Scotland has a unique vantage point between UK policing, the Scottish criminal justice system, and the wider public sector in Scotland.

Since police reform in 2013, huge progress has been made to consolidate, integrate, and update legacy systems to develop and embed a single national crime system and a shared network across the Service.

We are closely aligned with developments at UK level including around the Law Enforcement Data Service to replace the Police National Computer and the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme to provide secure, high-quality communications across emergency services.

In recent years, Police Scotland has demonstrated improvement across the criminal justice system in Scotland through the implementation of the digital evidence sharing capability and the wide roll-out of body worn video.

A more efficient criminal justice system can deliver quicker and better outcomes for victims, improving the flow of information after someone has reported a crime, and reduce further trauma.

Along with improved working practices, this can minimise court hearings where victims, witnesses, and police are cited but aren't required, saving public money and releasing officer time to support their wellbeing and serve communities.

At the same time, we must continually strengthen our own resilience against cyber-attacks and continue to invest in the workforce and skills to maintain and accelerate improvements.

Our experience has helped us develop the partnerships, and ethical frameworks to deliver further change which ensures we realise our vision of safer communities, less crime, supported victims, and a thriving workforce.

I have huge ambition and optimism for Police Scotland to continue to develop our public digital contact options, automate processes to improve efficiency inside our organisation, across the criminal justice system, and with partners in Scotland and the UK.

This strategy outlines how we will achieve that in a rapidly changing field, which engages issues of privacy and proportionality, in a way which matches our values and supports public confidence and trust in policing.

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Message from the Chief Digital Information Officer

In an era of fast-moving technological advancement and evolving public expectations, the role of digital and data within policing has never been more critical.

Our last Digital Strategy focused on moving from 'Doing Digital to Being Digital' – Recognising the evolving role that Digital, Data and Technology have within an organisation.

Digital Reimagined – a strategy to enable vision 2030. This sets out our renewed vision for harnessing technology and information to enhance operational effectiveness, improve public trust and support our workforce in delivering outstanding policing services.

This refreshed strategy aligns closely with the **National Policing Digital Strategy 2025** and **National Police Chief's Council – Policing's Problem Book** which sets out a shared vision for UK policing to become more digitally enabled, interoperable and citizen-focused. We are proud to contribute to this national ambition by embedding its principles into our local delivery - ensuring our digital investments support operational effectiveness, ethical data use and public trust.

The Scottish Government has recently published a revised Digital Strategy – **Realising Scotland's Full Potential in a Digital World** – and this sets out plans for placing digital at the heart of everything that it does. The PSoS refreshed strategy aligns with the broader ambition and specific actions for the public sector in Scotland.

By 2030 Police Scotland aims to provide a policing service that is modern, sustainable and trusted by every community in Scotland. Our communities rightly expect a police service that is agile, transparent and responsive. To meet these expectations, we must ensure that our digital infrastructure is resilient, our data is trusted and accessible, and our systems are designed around the needs of both officers and the public. This strategy builds on the foundations laid in previous years, aligning with national policing priorities and local strategic objectives, while embracing innovation and emerging capabilities.

Key to this refresh is a renewed commitment to ethical data use, robust governance, and inclusive design. We are investing in smarter platforms, strengthening our cybersecurity posture, enabling data-driven decision-making across all levels of the organisation.

This refreshed strategy recognises the progress made in delivering and implementing new digital and data capabilities since 2023. More importantly, it provides an updated roadmap for delivery aligned to Vision 2030 and the organisation's medium-term business planning horizon through to the end of 2028. Some of our DDaT successes since 2023 are listed below:

- Core Operational Systems - National Crime and Case.
- National roll-out of Digital Evidence Sharing Capability (DESC).
- National roll-out of Body Worn Video (BWV).
- Event Management – COP26, Operations Unicorn, Roll and Oclate.
- Creation of golden nominal records.
- Supporting delivery of efficiencies through process automation.

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- Increased resilience in keeping the organisation safe from cyber threats.

Police Scotland is committed to maintaining a proactive approach to partnership working and collaboration across the justice system, as well as the wider public and private sectors. In support of this, our Digital Strategy and Transformation programme remains focused on delivering end-to-end service design and developing, enhancing, and sustaining national capabilities in secure and scalable ways.

As we modernise our estate, we recognise that physical infrastructure and digital capability must evolve in tandem to meet the demands of a dynamic, connected and sustainable future.

This alignment is not simply about upgrading buildings or deploying new technologies - it is about reimagining how people interact with space, data and each other.

We will relentlessly pursue the design, development and implementation of technology enabled change across the Organisation, and our flagship programmes will focus on delivering new and innovative solutions to prevent and detect crime, replacing our Contact, Command and Control CAD systems and introducing a new Eco-System of enabling systems across our corporate and support functions. To support these initiatives, we must adapt our delivery model, introduce new capabilities and become more product centric, therefore our proposals for a new DDaT Operating Model will be critical.

This document outlines the strategic pillars and key enablers that will guide our transformation journey over the next three years. It is not just a technology roadmap - it is a strategic blueprint for cultural change, operational excellence and digital leadership in modern policing. We will continue to work in partnership with national bodies, local stakeholders and our communities to ensure our digital and data capabilities are secure, inclusive and future-ready.

Call to Action

"To all our officers and staff: your insight, innovation and commitment are vital to the success of this strategy. We encourage you to engage with the opportunities it presents whether by adopting new tools, contributing to data-driven initiatives, or helping shape the future of digital policing".

Together, we will build a digitally confident service for the communities and people of Scotland that is fit for the future, trusted by the people we serve and equipped to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow.

Andrew Hendry
Chief Digital Information Officer

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Aligning the Digital Strategy to Vision 2030

Police Scotland's Vision 2030 sets a clear, shared ambition for the organisation and guides strategic decisions on investment and priorities.

The refreshed Digital Strategy is pivotal to achieving this. The ambitions set out in this Strategy extend beyond the first business plan cycle and continue through to 2028.

The Digital Strategy will embed technology, data and innovation across all aspects of policing.

This approach underpins the delivery of Vision 2030 by modernising systems, enabling data-driven decision-making and improving operational efficiency. The Digital Division ensures that digital capability is not an add-on but the foundation for frontline policing and community engagement.

Operation Evolve provides the overarching programme for Vision 2030 and the Digital Strategy refresh aligns fully with this, driving progress on key priorities such as:

- Frontline Policing and Communities: Police Scotland is committed to ensuring every community has identifiable local officers. This involves increasing the capacity of local teams and emphasising prevention and problem-solving at the community level.
- Victim Support: The vision is to ensure victims are fully heard and supported, with a service that is more tailored to their needs through a trauma-informed approach.
- Workforce Modernisation: The strategy aims to create a more inclusive, anti-racist and anti-discriminatory organisation. It focuses on improving employee welfare and wellbeing and empowering a diverse workforce with better training and development. This includes continuing to develop a balanced workforce model that makes best use of officers' operational powers and police staff's specialist expertise.
- Operational Efficiency: The plan seeks to make the service more efficient and productive to deliver value for money and invest more in frontline policing. This involves a strategic review of police estates (buildings) and an effort to become a more data-driven organisation.
- Technology, Data and Innovation: The strategy places a significant focus on technology and data to improve efficiency, tackle emerging threats like cybercrime and modernise the force. The goal is to move from "doing digital" to "being digital".

Chief Constable Farrell stated:

> "Our vision and values set the guiding principles and ambitions for policing, and our business plan details the steps we are taking to deliver for our communities and our workforce, relentlessly prioritising frontline services.
>
> This is a positive and ambitious vision and plan for policing and, while we outline the milestones taking us to 2027, our approach will remain flexible and subject to funding.
>
> I want the force to be the most digitally enabled police force in Europe, using technical capabilities to improve both efficiency and effectiveness".

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Digital Ambition

Digital at the heart of policing transformation

Police Scotland's Digital Strategy marks the beginning of a new era - one defined by innovation and opportunity. Following a period of consolidation and the successful delivery of core platforms, the organisation is now equipped to pursue **new and innovative solutions to prevent and detect crime.** This next phase will focus on deploying advanced digital tools that enhance investigative capabilities, support proactive policing and strengthen our ability to respond to emerging threats.

Digital reimagined will be central to maximising officer and staff efficiency. The strategy challenges the whole organisation to think beyond traditional technology offerings and seek new solutions and ambitions in keeping with the transformative digital age we operate within. By modernising workflows, automating routine tasks and integrating data-driven technologies, we aim to free up frontline resources and improve decision-making across the organisation. These improvements will not only deliver measurable productivity gains but also enable officers to spend more time engaging with communities and tackling crime.

As public expectations evolve, so must our approach to engagement. The strategy will **transform the citizen experience** by expanding digital channels, improving accessibility and ensuring services are responsive to the needs of a digitally enabled society.

Organisations across the public sector must also evolve to recognise the interdependencies and partnerships required to tackle wicked societal problems that ultimately draw policing in at a point of crisis or high harm. Police Scotland must **play a leading role in championing public sector digital collaboration** to focus on prevention to deliver multi-agency data research, analysis and intervention.

This Digital Strategy must respond to the internal and external expectations of a modern police force, in a digital age, with the new frontiers of artificial intelligence and cyber capabilities. It represents a proactive and assertive vision of digital capabilities at the heart of policing innovation and organisational performance.

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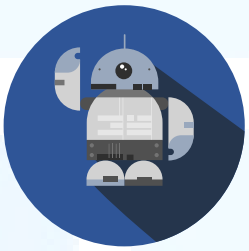
Our Digital Data and Technology Ambitions, Enablers and Principles

Our DDaT strategy will support the delivery of Vision 2030 outcomes through:

Our Strategic Ambitions

New and Innovative Solutions to Prevent and Detect Crime



Digital Reimagination to Maximise Officer and Staff Efficiency

Reform the Citizen Experience and Engagement

Enhance multi-agency collaboration and partnerships

Our Strategic Enablers

- **Cyber Resilience**
- **Data**
- **AI & Automation**
- **Continuous Improvement & Innovation**
- **Digital Skills**
- **Investment & Prioritisation**

Our Design Principles

Enterprise By Design

Deliver enterprise architecture, to enable secure, integrated and resilient solutions

People, service & values focussed

Be people and service focused, with our values and accessibility at the heart of the design to build trust and confidence of our communities

Data Driven

Be informed by data insights and promote evidence-based decision making at all levels of the organisation

Sustainable

Deliver sustainable solutions, which consider environmental impact and prioritise investment by balancing cost, quality and risk

Future Ready

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Our Strategic Ambitions

New and Innovative Solutions to Prevent and Detect Crime

Police Scotland must evolve beyond the modernisation and consolidation of operational systems to embrace a new generation of digital capabilities that directly enhance operational capabilities to prevent and detect crime. This ambition focuses on developing innovative solutions that tackle high harm, support complex digitally enabled investigations and unlock greater access to data and insights.

How we will impact Policing

- Provide officers and analysts with new digital solutions to identify, investigate and disrupt new digitally enabled organised crime and terrorist activity.
- Respond to the rising volume of complex investigations by providing a suite of capabilities to gather, consolidate, analyse and report on digital evidence.
- Greater access to data to support local policing identify and respond to vulnerability, criminality and local trends.

How this will be delivered

- New capabilities: Invest and develop new covert and overt solutions to respond to changing use of technology by organised crime groups and digital skills to safeguard the vulnerable and target perpetrators online.
- Innovation: Deliver industry leading innovation through the exploration of emerging technologies and artificial intelligence to identify new methodologies to prevent, detect and investigate crime.
- Access to connected data: Fully utilise our data assets to drive organisational performance by breaking down data silos and providing easy access to linked data within all business functions.

How our success will be measured

- Increased detection and prosecution of crime utilising complex digital tooling.
- Reduction in time spent in investigations.
- New insights generated by analysts leading to new strategies and operational action.

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Digital Reimagination to Maximise Officer and Staff Efficiency

This ambition calls for a complete reimagining of how officers and staff work, powered by digital transformation. Technology has the power to now move beyond incremental improvements or digitising existing processes and instead introduce entirely new ways of working. Priority will be given to critical but inefficient processes that impact operational officer, staff and resource intensive corporate functions. Digital Reimagined unlocks Police Scotland's potential to thrive whilst managing budget and resources efficiently.

How we will impact Policing

- Enhanced productivity and workforce capacity by reducing manual processes and duplication.
- A modern and flexible working environment within our estates and mobile deployments, providing access to cutting-edge hardware and software solutions.
- A more efficient and automated flow of data across the organisation through connected systems, reducing double-keying and potential for input errors.

How this will be delivered

- Process Optimisation and Reinvention: Use of new and emerging technology such as robotic process automation, low-code/no-code applications and artificial intelligence to reduce manual processes and enable the digitising of operational and corporate functions.
- Estates modernisation and mobility: Support the organisation's Estate and People Strategies by introducing new technology solutions to allow officers and staff to maximise their productivity and capability within and outwith police buildings.
- Demand and Productivity Insights: Provide the data to support a greater understanding of how police resources are deployed and utilised.

How our success will be measured

- Increased productivity through quantifiable reduction in time spent on administrative tasks.
- Increased use and satisfaction with digital tools measured through regular surveys and engagement.
- Increased operational efficiency demonstrated through improvements in case handling times, data accuracy, and resource deployment.
- Increased proportion of officers and staff able to work effectively from remote or flexible locations.

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Reform the Citizen Experience and Engagement

This ambition focuses on rethinking how people engage with policing; not only in improving traditional communication channels but recognising and responding to the digital environment that communities operate within, and Police Scotland must respond to. The experience and engagement with a citizen must be considered beyond the initial contact in seeking advice or reporting a crime, it extends throughout the journey of a victim, witnesses, or accused. Digital solutions must be considered across all interactions to support the delivery of new and reformed services that align to the organisation's values.

How we will impact Policing

- Citizens can seek information, support and report incidents in a manner that suits them.
- Reduce demand on service centre operators by redirecting or responding to queries automatically.
- Improved support for victims through better digital services and access to investigation progress updates.
- Modern and efficient Custody environment, supporting officers and staff in the wellbeing of detainees.

How this will be delivered

- Digital Channel Expansion: Develop and deploy new digital contact platforms to provide multiple options for public engagement from initial point of contact through their journey with Police Scotland.
- Custody Transformation: Support the modernisation of the custody experience for officer, staff and the public to ensure detainees are allocated, processed, monitored and released in an efficient manner.
- Data Informed service: Augment live incidents with relevant operational data to ensure advice, direction and response is tailored to citizens' needs.

How our success will be measured

- Increased use of digital channels for public contact and engagement.
- Reduction in contacts managed by service centre operatives.
- Reduction in manual officer observation within Custody Suites.
- Increased availability of operational data at key decision points.

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Enhance multi-agency collaboration and partnerships

The most complex societal challenges, often described as 'wicked problems', cannot be solved in isolation by a single agency. These issues frequently escalate to a point where policing becomes involved during moments of crisis or high harm. This ambition places prevention at the heart of digital collaboration across the public sector, with Police Scotland leading multi-agency efforts to share data, conduct research and apply analysis to enable early intervention. Achieving this requires new ways of working: linking data, identifying risk factors and informing partners' strategies to understand the complex needs of citizens as they interact with public services. Alongside strengthening public sector collaboration, we will deepen partnerships across UK and international policing. This will ensure data, intelligence, best practice and skills are shared effectively, supporting both preventative and operational outcomes.

How we will impact Policing

- Tailored support & assistance for the public at a community level, finding best help at the earliest opportunity, by the most appropriate agency.
- Focus on problem solving, proactivity and prevention - better insights that will inform strategies and interventions in Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), anti-social behaviour, youth violence, reoffending, vulnerability and harm.
- Better co-ordination across the public sector and UK policing to identify and intervene with high-risk individuals.

How this will be delivered

- Common Data Platform: Through the work of the Prevention Hub, bring together and link person-centric datasets from across the public sector including policing, health and local authorities to identify risk factors.
- Emergency Services and Criminal Justice Collaboration: Identify opportunities to share services, best practice and data to improve service delivery.
- Supporting and delivering national programmes: Collaboration with NPCC, Home Office and PDS to roll out key cross-boundary technologies.

How our success will be measured

- Reduction in demand on Police Scotland through preventative action/intervention.
- New capabilities for early intervention based on cross agency data.
- Reduction in preventable incidents of trauma and vulnerability.
- Increased productivity through national technologies available to Police Scotland officers and staff.

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Our DDaT Strategic Enablers

Data

What is this?	Why is this important?	What will this enable?
This strategic enabler aims to advance and strengthen the management and governance services around our data assets to deliver: • **Data Foundations** Understanding what data we have, where it is and ensuring the quality is fit for purpose • **Data Provisioning** Providing easy access to a single view of linked data • **Data Exploitation** The ethical use of data to solve operational problems.	Data is the lifeblood of policing, a hugely important asset to Police Scotland. Like all assets, they must be maintained and utilised to realise its true value. Ethical use of data is recognised across all industries as a strategic enabler that is core to organisations achieving their primary ambitions. Guidelines on Data Protection Impact Assessments, Sovereignty and Security are necessary to reassure the public.	Efficient and timely access to data to inform operational decision making: • New insights and innovative solutions that will direct operational activity • Public confidence and legal compliance in data-driven solutions.

Continuous Evolution and Innovation

What is this?	Why is this important?	What will this enable?
The threat landscape, public expectations and technology capabilities are constantly evolving. Static systems and rigid processes cannot keep pace with emerging challenges such as cybercrime, digital evidence handling, or mobile-first engagement. Product centric and innovation teams will support and deliver continuous evolution and innovation of our solutions.	A culture of continuous innovation enables: • Agility in responding to new threats and opportunities • Scalability of digital services across forces • Sustainability of transformation through iterative improvement and experimentation (e.g., sandboxing new tech).	Use of drone technology for crowd monitoring during large public events. Initial trials may focus on safety and logistics, but continuous innovation could expand use to: • Search and rescue operations • Real-time traffic incident response • Environmental crime monitoring.

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Cyber Resilience

What is this?	Why is this important?	What will this enable?
Policing organisations are high value targets for cyber-attacks due to the nature of their data and operations. Disruption to digital systems can have serious consequences for public safety and operational continuity.	Cyber resilience is foundational to: • Operational continuity during incidents • Protection of sensitive data and evidence • Compliance with national cybersecurity frameworks (e.g., NCSC guidance) • Trustworthiness of digital platforms used by officers and the public.	Stronger business resilience reducing operational risk and minimising disruption from cyber incidents: • adherence to industry standards and legal obligations, avoiding penalties and reputational damage • cyber awareness across the workforce reducing human error (the leading cause of breaches), strengthening overall organisational security posture • allow us to continue to employ a range of tools and techniques to support our 'defence in depth' principles.

Digital Skills

What is this?	Why is this important?	What will this enable?
Frontline officers, analysts and support staff increasingly rely on digital tools - from mobile apps to data dashboards. Without the right skills, technology adoption stalls and risks increase.	Investing in digital skills ensures: • Effective use of digital tools and platforms • Empowerment of staff to innovate and adapt • Reduction in digital friction and support overhead • Alignment with UK-wide DDaT capability frameworks.	Training officers and staff in the safe use of technology, systems and data to drive efficiency and productivity across the organisation. This includes: • Digital forensics and evidence handling protocols • Use of secure communication apps • Basic data literacy for interpreting dashboards • Upskilling officers and staff to support new and emerging technologies around Automation and AI.

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AI and Automation

What is this?	Why is this important?	What will this enable?
AI and automation offer transformative potential in areas like incident triage, digital forensics and administrative processing. However, their scalability and deployment must be carefully managed to mitigate ethical and operational issues. AI and automation are about freeing officer and staff time rather than as a replacement for human interactions or presence.	AI and automation support: • Efficiency gains in repetitive or data- heavy tasks • Enhanced decision support for officers and analysts • Scalable intelligence in areas like threat detection or resource planning • Innovation in public engagement and service delivery.	Automated triage of 101 and 999 calls using natural language processing to categorise urgency and route to appropriate response teams. Other use cases: • Automated transcription of interviews • Predictive analytics for resource deployment. Ethical assessment and approval of AI-based solutions prior to introduction through our Rights Based Approach. Public confidence and legal compliance in AI-based solutions.

Investment and Prioritisation

What is this?	Why is this important?	What will this enable?
Resources are finite, and digital initiatives must compete with other operational priorities. Without clear investment strategies and prioritisation frameworks, transformation efforts risk fragmentation or under- delivery. Combining technology and policing roadmaps to ensure focus on Vision 2030 objectives and proactively seeking opportunities to improve the financial landscape.	Strategic investment and prioritisation ensure: • Alignment with Vision 2030 organisational goals and public safety outcomes • Value for money and measurable ROI • Focus on high-impact initiatives (e.g., national platforms, interoperability) • Resilience in funding models across budget cycles.	Prioritising investment in a national digital evidence management system over bespoke local solutions. This involves: • Business case development • Benefits realisation planning • Cross-force collaboration for funding.

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Delivery Model

Our Digital, Data, CI and Innovation team provide service, support and deliver new solutions across Police Scotland, Forensics Services and SPA. Policing in Scotland benefits from a highly skilled and professional team, our service is shaped and strengthened by the people who deliver it and they are the foundation of our success. As we move into the next stages of policing reform in Scotland, we are increasingly at the heart of policing, enabling operational improvement and creating high quality experiences for officers, staff and the public.

A reimagined delivery model is essential to enabling the right environment & skills, to ensure our people thrive and deliver the benefits of Vision 2030 and ensure consistency, efficiency and strategic alignment.

New Target Operating Model

What is this?	Why is this important?	What will this enable?
To support the delivery of the Digital Strategy and deliver value at pace and scale we will: • implement a new Operating model across Digital, Data and Technology supporting new and enhanced capabilities • introduce focus on innovation and continuous improvement, enhancing product delivery • introduce improved demand and capacity management • integrate Digital and Data with increased focus on Data Science and Data Science practice.	The importance of having a fit for purpose and sustainable digital division, with the correct skills, organised in the correct way, has been brought into sharper focus with the publication of Police Scotland's 2030 Vision and supporting 3-year plan. The realisation of the ambitions set out in both the vision and the 3-year plan will be dependent on successful delivery of technology and people transformation.	Strategic Alignment with operational Goals and Vision 2030: • Increased agility, innovation, continuous improvement and reliability • Accelerated value delivery and improved compliance • Supporting early careers workforce model and skills fit for the future • Smarter decisions and deliver better outcomes for the public through use of data.

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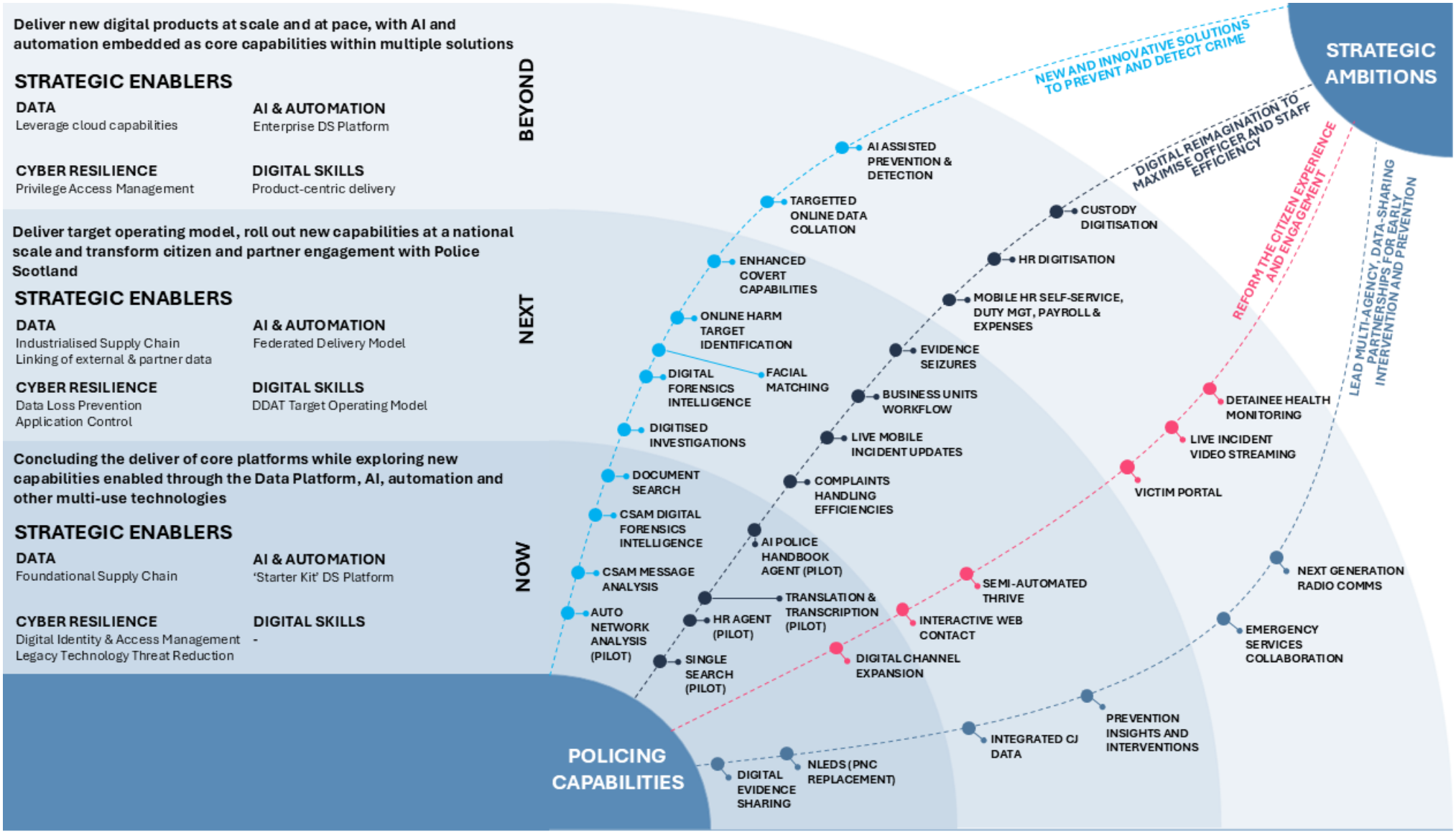
Digital Strategy Roadmap



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Digital Capabilities delivered... and envisioned through this strategy

Body Worn Video

Digital Forensics Intelligence Gathering

New Intelligence Analysis Capabilities

CSAM Message Analysis

Video Conferencing

Victim Portal

Mobile HR Self-Service

Auto-transcription and translation

National Applications

Digitised Investigations

Estates Modernisation

Transactional Website

Officer Mobility

Facial Matching

Nominal Search

Semi-Automated THRIVE Assessment

Digital Evidence Sharing Capability

Enterprise Document Search

New Digital Contact Channels

Prevention Insights and interventions

Digital Enablers delivered... and envisioned through this strategy

Unified Digital Communication

Golden Nominal and Linked Data Platform

Next Gen Command and Control Solution

Digital Identity and Access Management

Data Science

Core Infrastructure

Cross-sector data platform

Low-Code Application Platforms

Cyber Security

Robotic Process Automation

New Finance and HR System

NLEDS

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Investment

The Digital Strategy published in 2023 estimated that £380 million of investment would be required between 2023/24 and 2027/28. This figure, set out in an overarching Outline Business Case, was based on Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) estimates and assumptions regarding sequencing and requirements.

To date, digital investment has enabled us to deliver £114 million of the estimated £228 million required for the period 2023/24 to 2025/26. This investment has supported key technology successes, including maintaining a secure and resilient infrastructure and supporting critical services and applications used daily by our officers and staff. However, during this period, significant technology investment has been deferred, including Command and Control Solution Replacement and the procurement of the Enabling Policing of the Future (Core Ecosystem). These two programmes will enter their respective formal procurement phases in 26/27 and 27/28 and represent significant investment, opportunity cost and risk for the Organisation. They also however offer substantial new capabilities and efficiency opportunities.

Key Priorities for the Strategy and broader Vision 2030

Key priorities for 2026/27 include:

- Ongoing rollout of Body Worn Video.
- Further improvements to our Core Operating Systems, Criminal History and National Intelligence databases.
- Continued modernisation of our Contact systems to provide a more responsive and user-focused service, including self-service options.
- Continued investment in AI-driven automation to eliminate duplication and improve processes
- Maximising the use and value of data and data insights.

We also anticipate ongoing support from the Scottish Government to fund the rollout of the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP), which will replace the existing Airwave network with a new mobile network providing secure voice and broadband data services to emergency services.

The changing nature of technology is impacting the type of investment required, with trends towards Software as a Service (SaaS) and cloud-based solutions resulting in decreased capital expenditure (Capex) requirements and increased operational expenditure (Opex) requirements.

To ensure that the policing model and Vision 2030 are delivered, we must continue to unlock the value of digital data and enabling technology, while maintaining public trust and confidence in their ethical and responsible use.

Over the last decade, digital technology and data have become integral to policing's ability to deliver an effective and efficient service. The service must continue to rely on data and technology to transform our ability to capture evidence and protect the public.

The need for prioritised investment in digital, data and technology continues to grow. Alongside this, we must find effective mechanisms to prioritise and manage demand. To deliver ongoing value for money, we must create opportunities for greater collaboration between police, partners and industry, learning lessons and taking action where necessary.

The policing landscape will continue to evolve. Police reform creates the opportunity for a national policing organisation focused on providing digital capabilities that are effective and efficient at serving the sector's

data and technology needs, guided by the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) Science and Technology and Digital strategies.

Our digital ambitions, enabling pillars and underpinning priorities are clearly defined and designed to be used by the sector, informing decisions at every level across policing. This strategy provides a clear summary of our digital ambition and aspiration – our roadmap and what we intend to achieve by 2030.

Sustained investment will be required to realise the full benefits of Vision 2030. The period to 2028 will focus on scaling successful capabilities, embedding artificial intelligence and automation, modernising core operational platforms, and strengthening collaborative services across the public sector.

Funding Principles and Governance

To ensure transparency and accountability in the use of public funds, all digital investment decisions will be subject to robust governance processes. This includes:

- Alignment with national and local policing priorities.
- Regular review and challenge of business cases to ensure value for money.
- Ongoing monitoring of benefits realisation and risk management.
- Engagement with external auditors and stakeholders to provide assurance.

We will also seek to diversify funding sources where appropriate, including exploring opportunities for joint investment with other emergency services, public sector partners and industry.

While the roadmap highlights current programmes and priorities, it should be viewed as a living plan. Emerging technology, legislative change, operational demands and opportunities for innovation will continue to shape delivery through to 2028 and beyond.

Investment in Skills and Capability

Recognising that technology alone cannot deliver transformation, we will invest in developing the digital skills and capabilities of our workforce. This includes:

- Ongoing training and professional development in digital, data and technology.
- Supporting staff and officers to adapt to new ways of working.
- Promoting a culture of innovation and continuous improvement.
- Countering skills atrophy as a result of automation and AI.

Links to Government Guidance

For further information on public sector investment and digital transformation, please refer to:

- HM Treasury Green Book: Central Government Guidance on Appraisal and Evaluation HM Treasury Green Book
- National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) Digital Policing Strategy NPCC Digital Policing Strategy 2025-2030

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Future Vision #1

This scenario shows how we might, in the future, respond to an assault. Technology-enabled policing ensured swift action, accurate documentation and continuous victim support. What began as a chaotic incident in a pub ended with a streamlined investigation and a well-informed victim.

Victim Focussed

Enquiry Focussed

1 ASSAULT OCCURS

- Live video integration and streaming
- Enhanced Digital Contact

After an assault the landlord presses the pub's panic button providing Police Scotland with instant access to the pub's CCTV feeds. Simultaneously, a witness inside the pub calls 999 and began streaming the incident from their phone.

2 RESPONSE DISPATCHED

- Video analysis
- AI Summarisation
- Data integration

Within seconds, the control room's AI begins analysing the videos and information obtained, identifying key individuals, summarising the incident and flagging potential threats. This information is relayed to officers dispatched, allowing for rapid, informed decision-making.

3 STATEMENT TAKEN

- Body Worn Video
- AI Transcription
- AI Translation

Officers arrive and locate the victim, administer first aid and began taking a statement. Using their body-worn camera, live translation was activated for the victim, who spoke limited English. The camera also transcribed the entire interaction in real time, ensuring nothing was missed.

4 EVIDENCE GATHERED

- Smart labels
- Mobile capabilities
- Digital Smart Lockers

Meanwhile, an officer seizes evidence. Each item is geo-tagged, photographed and automatically labelled by the officer's smart device. The productions are securely stored in a digital smart locker, ensuring chain-of-evidence integrity.

5 VICTIM SUPPORTED

- Integrated data
- Third sector collaboration

The victim receives a text message from an official Police Scotland account. It includes the crime reference number, officers contact details, and links to support services and victim guidance materials.

6 SUSPECT TAKEN INTO CUSTODY

- Single Search
- Health monitoring system
- Robotic Process Automation
- Mobile integration with operational systems

Back at the station, the reporting officer considers further lines of enquiry, researches the suspect and auto-populates forensic request forms. Officers arrest the suspect and bring him into a Digital Custody Centre.
Inside the centre, the suspect's health was monitored via in-cell life sensors. Every movement, from booking to medical checks, was logged through QR code scans by support staff, ensuring transparency and accountability.

7 SUSPECT CHARGED/VICTIM UPDATED

- AI Assistant
- Public Sector collaboration

Later that evening, the victim receives another update: the suspect has been identified, charged and reported. The police report, reviewed by AI for errors, is sent to the Procurator Fiscal. The victim is also sent digital information explaining the next steps, including videos on court processes and legal terminology.

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Future Vision #2

This scenario shows how we might, in the future, respond to a report of a missing person. Stephen hasn't arrived at work, prompting concern from his boss. Technology-enabled policing delivered a fast, efficient response to a life-threatening situation, resulting in a person being located in time and provided support.

Public Focussed

Enquiry Focussed

1 DETAILS OBTAINED

- Enhanced Digital Contact

A call to Police Scotland triggered a chain of technology-driven actions. Within seconds, a secure link arrived on the boss's phone, asking for details including name, photo, social media profiles and next of kin.

2 SYSTEMS SEARCHED

- Data Integration
- AI searching & summarisation
- AI Assistant

AI systems instantly scanned police databases and linked into NHS and Partner systems – a history of suicidal ideations was found. A risk profile was automatically created while officers were dispatched straight to the address.

3 DETAILS CIRCULATED

- Robotic Process Automation
- Mobile integration with operational systems

A branded Police Scotland text pinged the missing person's phone: "You've been reported missing. Contact us immediately." At the same time, the individual's image and circumstances were pushed to local officers' work devices and to the on-duty sergeant and inspector for rapid triage.

4 SEARCHES STARTED

- Mobile capabilities

A drone with thermal technology was used to get an early insight into any persons in the home address. There was No sign of a disturbance and no persons within. A joiner was called to gain entry to allow officers to search for additional information to assist with the incident.

5 PUBLIC APPEAL

- Public Sector collaboration
- Private Sector collaboration

Police systems worked in the background sending automated requests to bus and taxi firms, DVLA, phone networks, and insurance databases. The missing person's photo was uploaded to public-space CCTV, and mobile response vehicle systems, with Live Facial Recognition enabled.

6 PERSON LOCATED

- AI automation
- Remote contact
- Video analysis

The missing person's car is at nearby hills. Mountain Rescue was mobilised while AI POLSA analysed terrain mapping and predicted likely routes. A drone swept the rugged landscape with thermal imaging and object recognition, locating someone. The drone pilot spoke through its speaker and confirmed the Identity of the missing person. GPS coordinates and a What3Words location flashed to rescuers.

7 SUPPORT PROVIDED

- Third sector collaboration
- Robotic Process Automation

A medic pack dropped from the sky, and the rescuers arrived providing first aid. Robotic Process Automation generated urgent support referrals to partners, including social work, NHS professionals and third sector partners using automated information sharing processes. The missing person was given an urgent video appointment with mental health professionals to identify what support they needed.

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If you have any queries about the Strategy, please contact us at

ChiefDigitalInformationOfficer@scotland.police.uk

Digital, Data and Technology Strategy 2025-2028 Consultation

Public Insights

Strategy, Insight and Engagement

Professionalism and Enabling Services, Police Scotland

August 2026

Contact: InsightEngagement@scotland.police.uk

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- Purpose of the Insight Pack
- Context
- Stakeholder Feedback
- Public Feedback
- Strategic Reflections
- Recommendations
- Appendixes

Executive Summary

- There is a general consensus around the proposed direction, evidenced by high overall agreement across both stakeholders (92%) and the general public (74%). This mandate demonstrates broad confidence in the strategic vision and its core objectives.
- The primary driver for public investment is the need to minimise administrative burdens and streamline routine paperwork. By using digital tools to automate background tasks, police officers can spend less time on operational admin and dedicate more time to visible, high-impact community policing.
- Public trust and ongoing support are dependant on maintaining human-centric policing and ethical standards. Key factors include preserving face-to-face contact in local communities, enforcing strict data privacy protections, and maintaining transparent communication to resolve public concerns regarding AI and automation.
- To overcome public concerns and build trust, strategic messaging must explicitly position AI and digital tools as 'enablers' that assist and free up officers for human-centric community presence rather than replacing them. All public-facing materials should be communicated in clear, plain English to eliminate misinterpretation and foster long-term public confidence.

Purpose of the Insight Pack

- This insight pack summarises public and stakeholder consultation feedback for the Police Scotland Digital, Data and Technology Strategy 2025-2028 and highlights implications for consideration and governance decisions.
- The consultation sought views on the proposed refreshed strategy, specifically focusing on harnessing technology to enhance operational effectiveness, ensuring ethical data use, and building public trust.
- This pack:
  - Summarises consultation responses from both the general public and partners.
  - Quantifies key themes from open-text survey responses.
  - Highlights main drivers of community support and technological concerns.
  - Identifies areas where digital governance, robust oversight, and inclusive design may benefit from clarification.
- The findings support leaders ahead of presenting the final draft to the Scottish Police Authority Board in September 2026 to determine next steps.

Consultation Approach

- From 30th of July to 27th of August, we received **1,144** responses from the public, as well as **13** stakeholders, which included organisations and community groups.
- The consultation was hosted on Police Scotland's Engagement Hub through an online survey open to both the public and stakeholders, enabling broad reach and structured analysis of responses.
- The consultation was promoted through stakeholder networks and direct outreach, with reminders issued to maximise participation.
- As with all consultations, respondents are self-selecting and not statistically representative but provide valuable insight into public and stakeholder perspectives. The high number and quality of responses shows there is a real interest on how we plan to progress in this space.

Consultation Questions

Respondents were asked to consider whether they agreed with the four elements of the strategy, highlight public priorities as well as how the use of digital, data and technology would impact their experiences with policing in Scotland:

1. New and innovative solutions to prevent and detect crime
2. Digital reimagination to maximise officer and staff efficiency
3. Reform the citizen experience and engagement
4. Enhance multi-agency collaboration and partnership

Analysis Methodology

- All open text comments were read individually, and thematically analysed to identify, analyse, and interpret patterns and themes in the qualitative data. (Braun & Clarke, 2022)*.
- Quantitative analysis was undertaken using Likert scale responses to assess levels of agreement across each consultation question. Responses were aggregated and presented as percentages (or by count for stakeholders) to illustrate overall sentiment and enable comparison between questions.

* V. Braun, V. Clarke. (2022). Thematic Analysis. A Practical Guide London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 376 s.

Why a Digital, Data and Technology Strategy?

- The strategy plays a vital role in delivering our 2030 Vision for policing in Scotland which is for safer communities, less crime, supported victims and a thriving workforce.
- In an era of rapid technological advancement and evolving public expectations, the role of digital and data within policing has never been more critical.
- This refreshed strategy will set out our renewed vision for harnessing technology and information to enhance operational effectiveness, improve public trust and confidence, and support our workforce in delivering outstanding policing services.

Why Consult with Stakeholders and the Public?

- We have committed to using stakeholder and public feedback, along with other research and evidence, to develop and shape the final Digital, Data and Technology Strategy.
- This feedback on the draft strategy will also inform future public engagement on future proposals brought forward as part of our implementation of this strategy.
- Findings will be considered by Police Scotland, before being presented to the Scottish Police Authority Board in September 2026. We will update our Engagement Hub with progress made.

Stakeholder Feedback

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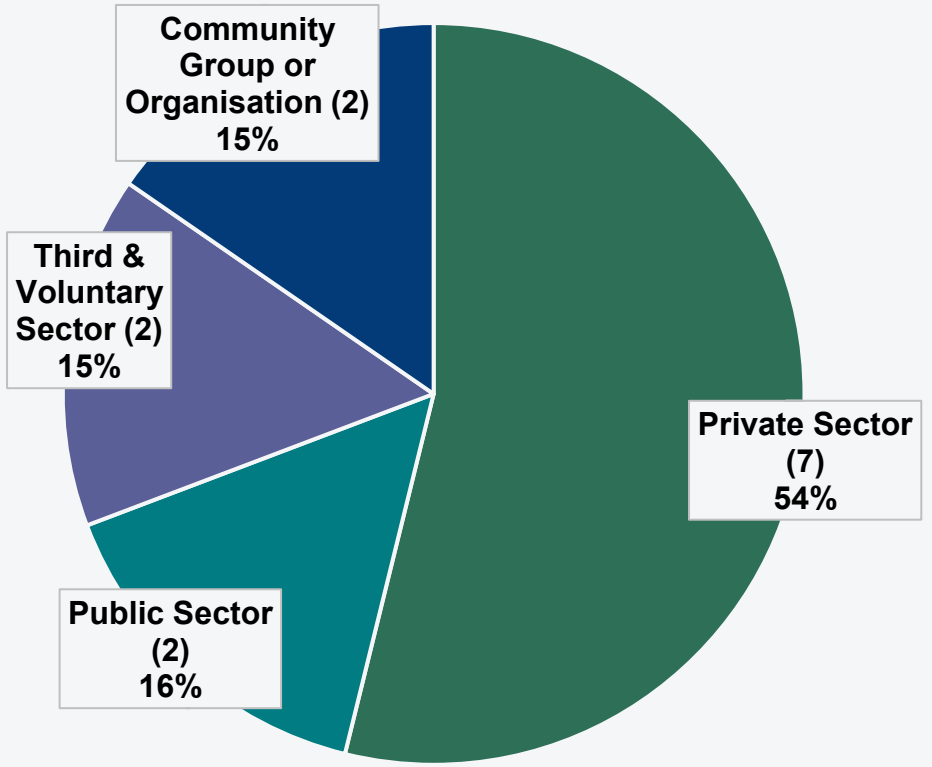
Stakeholder Profile

13 stakeholders responded to the consultation on the draft strategy:

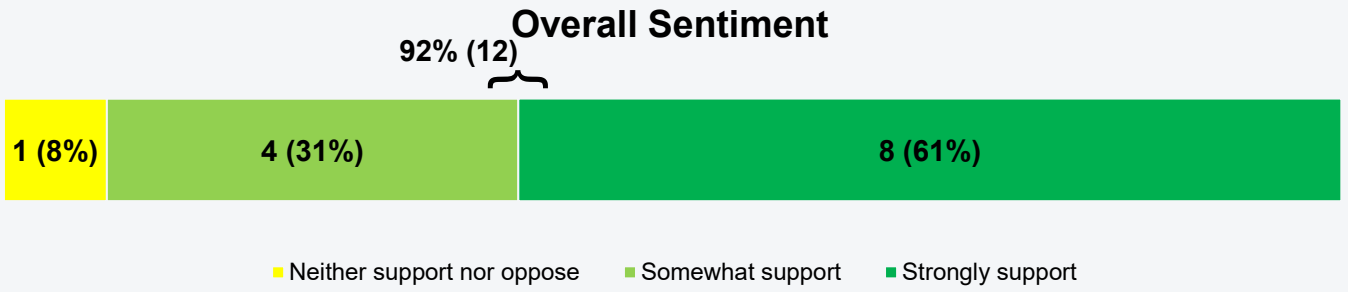
- Aberdeenshire Council
- Dejero
- Hareshaw Village Community Group
- Lambhill Stables
- Neighbourhood Watch Scotland
- NiCE Public Safety & Justice
- NHS Lothian
- Palo Alto Networks
- SCC
- Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations
- Splunk (part of the Cisco Group)
- Wyvis One Estate Limited
- Zscaler

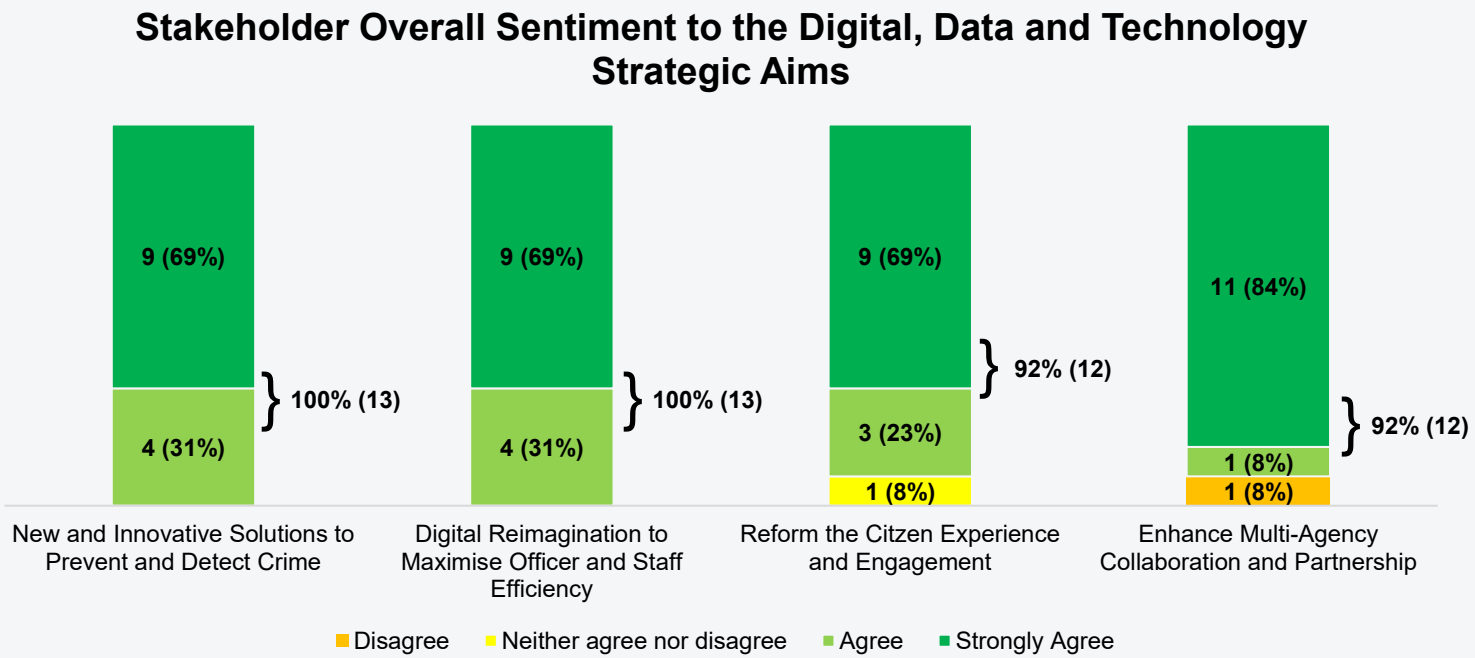
Stakeholder's Organisation Type



We worked extensively with partners and stakeholders to develop our last Digital Strategy which focused on moving from 'Doing Digital to Being Digital', recognising the evolving role that digital, data and technology has within an organisation. This refreshed draft was open to partners and stakeholders to take part.

Stakeholder Overall Sentiment





n=13

- The data shows that stakeholders generally agree (92%, n=12) with the strategy as a whole.
- Agreement is strongest on the need to focus on New and Innovative Solutions to Prevent and Detect Crime and Digital Reimagination to Maximise Officer and Staff Efficiency.
- Insights indicate that stakeholder support of the strategy is dependent upon how the data is managed, stored and governed.

Stakeholder Open Text Analysis – Summary

- Feedback highlights the need for Police Scotland to **keep up to date** on a strategic level with data and technology.

- There was an acknowledgement that whilst the implementation of technology is a good thing, it must be done in a way that **frees officers to engage with the public more.**

- Organisations overwhelmingly supported the need for multi-agency collaboration, citing the benefits of **data sharing between organisations** to create more cohesive services and **better lines of communication.**

- There was a strong emphasis on **better collaboration needed between Police Scotland, the NHS and Neighbourhood Watch** respectively.

Verbatim comments – Stakeholders

"Unifying data across the complete digital footprint within Police Scotland - all physical devices, applications and infrastrucutre will be critical to provide visibility, context and to allow informed decision making. Imprtantly, this data should be owned and managed by Police Scotland within the confines of country sovereignty Ultimately, unfied data as the foundation accessed across the whole organisation will provided a fully Digital Resilient solution irrespective of vendors and technologies“

"I think it can only help as we move forward, increased communication between police and public services such as NHS, social work and other agencies would be really helpful when trying to establish how to help people that end up in our care.
I work with people woth learning disabilties in a community Ld nursing role, and they often end up dealing with the police which can cause further trauma. If i could help share a snap shot of how to desclate situations that could help both the person and police involvement this would be really helpful.”

“Digital inclusion is broader than being online. Barriers can include access to suitable devices and affordable connectivity, skills and confidence, accessibility, literacy, language and the need for support from another person. In a policing or justice context these barriers can be heightened by distress, trauma or difficult personal circumstances. A service being available digitally does not necessarily mean it is accessible or usable.”

“It should improve communication.”

“Done well, greater use of digital technology and data has the potential to make policing more responsive and more accessible. Citizens increasingly expect to interact with services on their own terms - reporting incidents online, tracking case progress, accessing support without needing to visit a station or wait on hold. Meeting that expectation builds trust as much as it improves efficiency.”

“…regular contact with local police teams is very sporadic, and it should be an everyday thing, we need better direct contact with area police teams”

“In certain cases I agree but not in all circumstances. Police need to be seen by the public to assure that they are there to support their communities.”

“Digital tools give me safer, more flexible ways to report incidents, especially in sensitive cases like domestic abuse. AI helps police pull evidence together faster, speeding up investigations and progress updates. Automated queries free up service centre staff, and smarter custody monitoring supports detainee welfare. Bodies like NPCC, PDS, and College of Policing help ensure proven, fit-for-purpose tools reach forces without lengthy delays. Overall, DDaT reduces friction, for the public reporting and for staff investigating, so time goes where it matters most.”

“The improved use of data enables police services to better understand community needs, identify emerging trends, and deliver more targeted and proactive services. Technology can also increase transparency through real-time updates on cases and incidents, helping to build trust and confidence in policing.“

Public Feedback

OFFICIAL

Public Profile

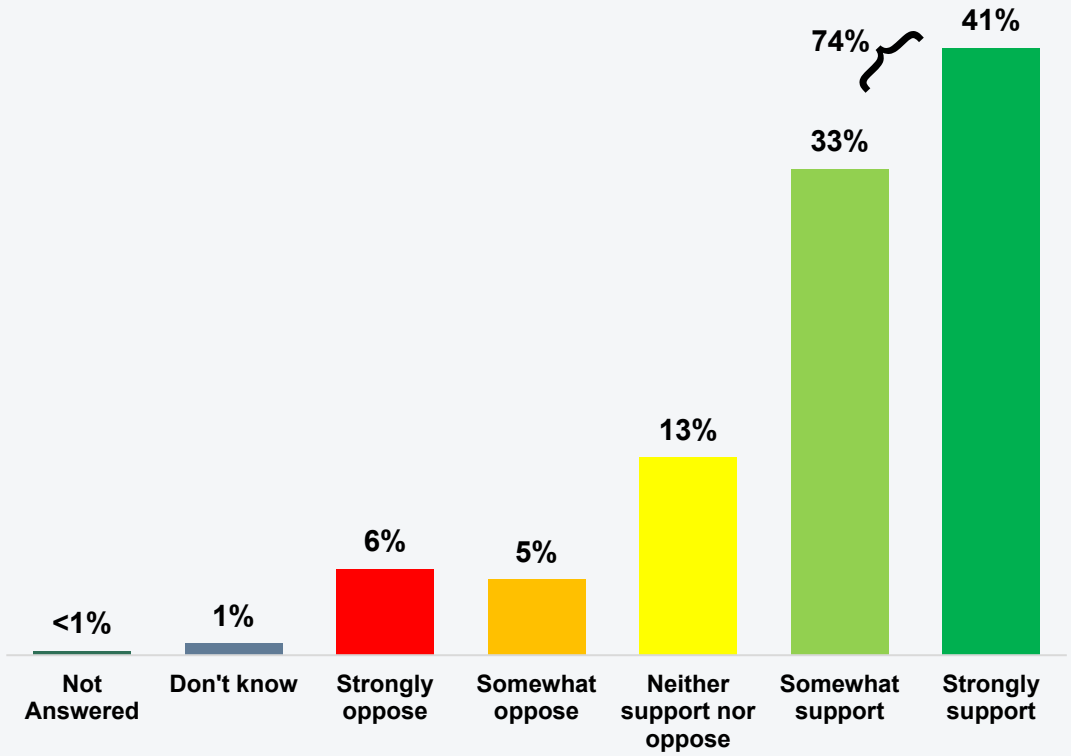
The consultation received **1,144** responses from the public.

	Sample size	Sample %
Gender		
Man	614	53%
Woman	493	43%
Prefer not to say	25	2%
Non-binary (gender neutral)	4	<1%
Other	6	1%
Age		
Under 16 years old	4	<1%
16-18 years old	1	<1%
19-24 years old	4	<1%
25-34 years old	9	1%
35-44 years old	41	4%
45-54 years old	130	11%
55-64 years old	330	29%
65-74 years old	401	35%
75-84 years old	186	16%
85 years old and over	8	1%
Prefer not to say	23	2%
Total	**1137**	**100%**

	Sample size	Sample %
Ethnicity		
White Scottish	861	76%
White other British	170	15%
Any other white ethnic group	18	2%
White Irish	13	1%
White Polish	2	<1%
Indian, Indian Scottish or Indian British	1	<1%
African, African Scottish or African British	3	<1%
Any mixed or multiple ethnic group	5	<1%
Black, Black Scottish or Black British	2	<1%
Arab, Arab Scottish or Arab British	1	<1%
Any Other Asian	1	<1%
Chinese, Chinese Scottish or Chinese British	1	<1%
Caribbean, Caribbean Scottish or Caribbean British	1	<1%
Other	19	2%
Prefer not to say	31	3%
Total	**1129**	**100%**

Overall Sentiment

Q: To what extent do you support or oppose the strategy?

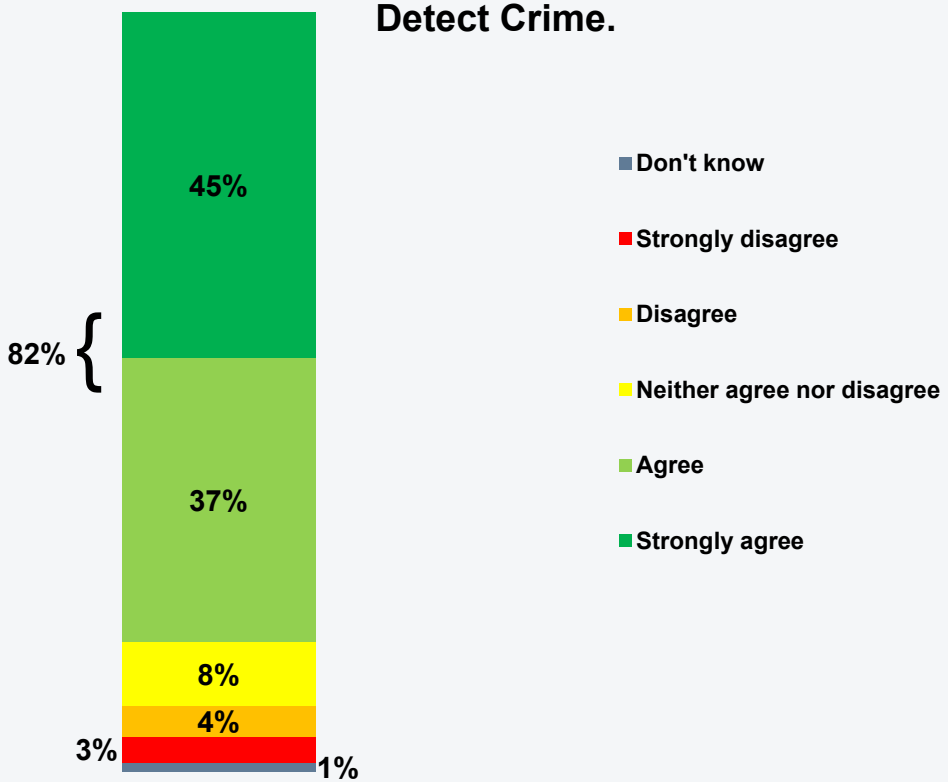


n=1144

- There is a broad support from the public (74%, n=1144) in relation to the strategy as a whole.
- It is, however, important to recognise that around one quarter of respondents have either opposed the strategy (11%) or remained neutral (13%).
- Whilst there is a broad agreement it is worth noting that their sentiment's come with caveats when reviewing the open-ended text.

New and Innovative Solutions to Prevent and Detect Crime

Q: To what extent do you agree or disagree that this is an objective we should be focussing on: New and Innovative Solutions to Prevent and Detect Crime.



n=1144

- There was an overwhelming agreement from the public that Police Scotland should focus their new Digital, Data and Technology strategy around new and innovative solutions to prevent and detect crimes (82%, n=939).
- This strategic aim received the most support of agreement compared to the other three, but it is worth noting that all are all well supported.

New and Innovative Solutions to Prevent and Detect Crime – Open Text Analysis

- Respondents' feedback reflected an awareness of the benefits that technological advancements can offer policing. Overall, there were many positive comments relating to the implementation of new technology in policing, mainly surrounding the need to 'keep up' with digital advancements in crime in today's society.

- Respondents shared some apprehension and fear over losing the human side to policing. For example, losing face to face interactions with police and police presence among communication. Some shared that police presence within communities is still the best way to deter crime.

- Concerns were raised around the trust and relatability over new and emerging technologies, and how these would be used in a public setting and what data they would gather. Many comments shared that while they apprehensive, as long as appropriate safeguards are in place and they are communicated well, then it would still be an overall positive for the benefit it would bring to policing.

- As well as concerns over the security, concerns were raised over barriers that need to considered when adapting to new technologies

- Respondents emphasised the need for complete transparency, where possible, to ensure public safety and how any new technology will be used. Face to face communication was raised as a way for these updates to be delivered, by utilising community partnerships with policing for in person updates.

New and Innovative Solutions to Prevent and Detect Crime – Verbatim Comments

"Any strategy to prevent crime is important and I know how much cyber crime is happening these days."

"It's important to have a good balance between online safety and traditional policing."

"These innovations need to be well tested and to complement, not replace, the skills of detectives."

"I always like to hear that police activity is met with success in the investigations they have to go, and of course you have to keep up to date with technology."

"The overriding aim for Policing is to prevent crime, and where that hasn't been possible, to then detect and give victims the closure they seek. Using innovation to aid this is rightly a key priority."

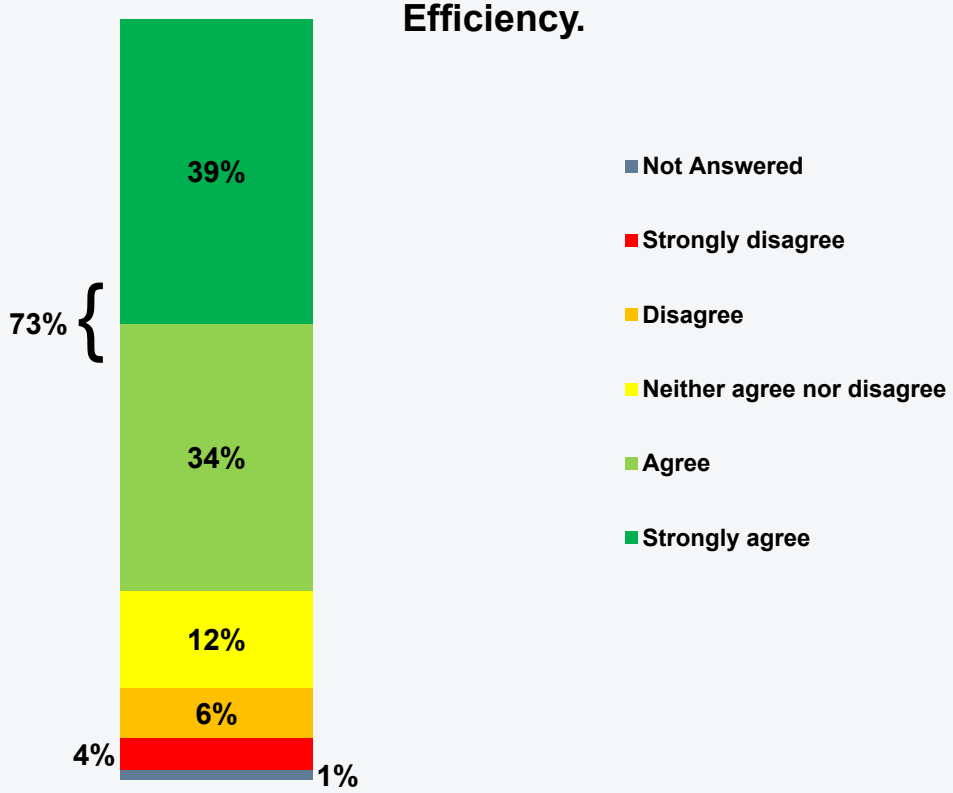
"I support the responsible use of new technology to prevent and detect crime, but innovation should not be treated as an objective in itself. New systems should be demonstrably necessary, proportionate, independently scrutinised and capable of being audited."

"DDaT should be used as an additional tool where required. It must not be relied upon to replace or exclude conventional policing methods. Neither should it replace existing methods of communicating with the public."

Digital Reimagination to Maximise Officer & Staff Efficiency

- Almost three quarters of the public (73%, n=843) agreed that maximising officer and staff efficiency through digital reimagination should be a focus of the refreshed strategy.

Q: To what extent do you agree or disagree that this is an objective we should be focussing on: Digital Reimagination to Maximise Officer & Staff Efficiency.



n=1144

Digital Reimagination to Maximise Officer & Staff Efficiency – Open Text Analysis

- Many respondents shared positive views on the introduction to the usage of new technologies, and many are happy to utilise them in order for policing to modernise with society. However, while people are happy for police to utilise new and emerging technologies, there is the hope that this will in turn lead to a larger police presence back in communities.

- Some respondents shared that new technology will be beneficial for police efficiency, so long as it does not lead to duplication of work for everyone involved.

- Respondents shared positive and encouraging feedback that the implementation of new technology will be an overall benefit to improving current systems and processes.

- Responses highlighted the need to ensure a human approach and community focus. Many respondents shared concerns and worries that the introductions of new technologies will further reduce ‘boots on the ground’ and take officers away from local communities.

- Some comments shared concerns over trust and security of data. Robust testing to ensure the technology is fit for purpose, it will be a good additional to help however should **not** be used as an alternative to traditional police work.

Digital Reimagination to Maximise Officer & Staff Efficiency – Verbatim Comments

"To improve quality of staff to perform efficiently this is a good thing"

"More officers in public would give the public more confidence in the police"

"The police must be more on top of digital technology to be able to stop "online" crime"

"By allowing front line data processing and capturing of data ensures they remain visible in their communities. Also, by using this data effectively tasking the correct response from business partners."

"With the increase in the crime rate and the decrease in members of Police Scotland every avenue must be explored to help the dwindling human resources work at optimum efficiency"

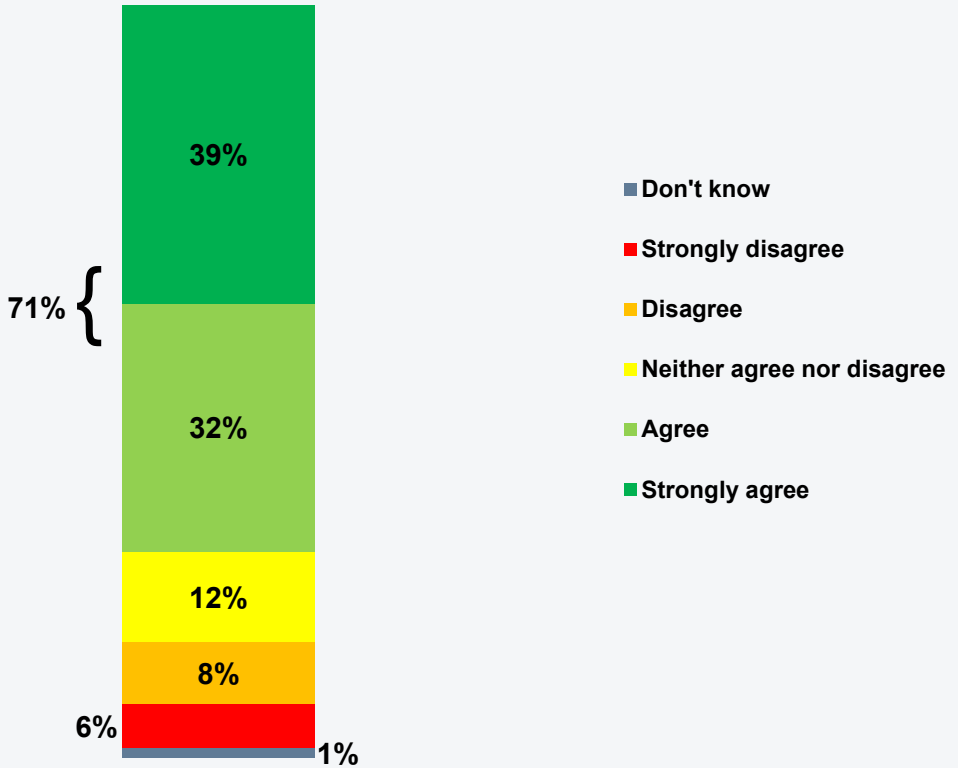
"Police organisations have to be progressive and keep ahead of the latest technologies. They have to understand the workings of people and organisations in order to fully investigate crime. IT technology can help them to do that but should never be a replacement for good traditional policing."

"Digital technology can substantially improve efficiency, but efficiency should not come at the expense of evidential integrity, accountability or proper investigation…

"The strategy should therefore measure success not simply through time or financial savings, but through improvements in accuracy, accountability, evidential integrity and public confidence."

Reform the Citizen Experience & Engagement

Q: To what extent do you agree or disagree that this is an objective we should be focussing on: Reform the Citizen Experience and Engagement.



n=1144

- A majority of the public (71%, n=816) are in agreement that the refreshed strategy should have a focus on reforming the citizen experience and engagement.

Reform the Citizen Experience & Engagement – Open Text Analysis

- Respondents shared the need for improved self-service and accessibility. For example, a self-servicing app for people to report crime as the current 101 system is a point of frustration for a lot of people. Additionally, an improved digital platform for victims was suggested.

- Multi channel engagement and communication. When referring to engagement and communication, many highlighted that the feedback loop is not great and people are left waiting extended periods of time for updates.

- Maintaining community policing and human connections is a key concern. As previously mentioned, there is a fear of losing personal interactions and communities being alienated. Some wondered how this would affect older people or those who do not use or understand newer technology.

- Ethical, responsible and care implementation and Trust AI and technology concerns. Similar to what has been mentioned previously, respondents shared concerns over new technology that is being implemented. To ensure it is done in an ethical way, it can be trusted and police consider and discuss concerns with the public to help ease concerns to answer any questions they may have.

- Many comments from respondents highlighted that the wording of the strategy should be reconsidered, as currently, it sounds like technology will replace face to face policing altogether. Additionally, many raised issues of the wording, at times, being difficult to understand and would prefer it if plain English was used throughout.

Reform the Citizen Experience & Engagement – Verbatim Comments

"There is a strong risk of alienation if communication is only digital. Sometimes a human voice can be very reassuring"

"My concern would be with this initiative ending up like many corporations where you cannot speak to a real person."

"Support for victims through DIGITAL services? People already spend too much time on the phone waiting to be connected (for non-emergencies). We just want to speak to an officer who will guide and progress matters appropriately. We would need to know more about how this 'ambition' will be rolled out."

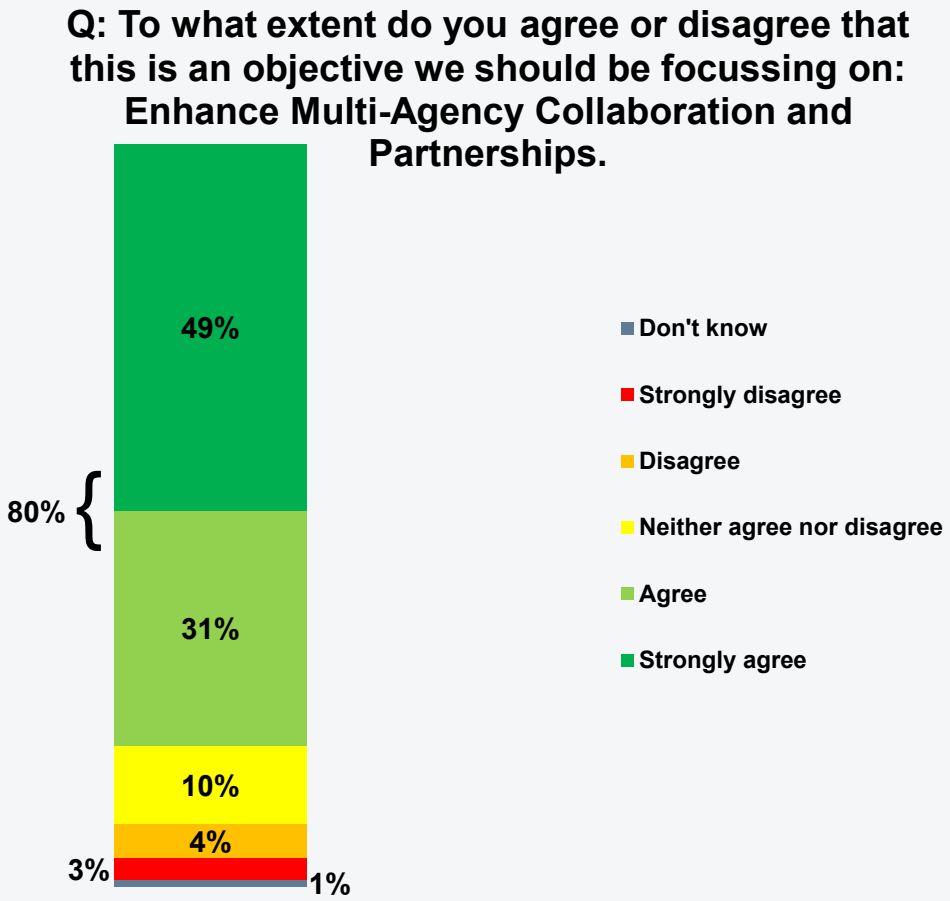
"Fully agree with improving digital channels to address all crime from minor to major although this may substantially increase police workload. The public would require feedback on any crime reporting which may contravene privacy laws."

"I can see the need to provide digital services to assist the public to access police services but am concerned at the suggestion that there will be fewer channels to contact service centres. Many older members of the community find digital services difficult to navigate, for good reason."

"Very little police/citizen interaction, police officers are unlikely to engage if spoken to. Very few kids would now go to an officer if they needed help."

Enhance Multi-Agency Collaboration & Partnership

- Enhancing multi-agency collaboration and partnership within the refreshed strategy was again, well supported with 4 in 5 respondents (80%, n=911) in agreement that it should be a focus.



Enhance Multi-Agency Collaboration & Partnership – Open Text Analysis

- Many comments from respondents emphasised that joint working and collaboration across other agencies will be a positive step forward. Comments shared that collaboration, while a positive for creating a more efficient system with resource sharing, there needs to be strong communication between agencies to ensure a smooth process for everyone involved.

- Multi-agency collaboration is generally viewed in a positive light with regard to detecting and preventing crime, but respondents expressed hope that this will mean there will be a higher police presence and officers are freed up to spend more time within communities. Respondents shared that as part of collaboration and partnerships, communities need to be engaged with as well.

- While data sharing across agencies will be beneficial for efficiency and resource sharing, some comments highlighted apprehension over data sharing, stating that certain types of information should only be shared when absolutely necessary and there should be strong safeguards in place to protect privacy where possible.

- Similar to the previous point, concerns were raised over data security, privacy and legal compliance. There needs to be safeguards in place, along with consistent governance and accountability.

Enhance Multi-Agency Collaboration & Partnership – Verbatim Comments

"More multi-agency collaboration and information sharing can only reduce crime (especially organised crime) and that can only be a good thing."

"Sharing data digitally will speed up processes and create a larger understanding of other bodies."

"More involvement in schools in local towns can help - I work at a High School and there hasn't been any workshops or connection with the students."

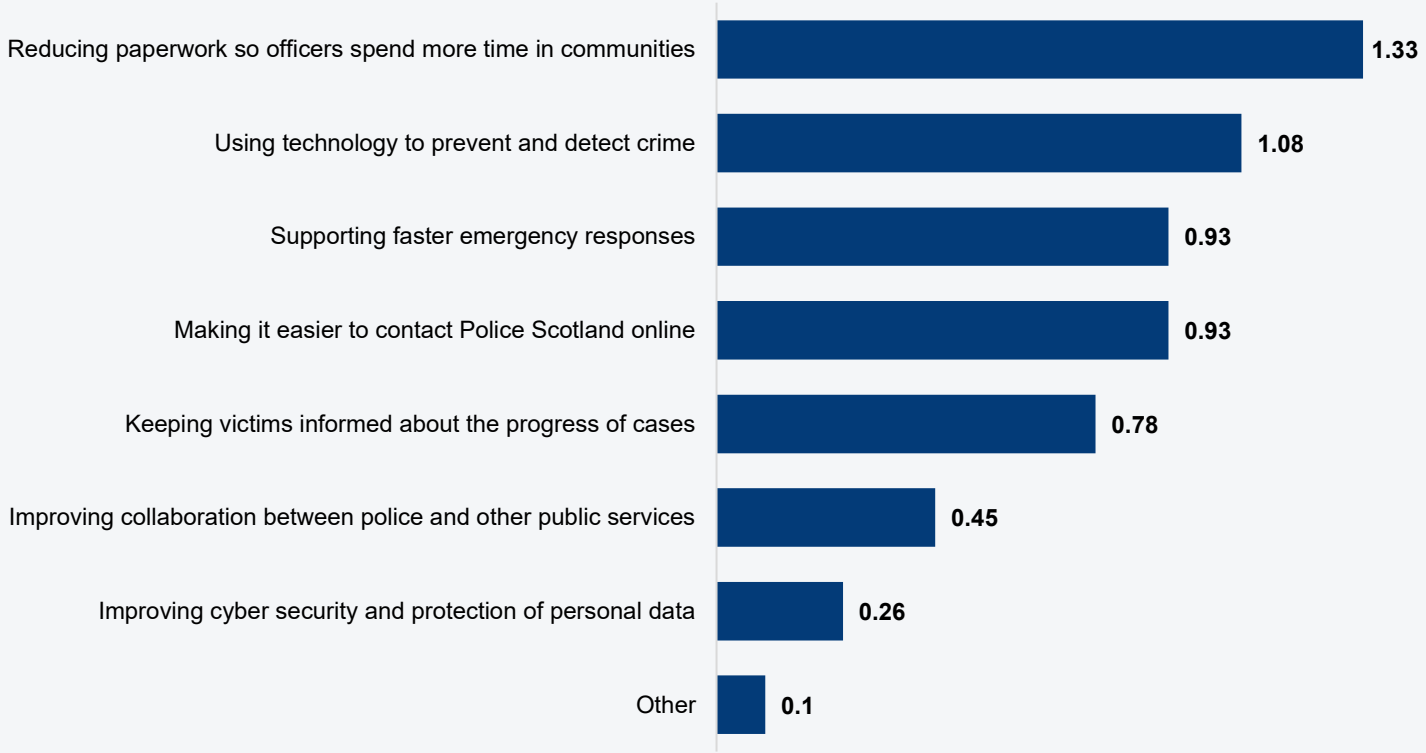
"Collaboration is the top priority to help prevent failures and a waste of resource. Not every event is a police matter, so immediate hand-off to the correct agency will provide a more seamless and professional interaction, getting the right help to each person."

"Effective collaboration between public bodies can improve policing, but increased information sharing must be accompanied by clear accountability…Multi-agency working should not create gaps in accountability where each organisation assumes that another body holds the relevant information or is responsible for preserving it."

"Sounds good, however I think the general feeling is that we could be turning in to a centralised state where individual rights to privacy are compromised. As long as this collaboration is targeted correctly with proper oversight it is of course a great idea"

Public Priorities

The Public's Highest Priorities for Digital Investment

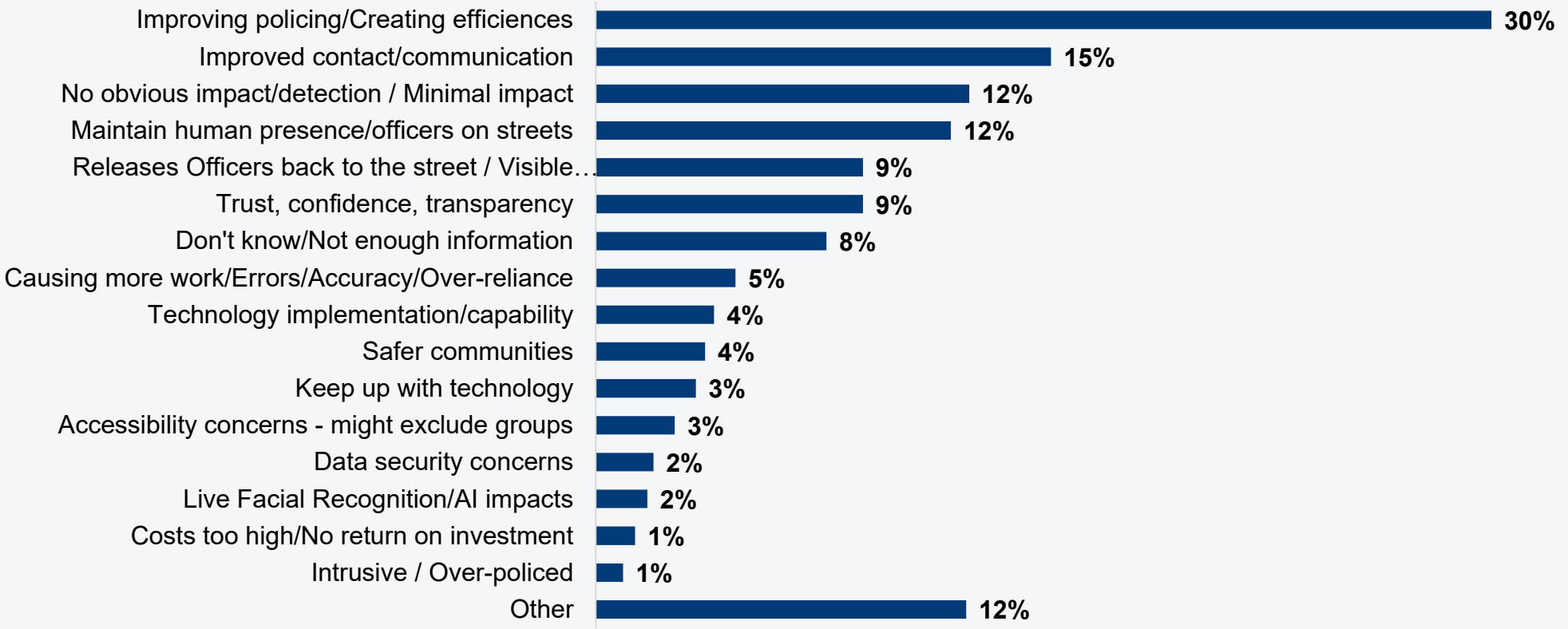


n=1,151

- Respondents were asked to rank which of the following areas should be the highest priority for digital investment. These rankings were weighted using a formula (see appendixes) to provide the final score for each area.
- 1,151 respondents felt that the highest priority for digital investment should be in reducing paperwork, enabling officers to spend more time in communities.
- The public would also like to see investment in technology to prevent and detect and crime, supporting faster response times and digital contact method with Police Scotland.
- By contrast, improving cyber security and protection of personal data was lower on the public's priorities.

Perceived Impacts of the Proposed use of Digital, Data and Technology

Question: How do you think the use of digital, data and technology will impact your experiences with policing in Scotland?



n=1,001 individual respondents who provided comments

Please note: Some respondents commented on more than one theme. Percentages, therefore, do not add up to 100%.

Perceived Impacts of the Proposed use of Digital, Data and Technology

Overall, views were more positive than negative, with digital, data and technology seen as an opportunity to improve policing while raising some concerns about its use.

Perceived positive impacts

- **Improving policing and creating efficiencies** was by far the strongest theme with 30% reflecting expectations that technology can make policing more effective and efficient by streamlining processes, minimising administrative tasks and making things more efficient, which in turn would improve service delivery. Respondents felt it would speed up reaction times and improve crime prevention. It was perceived that it could improve collaboration between partners by improved data sharing and linking opportunities.
- **Releases officers back to the street / visible policing** – Around one in ten respondents would expect to see improved visibility of police officers in the community with more officers being freed up to go back onto the beat. It was felt that by improving policing it would **make people feel safer in their own communities** with a reduction in community-based crime.
- **Trust, confidence and transparency** - Around one in 10 respondents view technology as a tool to improve trust and confidence in policing. It was felt that the use of technology to improve efficiencies and better prevent or detect crime and increase visibility would lead to greater public confidence.
- **Improved contact and communication** - 15% of respondents who commented expected to see an improvement in contact with the police, including ease and speed of contact offering up more ways to contact the police and reduce the amount of time spent waiting on 101 calls and paperwork. Suggestions included providing a chat function which could be more accessible than a phone call for those who do not speak English confidently, or an AI agent to help direct or answer frequently asked questions. Many felt that it could improve ongoing communication with the police by keeping people up to date with progress and outcomes.

Perceived Impacts of the Proposed use of Digital, Data and Technology

Main concerns

- **Maintaining a human presence** – over one in ten respondents (12%) still see visible officers and human interaction as an important part of effective policing. A main concern was that respondents did not want to see the more efficient use of technology, data and AI to replace police officer interaction with the public or reduced number of police officers on the streets.
- **Minimal or no obvious impact** – A sizable minority (12%) were unsure whether technology would make a noticeable difference to them or policing in general. This was not necessarily viewed as negative by some, with many not expecting to contact the police or have any interaction with them.
- **Don't know/No enough information** – Comments highlighted that there was a degree of uncertainty, with some (8%) feeling they lack sufficient information to assess the impact.
- **Errors, accuracy and over-reliance** – There were concerns that technology could introduce errors or lead to over-reliance on automated systems and AI. Some felt that it could have the opposite effect and cause greater scrutiny and more work for officers, in turn causing delays and longer policing times.
- **Other concerns** – Smaller groups mentioned issues such as accessibility, data security, AI/facial recognition and feeling like this approach would be intrusive with worries of over-policing.

Key point – Digital, data and technology is primarily associated with opportunities to improve policing, but public confidence depends on transparency, appropriate use and retaining the human element.

Verbatim Comments – Perceived Positive Impacts

"I think it will streamline communication with victims, speed up process …reduce paperwork carried out by officers and allow them more time to focus on policing issues"

"…I would expect it to make it easier to contact Police Scotland, receive timely updates about cases, obtain clearer information as a victim and potentially receive faster responses when incidents are reported."

"Hopefully it'll make the streets safer."

"It will make interacting with the police much faster and more transparent. .it should lead to a more visible police presence in the community. …I expect it to create a more proactive service that addresses local safety issues before they escalate into crises."

"…it has the potential to improve access to services, speed up investigations, reduce administrative burdens… and enable a more proactive approach… [It] should also strengthen partnership working …, allowing agencies to …deliver more coordinated support..."

"If done correctly, it will make me feel safer. I've had nothing but good encounters with police in Scotland. I have a high respect for officers working in Scotland."

"Increase confidence in the Police and improve the protection of communities."

"I perhaps would like to know how it is progressing without cause to contact someone."

"I would hope using technology would improve contact with the police. My experience using the non emergency number is not good - at times waited 20+ minutes for calls to he answered. Sometimes I just hang up."

"When I ask the police for help, the process would be seamless and I wouldn't have to repeat information. If I need an update on something I have reported, I will be able to check the website, or receive an email or text messages informing me that there has been progress."

"Hopefully it will make for less admin for officers so they can be out in the community showing their presence "

"I would love to see more Officers on the beat. This would make me feel safer."

Verbatim Comments – Concerns

"a visible, trusted human presence in communities is irreplaceable. Digital transformation can enhance policing, but it cannot substitute the legitimacy, reassurance and deterrence that come from officers physically present in neighbourhoods."

"I would not be happy with any reduction in the face to face policing though."

"technology should be seen as an enabler rather than a replacement for the human aspects of policing. Public trust, visibility and community engagement remain fundamental to policing by consent. Digital services must complement, not replace, meaningful interaction between officers and the communities they serve. It will also be important to ensure that all citizens can access policing services, including those who may be digitally excluded. Strong safeguards around data security, privacy and accountability will be essential to maintaining public confidence in how information is shared and used."

"I doubt it will make any difference to me personally given how "minor" crimes are not priority."

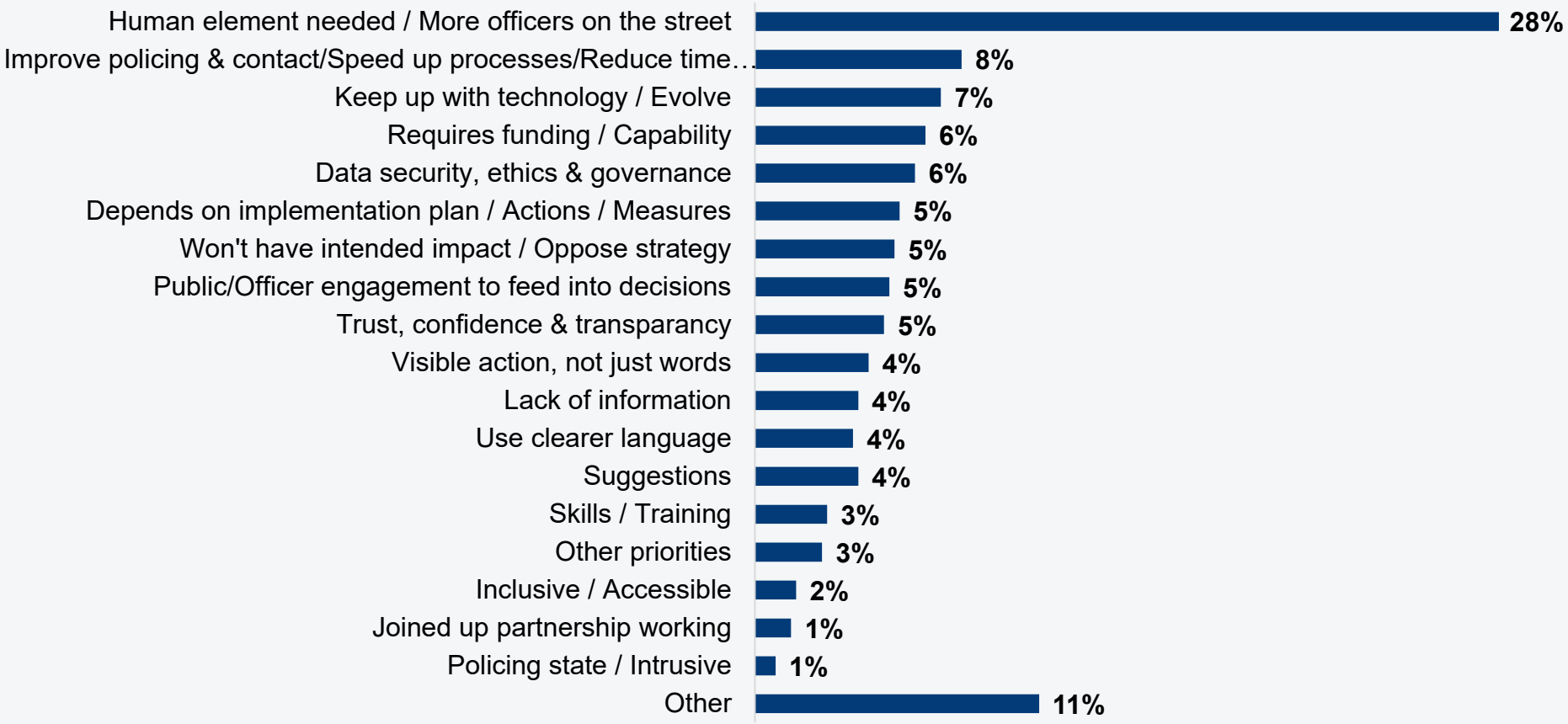
"I have grave concerns about the security of information in the current and future digital world"

"Digital, data and technology are often presented as solutions, but in reality they risk making policing in Scotland feel less personal, less accessible, and more intrusive. Instead of improving the service, there's a real possibility that technology will widen the gap between the public and the police. Online reporting may be convenient, but it also removes human contact at a time when people often need reassurance. Increased reliance on data systems introduces new opportunities for errors, misidentification, and unfair decision-making, especially when outdated or inaccurate information is fed into automated tools. Surveillance technologies and biometrics may be justified as "modernisation", but to many people they feel like a step toward over-policing and reduced privacy. And while digital tools are supposed to save time, they often create more bureaucracy, meaning officers spend even more time staring at screens instead of being visible in communities. Overall, the push toward digital policing risks delivering a service that is more remote, more automated, and less connected to the people it is meant to serve."

"I think digital, data and technology can improve my experience of policing by making services easier and quicker to access, improving communication and allowing information to be shared more effectively. However, it is important that digital services do not replace human contact completely. People should still be able to speak to someone when they need help, particularly in urgent, sensitive or complex situations. Technology should support policing while remaining secure, accessible and inclusive."

Other Comments

Question: Please provide any other comments you may have on the draft strategy



n=504 induvial respondents who provided comments

Please note: Some respondents commented on more than one theme. Percentages, therefore, do not add up to 100%.

Other Comments – Key Takeaways

Human interaction and having more police officers visible in the community and on the street is hugely important

- The theme that came through most strongly was the importance of human interaction and having more police officers on the streets. Respondents felt that use of data and technology should not replace human interaction. Trauma-informed communication was felt to be vital when interacting with victims and witnesses. It was particularly felt that technology should be used to reduce administrative work for police officers, facilitating officers to be more visible on the streets in local communities. There was genuine concern that AI and automation would be used to make efficiency savings and reduce police officer numbers.

Digital, data and technology brings many benefits, however, it essential that this is adequately funded, resourced and well planned

- Respondents acknowledged the benefits digital, data and technology could bring to policing. Some respondents felt that we should be keeping up to date with advances in technology. This was caveated with the fact that there needs to be adequate funding and resource to meet requirements, including ensuring that officers and staff are trained up appropriately. Having well thought out and transparent plans were considered important, particularly ensuring goals are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound (SMART), whilst keeping it simple.

Other Comments – Key Takeaways

A greater focus on data security, ethics and governance is important, providing full transparency and reassurance

- Respondents showed concerns about inappropriate use and poor management of personal data, as well as some worries around more specific tools such as live facial recognition, including bias and errors. Accessibility was also touched upon with concerns that we should not forget those who are less likely to use technology.

Ongoing public and police officer engagement is viewed as crucial to getting the right products for a successful outcome

- Some respondents highlighted that we should be speaking with the public and police officers who are involved in the areas of interest when designing solutions. It was felt that person-centred approach to design were key to success.

Clearer language and more information was sought after to improve understanding and reassure the public

- Respondents felt the strategy could be clearer with more plain English and more information provided.

Reassurance sought over unintended consequences

- There were general concerns that the strategy would not have the desired impact of reducing workload and allowing more police back to the streets, and instead some felt that it would cause additional scrutiny and work, as well as feeling more intrusive and over-policed. Some were opposed to the strategy on this basis and others felt that Police Scotland should be focussing on other priorities, such as getting the “basics” right.

Strategic Reflections

- **General support for the strategy**: Both stakeholders and individual members of the public strongly associated technology with making policing more efficient and effective, and hope technology can be used as a way to strengthen police contact, communication and engagement. However, this support was heavily dependant upon certain conditions.
- **Operational Expectations vs. Human Presence**: While 30% of respondents expect technology to improve efficiency and response times, 12% stress that visible, physical police presence and human interaction remains essential and must not be replaced by automated systems.
- **Divergent Perspectives**: Stakeholders focus primarily on operational possibilities and inter-agency data sharing, whereas individual members of the public focus on risks regarding privacy, data security, digital exclusion, and potential loss of personal contact.
- **Communication Gap**: The public demands clearer updates (resolving issues with 101 call waiting times) and expressed a preference for plain, non-jargon language so as not to misinterpret technology as a replacement for officers.
- **Governance and Data Ownership**: Stakeholder approval relies heavily on robust data management, sovereignty, and secure cross-agency interoperability (e.g., with NHS and local authorities).

Recommendations

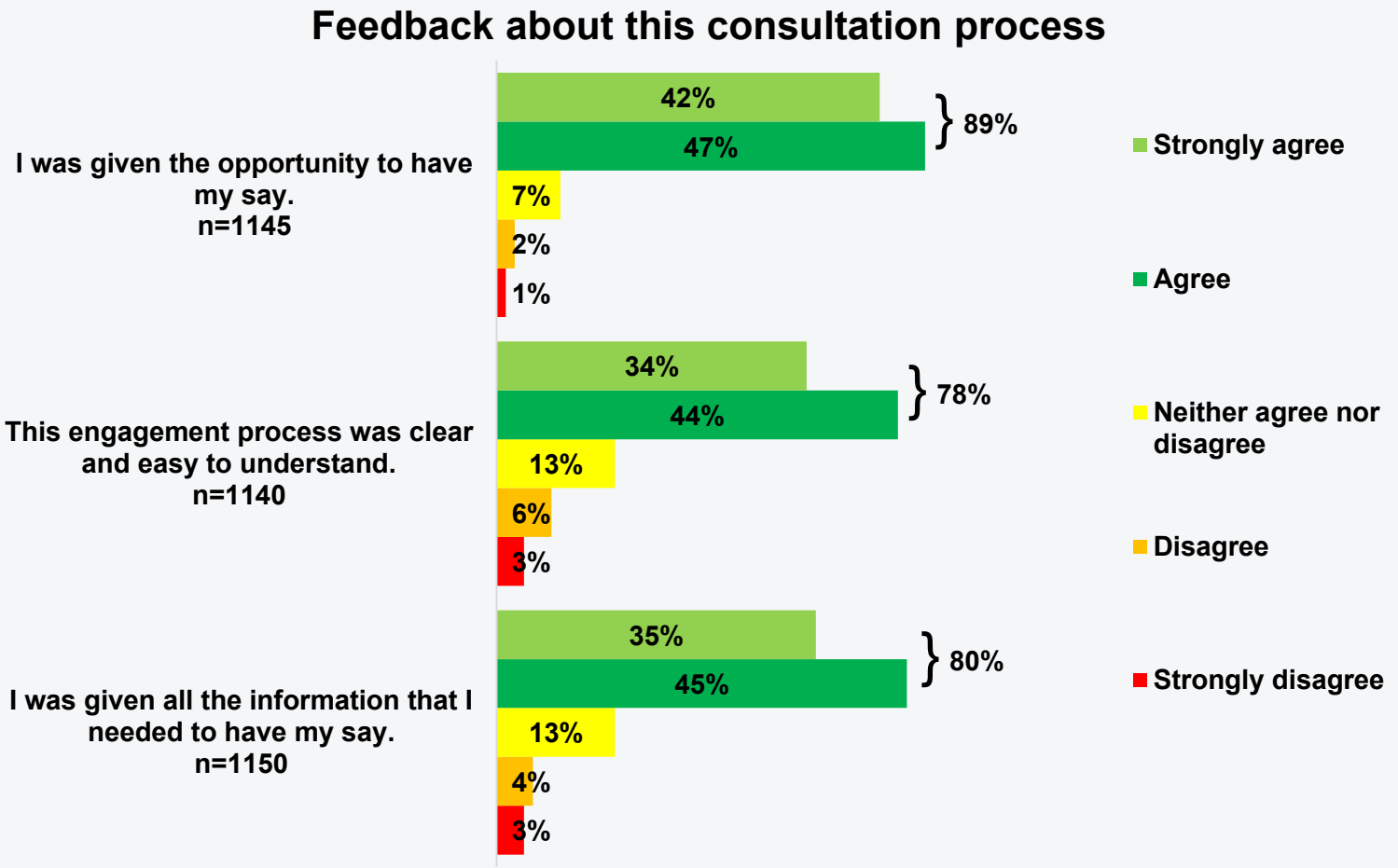
- **Reframe Messaging Around 'Enabling' Officers**: Explicitly clarify in strategic language that digital tools and AI are meant to assist and free up officers for the community, rather than replace human interactions or presence.
- **Simplify Language and Communication**: Review public-facing strategy materials using clear, plain English to alleviate misinterpretations and foster public confidence.
- **Strengthen Data Governance and Privacy Safeguards**: Establish transparent guidelines on data protection, sovereignty, and security to reassure both partner organisations and members of public.
- **Strengthen ethical commitments within the strategy through our Rights Based Approach**: provide information in the strategy on how Police Scotland will consider the potential benefits, risks and impacts of technology, ensuring that its use meets ethical standards such as fairness, necessity and proportionality, and our commitment to taking a trauma-informed approach to policing. Include our commitment to public and stakeholder engagement as part of our Rights Based Approach**,** building transparency, trust and confidence, and taking a person-centred approach.

Feedback about the Consultation Process

Amongst both members of the public and stakeholders, the percentage who agree or strongly agree they…

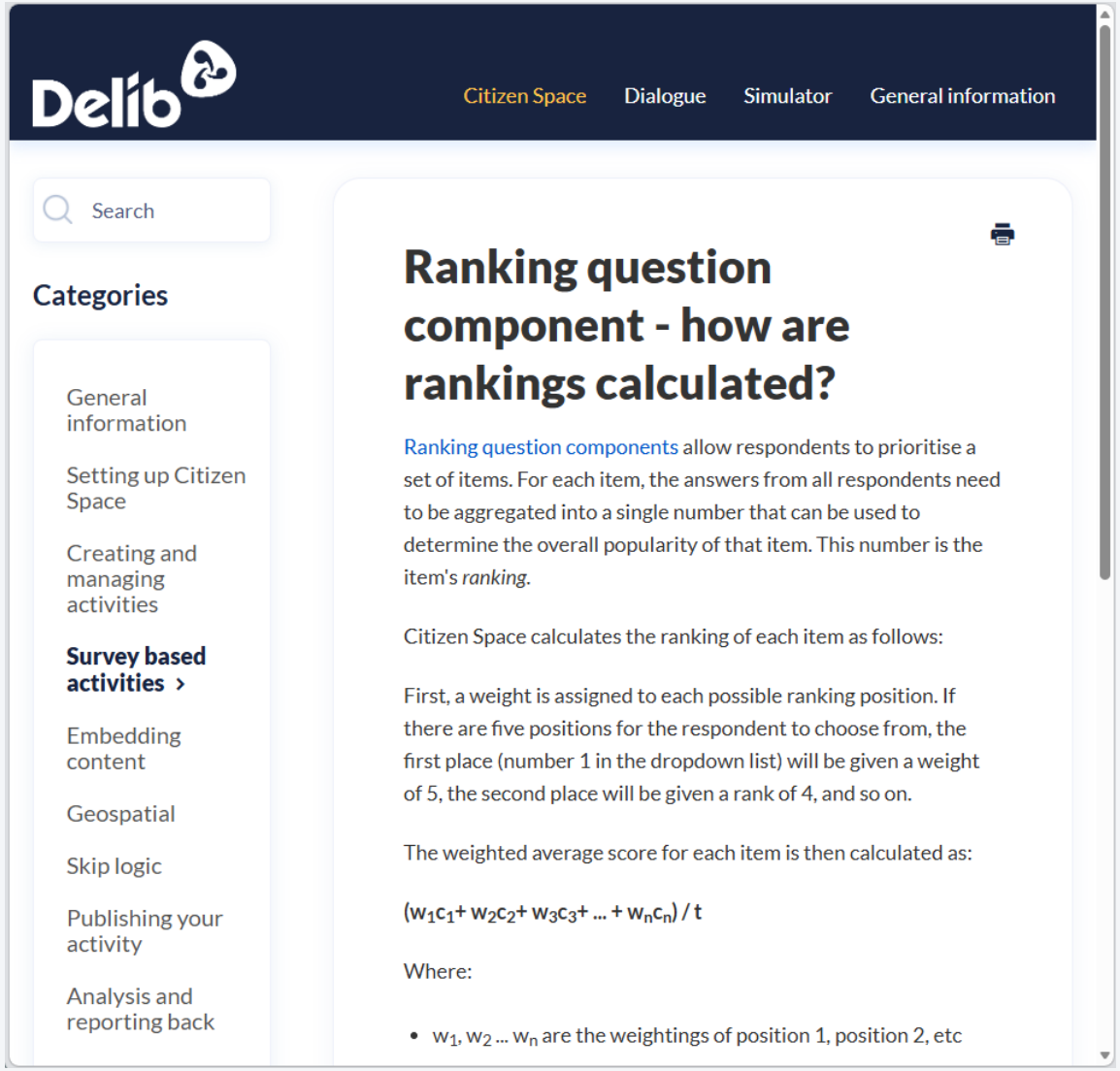
- were given the opportunity to have their say **89%**
- found the consultation process clear and easy to understand **78%**
- were given all the information needed to have their say **80%**

- **3%** felt they weren't given the chance to have their say; **9%** felt it wasn't a clear process and **7%** disagreed they were given all information.



Appendix

- For full methodology on how rankings questions are calculated in the 'Public Priorities' section, refer to the Delib Knowledge Base documentation.



Contact Us

If you have any question, please email us

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