

List of recommendations

Recommendations presented in the police leadership commission report.

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The following recommendations are from the police leadership commission report, 'Professionalism and performance – police leadership for the future'. They accompany the executive summary.

- [Go to the executive summary](#)
- [Go to the full report](#)

The case for change

Recommendation 1

There should be a root and branch modernisation of police recruitment, training and development, promotion, monitoring and appraisal.

Definition of police leadership

Recommendation 2

The police service should adopt a clear definition and set of principles of leadership which reflect both present and future policing challenges.

We therefore lay out a working definition which can be built on over time by the National Academy of Police Leadership which we propose in [chapter 12 of the report](#).

Workforce, data and evaluation

Recommendation 3

Work to deliver the comprehensive workforce strategy promised in the government's police reform white paper should commence immediately.

This strategy is essential to ensuring that the service can recruit and train for a rapidly changing landscape. It will ensure that there is capacity in the service to deliver the basic, effective,

preventive and protective policing on the ground with the emerging challenge of online criminality.

Recommendation 4

The proposed National Police Service should take the lead in creating a comprehensive workforce strategy.

The NPS should ensure that workforce strategy is cognisant of local needs and flexible enough to support local workforce planning across England and Wales.

A dedicated senior workforce planning function should be housed within the NPS' National Academy of Police Leadership. This is described in more detail in [chapters 11 and 12](#) ([recommendations 22](#) and [24](#)).

Recommendation 5

A complete rethink of how police workforce data is collected, collated and analysed, and applied in real time, is required.

This is fundamental to determining priorities and applying consistency of approach to the use of resources and assessment of outcomes.

Recommendation 6

A systematic, centrally supported evaluation framework and programme for analysing the value and effectiveness of leadership training and development across policing should be established.

A radical shakeup of training and development should be embedded in every stage of career development and promotion, including evaluation, performance and recognition of on-the-job delivery, outcomes and competency. This would be intended to facilitate robust longer-term measures to assess impact on leadership behaviour, organisational performance, and public outcomes.

Evaluation should be owned by the National Academy of Police Leadership so that it can be considered in the design and delivery of all leadership development across the system.

Representation and ethics

Recommendation 7

The National Police Service should take a lead role in promoting ethical and inclusive policing and be responsible for building a community of practice across the country.

The NPS should lay out a clearer national landscape for ethics forums. This may require the establishment of a national ethics capability within the NPS itself.

Police constable recruitment and training

Recommendation 8

Police constable recruits trained through the police constable entry programme (PCEP) should gain accreditation and recognition of their learning.

Forces should have a formal arrangement which supports recruits trained through PCEP to gain accreditation of the learning they completed during their initial training. This can be delivered through partnership with the National Academy of Police Leadership (described in [chapter 12 of the report](#)), a higher-education institution or another awarding organisation. Recruits trained through PCEP should also have the option to top up their accreditation and gain an equivalent qualification to the police constable degree apprenticeship.

There should be a robust approach to ensuring that all PCEP recruits have reached the necessary standard. Evidence that they have met the required standards should be included in their professional digital passport (as described in [chapter 6 of the report](#)).

Recommendation 9

Police forces should support officer recruits to choose the most appropriate training programme for them.

Forces should offer a range of police constable training programmes which cater for people with different skills, experiences and learning preferences.

Recruits should not be locked into the training programme they choose when they apply. Instead, bespoke advice should support successful applicants to choose the best police constable training programme for them. Tailored careers advice on training and development should continue to be

available as part of the support framework for leaders at all ranks.

Career long learning

Recommendation 10

A mandatory and standardised approach to annual performance reviews should be introduced to provide national consistency for appraisal.

Annual performance reviews should be benchmarked and distributed so that police professionals have an accurate understanding of their performance and progress. Through the annual performance review process professionals and line managers should be able to set continuing professional development goals, understand their leadership competency and map their career path.

Records of each annual performance review should eventually be included in a complete professional digital passport that gives each police professional a central record of their development, training, qualifications, conduct and performance.

The NPS should hold a national database of these digital passports. The national database should support the delivery of a licence to practise for police officers, providing a light touch non-bureaucratic way of achieving the government's stated aim.

Recommendation 11

Everyone in policing should have the opportunity to gain recognition of their learning and experience within a national system.

Recognition of learning demonstrates capability in a particular work area and externally validates a person's learning and its application to work. It aids progression, exit and re-entry into policing, and movement between forces.

Recognition of learning should be through a national scheme, so that there is consistency across forces. It should apply to all new courses, from an internal certificate of completion of a course or activity through to higher education credits and qualifications.

For officers and staff who have built up experience on the job, prior learning and experience could be recognised through one of the higher education schemes.

Together with an annual performance review, this recognition structure should be included in the professional digital passport to provide a foundation for implementing the licence to practise.

A police leadership fast stream

Recommendation 12

A police leadership fast stream should be introduced to identify, develop and accelerate those with talent and ambition to be senior police officers.

The fast stream would provide structured development for between five and ten years to ensure participants achieve rapid promotion. Progress through the fast stream would always be based on merit and performance and linked to the standardised promotions processes described elsewhere in [the report](#). The most talented and experienced participants should aim to hold the rank of superintendent when they complete the fast stream.

The fast stream would be open and widely accessible. It would be open to existing police officers up to the rank of inspector, allied police professionals and volunteers as well as those joining policing externally. A degree should not be required to qualify for the fast stream, but those on the fast stream should be expected to demonstrate a commitment to continuing learning and will have to evidence their development.

The fast stream would be designed and managed from the centre but delivered in partnership with forces. All forces should participate in the fast stream to guarantee sustained investment and ensure large annual cohorts.

Policing should aim to recruit at least 400 people a year onto the police leadership fast stream, the equivalent of around 5 per cent of annual police constable joiners and more than twice the average number of annual promotions to superintendent. Large annual cohorts will ensure that enough talented people progress quickly to superintendent, sustaining operational leadership capability at this rank and ensuring that the effective command of new local policing areas is created through reform of force structures.

Large annual cohorts will also ensure that leadership capability is enhanced at first line and middle leadership levels in the process.

Data on police constable joiners is taken from [Police workforce England and Wales statistics – GOV.UK](#). Data on annual number of promotions is in [Police workforce open data tables – GOV.UK](#).

Frontline leadership

Recommendation 13

A new senior constable rank should be introduced to provide recognition of experience and effective leadership on the front line.

Given that around three quarters of all warranted officers are constables, we believe that it is important to provide a progression pathway, which will both help with morale and motivation, and with proper utilisation of frontline experience and capability (data on composition of workforce is taken from [Police workforce England and Wales statistics - GOV.UK](#)).

Senior constable should be a formal rank (with a level of seniority), but it should not be necessary to have been a senior constable to gain promotion to sergeant. Expectations for this role should include mentoring and coaching responsibilities, role-modelling professional standards, and supporting frontline supervision.

Work to further develop how the rank should operate should involve consultation with staff associations. It should consider:

- The necessary fair, transparent and capability-based selection process for the rank that identifies officers who demonstrate strong judgement, integrity, communication and the ability to develop others.
- The structured training and ongoing development required proportionate to the rank.
- How to align the rank with tutor constable functions to create a nationally consistent approach to selecting, training and rewarding those who mentor new recruits.
- How the rank provides stable leadership cover in teams, reducing unnecessary reliance on extended acting-up arrangements, which are currently a feature of meeting operational need.

The Home Office and the College of Policing – and then the NPS when the College is integrated into the NPS – should introduce the rank at the earliest opportunity and identify resources that are currently used in paying substantial numbers of constables to act up as sergeant.

Recommendation 14

Promotion processes to sergeant and inspector should be reformed to equip these ranks with the knowledge and confidence to lead teams and serve the public, use frontline leadership talent to the full, and support the talent pipeline.

The reforms should build on the sergeant and inspector promotion process currently being tested in five forces and should be rolled out nationally as soon as possible, as an interim measure, before a full re-engineering of the promotion process and content of leadership development materials. The new promotions process should:

- Include clear criteria at every stage based on the agreed definition of police leadership ([recommendation 2](#)) so that officers, line managers and force leaders can fairly and objectively identify those officers ready for promotion.
- Assess eligibility for promotion using annual performance reviews and the completion of leadership development learning. The national leadership development programmes outlined in [recommendation 18](#), followed by a modernised legal exam should be required learning to gain promotion at each rank.
- Introduce probationary periods for the role and abolish the use of temporary promotions. During probationary periods newly promoted officers should be given extra support and supervision to ensure they can continue to hold rank.
- Promotion should be overseen centrally so that there is transparency around decision making at every stage and independent assurance of fairness.

An open profession

Recommendation 15

Secondments to other forces, public sector partners, the voluntary sector and private industry should be made more routine, and accessible to all in policing and senior officers should be expected to undertake them as part of leadership development.

Secondments should be managed through annual performance reviews to ensure that they are purposefully targeted at individual development needs to broaden leadership experience throughout the ranks.

The creation of the NPS presents an opportunity for increasingly varied development experiences. Secondments to the NPS should be a key feature of development for those seeking to reach executive level leadership. This would not only strengthen individual skills and relationships, but would also strengthen relationships between forces and the NPS. This would effectively create the NPS as policing's staff college – preparing leaders in a similar manner to the long-established approach adopted by the military.

Recommendation 16

Policing should recruit proven leaders with transferable skills to senior and executive policing roles. This should include the recruitment of individuals from outside policing as senior officers through a new targeted direct entry scheme.

This would be an adaptive talent model that allows individuals with equivalent professional maturity and leadership experience to enter policing at an appropriate level of responsibility. Many already do, particularly in allied professional police staff roles.

The service should continue to pursue bringing in experienced professionals at the level where their skills are most needed, while holding them to the same standards as anyone else. In addition, a targeted direct entry scheme should bring proven leaders from professions that could be considered adjacent to policing into senior and executive police officer roles. This programme should recruit people who have proven operational experience in adjacent security services, risk management and high-harm public protection.

The new targeted direct entry scheme should be supported by the National Academy of Police Leadership (described in [recommendation 24](#)), and its senior workforce planning function. The academy should work with forces to identify skills gaps and eligible vacancies and conduct targeted recruitment campaigns to hire people with the necessary skills and experience. The academy should support forces to provide tailored on-the-job training and development to ensure that the new recruits are able to demonstrate their operational competence and meet the required standards for their rank.

Recommendation 17

Police staff structures should be aligned to officer ranks, and police staff should have equal access to all leadership development opportunities.

Quality leadership development

Recommendation 18

National leadership development programmes should be available to everyone in policing.

Programmes should be delivered nationally and regionally and be established at all levels to build national capability by enabling police leaders to learn with counterparts in other forces and to create consistency and economies of scale.

National leadership development programmes would ensure fair and equal access to leadership training and development; and demonstrate a robust and evidence-informed approach to course design, teaching and learning. They would increase and improve the number and scale of benefits for individual police officers and staff, and for the police service as a whole.

Recommendation 19

Leadership development networks should be established at every level of policing connected to public sector partners.

Leadership development networks should enable people to share and learn from each other through formal and informal opportunities including peer review, networking and workshops. Leadership development networks should strengthen existing community safety partnerships by deepening local collaboration to tackle crime and public safety at the local level.

Officers and allied professionals should be given protected time to participate in network activities. Participation in their network should be essential to progression; it should be recorded through their annual performance reviews.

Senior promotions and appointments

Recommendation 20

Chief officers should participate in ongoing meaningful professional development.

All chief officers, including chief constables, should be expected to complete an annual performance review to provide supportive professional development and an up-to-date assessment of performance. The government should identify the best mechanisms to conduct annual performance reviews for chief constables through its work reforming force structures and accountability arrangements.

The leadership development network should ensure that executive leaders have real time support to manage major issues and a structured approach to their continuing professional development.

Executive leaders should also be supported by a non-executive board with independent non-executive directors with relevant experience and insight (similar to the board recently established in the Metropolitan Police).

Recommendation 21

A new standardised approach to promotion to chief inspector, superintendent and chief superintendent should be introduced.

These processes should include the same features as reformed processes at sergeant and inspector level so that there is a consistent approach to promotion at every rank. They should:

- Include clear criteria at every stage based on the agreed definition of police leadership described in [chapter 2 of the report](#).
- Assess eligibility for promotion using annual performance reviews and the completion of leadership development learning. The national leadership development programmes described in [chapter 10](#) should be required learning to gain promotion at each rank.
- Be overseen centrally so there is transparency around decision making at every stage and independent assurance of fairness.

Recommendation 22

The senior workforce planning function promised in the government's police reform white paper should be established as a matter of urgency.

A dedicated senior workforce planning function is required to monitor talent and recruitment across the service and ensure that the service is recruiting and developing enough people with the necessary skills and experience.

The National Academy of Police Leadership described in [chapter 12 \(recommendation 24\)](#) should host the senior workforce planning function and the central appointments panel so that these entities can work effectively together.

Recommendation 23

The central appointments panel for chief constable appointments, described in the government's police reform white paper, should be established as quickly as possible to ensure that candidates shortlisted for chief constable roles meet required standards.

The panel should ensure that candidates shortlisted for chief constable positions have varied experience, including experience of policing in different types of places and/or working in more than one force. The national panel should also be engaged wherever it is proposed to extend the term of office of a chief constable.

The panel should include system leaders and external voices including His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services. They should provide important independent advice with direct reference to the definition of effective leadership, together with mandatory appraisal of the most up-to-date performance review.

The Home Office should develop a clear structure at local level, following the abolition of police and crime commissioners, to ensure appropriate input to the interview panels candidates will undertake once shortlisted.

Delivering a new approach to police leadership

Recommendation 24

A National Academy of Police Leadership should be established. The academy should stand as an essential entity of the National Police Service and an enduring partnership between policing and higher education.

The academy should be responsible for:

- owning, maintaining and developing the definition and principles of effective police leadership
- designing and delivering the police leadership fast stream
- setting the standards for, and central oversight of, the new promotions processes described in [recommendations 14](#) and [21](#)
- managing the targeted direct entry programme
- facilitating the senior secondments
- hosting the leadership development networks
- designing and delivering national leadership development programmes
- providing a secretariat for the senior appointments panel
- delivering senior workforce planning
- undertaking research, in conjunction with academics and practitioners, in order to ensure that decisions about leadership and leadership development are based on the best available evidence

Recommendation 25

The National Academy should have an inspirational physical central location, a digital footprint and presence in forces and policing organisations throughout England and Wales.

The academy should have its own dedicated building. This may be an existing building or be purpose built.

The sale of existing estates could recover some costs but the purchase and development of a new home for police leadership development would require capital investment.

This would facilitate a global offer of police training and development which could yield not only a substantial income but also the development of soft power and partnership arrangements across the world.

Recommendation 26

Leadership development in policing should be properly funded to ensure sustained investment in the capacity and capability of police leaders at all levels.

The government and the Home Office should restore central funding so the centre can better prioritise leadership development spend on a national basis, and to bring support for training in line with other major frontline organisations, including the military and the NHS.

The College of Policing – and then the NPS when the College is integrated into the NPS – should monitor local leadership development spend to identify efficiencies and ensure it supports national priorities.

Recommendation 27

The Home Office should establish an implementation group to take forward the commission's recommendations. The group should ensure that the recommendations and detailed analysis in this report do not experience long delay in action.

The implementation group should be connected to the government's [police reform programme](#) to use the synergies and opportunities this presents. The group should be led by the Home Office and the new NPS. It should involve people from across the policing sector and people from outside policing who can bring their expertise in leadership, training and change management. The group should be led by someone of appropriate seniority to bring people together and drive the work forward.

Involving people from outside policing in the implementation group will bring outside expertise and provide critical distance from police workforce reforms of the past.

The implementation group should establish a clear timeline for the delivery of the commission's recommendations with defined milestones. It should prioritise the following in this financial year 2026/27:

- Finalising and promoting the Commission's definition of effective leadership described in [recommendation 2](#).
- The delivery of the profession's first comprehensive workforce strategy and the data reform described in [recommendations 3 to 5](#).
- Setting a mandatory and standardised process for annual performance reviews described in [recommendation 10](#).
- Following appropriate consultation, draft amendments to police regulations to create the senior constable rank described in [recommendation 13](#).

- Outline the delivery of the fair, transparent and trusted processes for promotion at every rank described in [recommendations 14](#) and [21](#).
- Establishing a senior workforce planning function described in [recommendation 22](#).
- The establishment of the National Academy of Police Leadership as described in [recommendations 24](#) and [25](#). This will enable the academy to be moved into the NPS as a priority when the new body is created in legislation.

Tags

Leadership development