



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Chief Superintendent Mark Sutherland
Greater Glasgow Policing Division
Divisional Headquarters,
50 Stewart Street,
Glasgow
G4 0HY

8 November 2021

Dear Mark,

We are writing to you in response to concerns raised with us by constituents who have attended recent public events, protests and gatherings across Glasgow related to COP26. Whilst it is true to say that protests related to the conference have largely taken place peacefully and been met by a proportionate police response, we are concerned by a number of incidents of what appears to be disproportionate policing of those exercising their rights.

At the march and rally on Saturday 6th November a number of constituents and others reported to us that one particular group of marchers were subjected to a police kettle from the moment they arrived at Kelvingrove Park, seemingly without clear cause. As this group were gathered close to the area at which our own Global Greens bloc assembled, we both witnessed the kettling on the Kelvin Way but like our constituents, did not see any clear cause for such a tactic.

As the march passed through the city centre, the kettled group were halted and prevented from moving any further. This in turn prevented thousands of other marchers who had been behind this group from completing the march. The conduct of officers at this point was extremely concerning, including their arrest of a march steward who they subsequently released without charge.

A colleague of ours spoke to a woman who was caught within the kettle with her young child in a buggy. She highlighted that a number of those kettled were minors but that neither their rights and welfare nor those of her own young child appeared to have been taken into account by the officers maintaining the kettle.

Public statements issued by Police Scotland since then do not appear to tally with eyewitness accounts and video footage. Specifically, the police claim is that this group refused to move on whereas it appears that both they and many other marchers were only too keen for them to be allowed to move on but they were prevented from doing so by the officers present.

We were also deeply concerned to hear that overnight on the 7th into the 8th November police officers attempted to force their way into 'Baile Hoose', the occupied activist space at the former Hamish Allan Centre. Again, there appeared to be no clear cause for this action, no warrant was presented and the officer who did engage with the activists inside refused to give either his full name or his badge number, identifying himself only as 'Paul', a Metropolitan Police officer.

The occupants of Baile Hoose believe that the Metropolitan and Welsh police officers who attempted to breach the building did so without the knowledge of Police Scotland. To their credit, Police Scotland officers intervened and the attempted entry was halted but the testimony of those activists inside the building raises concerning questions about the conduct of police officers currently deployed in Glasgow from forces outwith Police Scotland, both in terms of their accountability and their understanding of the legal jurisdiction in which they are operating.

In addition to the above, a journalist (Lewis Michie, Bauer Media) reported being kettled for around two hours on Wednesday 3rd with no water or access to toilet facilities and little communication from the police.

We would appreciate any clarity you can provide on both of the above incidents, including:

- Why the aforementioned group were policed so intensely and kettled from the start of Saturday's march
- Why this group were prevented from marching any further after a certain point and why Police Scotland public statements claimed that the group themselves refused to move on, in contrast to the testimony of other marchers
- Why thousands of others were prevented from continuing on the march due to this incident
- Why police officers from other jurisdictions attempted to breach Baile Hoose apparently without informing the Police Scotland officers who had been liaising with its occupants
- What instructions officers are given in regards to food, drink and toilet access for those they have contained in a kettle
- What instructions officers are given in regards to their duty of care towards minors they have contained in a kettle

We look forward to your response,

Ross Greer MSP
West Scotland
Scottish Green Party

Maggie Chapman MSP
North East Scotland