

Roundtable meetings

An overview of the police leadership commission roundtables.

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Roundtables provide a forum for the commission to hear evidence which will inform its final report and recommendations.

Roundtables will usually consist of an opening presentation to introduce the topic, followed by panel discussions involving invited experts and practitioners.

Six roundtables are scheduled throughout the duration of the commission.

Thursday 11 December 2025

Theme

Setting the scene for the commission by examining police leadership and its current challenges.

What's working well?

Participants acknowledged several successes including:

- increased numbers of women in policing at senior levels
- improved training for newly promoted sergeants and inspectors
- stronger national strategic collaboration on workforce reform between the College and the NPCC

What needs to improve?

Panel members discussed if there is currently a strong enough collective understanding of what good leadership looks like, with some feeling it should be focussed on what leaders deliver in terms of outcomes and performance.

There was recognition that police leaders at all levels must balance multiple operational, performance and team demand and do not always have adequate support to do so.

The scrutiny senior officers in particular face was considered to contribute to the lack of attractiveness for promotion and progression.

Survey data showing low confidence in senior leadership amongst frontline officers was highlighted as requiring further consideration.

Discussion also focussed on the potential for inconsistencies in the provision and delivery of leadership programmes, and the lack of a national promotion process for certain ranks.

What barriers exist?

Systemic and structural barriers were debated, including valuing operational experience versus enabling talented officers to progress quickly through the ranks.

The slow pace of achieving national consensus was also recognised as a challenge to reform, as well as a lack of funding nationally and locally.

Suggested solutions

The panel explored solutions including:

- diversifying entry routes
- expanding the use of professional registration

Discussions on how to vary experience at senior levels prompted ideas around:

- leaders gaining experience in different organisations
- bringing in external expertise at senior levels
- using police staff effectively

The commission identified key areas for further exploration, with particular focus on strengthening the support and development for front line leaders, given the key role they have.

Key national workforce statistics were also presented and suggestions made for what further data the commission needed for its review.

Tags

Leadership development