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HER MAJESTY’S CORONERS

Manchester West

Candidate Information Pack

**ASSISTANT CORONER**

**MANCHESTER WEST**

Relevant Authority:



**August 2018CONTENTS**

**ASSISTANT CORONER FOR MANCHESTER WEST**

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This recruitment pack has been drafted in accordance with the

Coroners and Justice Act 2009.

**1. The Post**

HER MAJESTY’S CORONERS

Manchester West

**Assistant Coroners Required for Manchester West (4 posts)**

**Salary – fee paid, £454 per day pro-rata**

**Background**

Bolton Council is the relevant Local authority for the Manchester West Coroner area. The Senior Coroner is supported by eleven Coroner’s Officers who are employed by Bolton Council and seven Police Coroner’s Officers who are employed by Greater Manchester Police and are co-located in the Coroner’s Office.

Greater Manchester West is a very busy and challenging area. In 2017 there were 4336 deaths reported and 723 inquests concluded within an average time of 19 weeks.

**The Role**

Bolton Council is seeking to appoint four new Assistant Coroners to support the Senior and Area Coroner across the full range of Coroner duties in order to deliver a high quality Coroner service to the people of Bolton, Salford, Wigan and Leigh.

Successful applicants will be required to carry out the duties and responsibilities of a Coroner as defined in the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 and associated rules and regulations and as further described in various guidance issued by the Chief Coroner.

These are fee paid positions although they are likely to involve a regular commitment to be agreed with the Senior Coroner. However, there are no guarantees as to the number of occasions that Assistant Coroners will be required to work.

This appointment will be made for an initial term of 12 months and thereafter for a renewable term of 3 years. The Assistant Coroners will be based in the dedicated court and Coroner’s Office in Paderborn House, Civic Centre, Howell Croft North, Bolton, BL1 1QY. Office opening hours are 8.30am to 4.00pm.

**The Person**

Bolton Council is looking for exceptional candidates with excellent proven organisational, management and efficiency skills, as well as experience of managing and embracing change. They will work closely with the Senior Coroner and Area Coroner to ensure value for money, performance and financial efficiencies. The Council is particularly interested in applicants with existing Coronial experience and those who are available on more than one day each week.

Candidates will be required to demonstrate knowledge and experience of Coroner law and of basic medicine, to have proven skills in conducting investigations and an understanding of court procedure. They will also need to demonstrate the excellent communication and interpersonal skills necessary to deal with sensitive situations.

The successful candidates will be barristers or solicitors or Fellows of the Institute of Legal Executives and satisfy the judicial-appointment eligibility condition on a 5 year basis. They will be under the age of 70 and be subject to the appointment and eligibility conditions within the [Coroners and Justice Act 2009 (s.23 and Schedule 3)](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2009/25/notes/division/5/1/1/3/2).

If you wish to have an informal discussion or arrange a visit, please contact the Senior Coroner, Professor Jennifer Leeming on 01204 338799.

**Suitably qualified candidates are requested to email their CV and Personal Statement clearly stating in full how they meet the Person Specification to** [**coroners@bolton.gov.uk**](mailto:coroners@bolton.gov.uk) **clearly marking the subject of their email: ‘(FULL NAME) Application for the Post of Assistant Coroner Manchester West’.**

**Closing date: Friday 7th September 2018 at 5pm**

**Interview dates: Tuesday 2nd, Wednesday 3rd and Thursday 4th October 2018**

The vacancies for these posts have been notified to the Chief Coroner (as required by statute).

**2. CORONER SERVICE INFORMATION**

**Area information**

The Manchester West Coroner Area has a current population of around 441,612. Bordering Coronial Areas include Manchester South, Manchester North and Manchester Central.

The number of deaths registered annually averages approximately 10,200 cases with 42% being referred to the Senior Coroner. Post mortem examinations are conducted at 3 Hospital Trusts by hospital pathologists.

In 2017 4366 deaths were reported and 723 inquests were held. The Area is accepted as being a Area of the highest complexity.

**Office and court accommodation**

The service is located in dedicated accommodation, including offices and courts in Bolton. The Coroner’s Court, which is next to the Coroner’s Offices, is available Monday-Friday allowing inquests to be opened quickly with dates set for inquest hearings, usually within the required six months. The average time from the date of death to hearing is currently 19 weeks.

**Staff**

The Senior Coroner for the area of Manchester West is Professor Jennifer Leeming. The Area Coroner is Dr Alan Walsh.

Nine Coroner’s Officers are employed by Bolton Council, managed and supported by the First and Second Coroner’s Officers. The Senior Coroner, the Area Coroner and the Assistant Coroners and Coroner’s Officers are supported by seven Police Coroner’s Officers employed by Greater Manchester Police.

All staff are co-located with the Senior Coroner.

**Management**

Accommodation, contracts, tendering, finance and support staff are managed by Bolton Council.

Bolton Council works closely with the Senior Coroner on the delivery of the service to ensure those affected by the work of the Coroner’s Office receive a high quality service.

**Daily operations**

As these are fee paid positions the Assistant Coroner will work on days and times as agreed with the Senior Coroner.

The administrative support staff are responsible for answering incoming calls from the public on weekdays from 8.30am to 4pm.

**3. JOB DESCRIPTION**

HER MAJESTY’S CORONERS

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Post Title** | **ASSISTANT CORONER**  **Fee Based £454 per day pro rata** |
| **Service Area** | MANCHESTER WEST  Relevant Authority Bolton Council, Chief Executives Department |
| **Responsible to** | Senior Coroner |
| **Location** | Coroner Service Paderborn House. Bolton BL1 1QY |

**Primary Purpose of the Role**

* To deliver a high quality Coroner service to the people of Bolton, Salford, Wigan and Leigh in accordance with statutory provisions, case law, best practice and associated guidance.
* To support and deputise for the senior and area coroners across the full range of coroner duties and to deliver a high quality coroner service to the people of Manchester West (Bolton, Salford, Wigan and Leigh).

**Job Functions and Responsibilities**

To support the Senior Coroner and Area Coroner to provide a high quality Coroner service in accordance with statutory provisions, case law and associated guidance issued by the Chief Coroner and the Ministry of Justice or Lord Chancellor.

1. To conduct investigations into deaths when made aware that bodies of deceased persons lie within the Coroner area and there is reason to suspect that:

* The deceased died a violent or unnatural death;
* The cause of death is unknown; or
* The deceased died while in custody or otherwise in state detention.

1. To determine the identity of the deceased and how, when and where the deceased came by his or her death; decide if a post-mortem examination is necessary and give directions to a pathologist or other appropriately qualified expert medical practitioner or scientist; to establish the medical cause of death.
2. Where required, to hold an inquest, with or without a jury, in accordance with Section 7 of the 2009 Act and as appropriate, to notify the relevant Registrar of Deaths of the findings and conclusion of the inquest, or the natural cause of death ascertained with or without a post-mortem examination or that the death reported does not require further inquiry or investigation.
3. To provide clear direction to staff on Coroner investigations.
4. To be sensitive and, as far as possible, responsive to the needs and requirements of those who engage with the Coroner Service, including the bereaved, witnesses, medical personnel, Police, the media and other stakeholders; and to manage their expectations.
5. To assist the Senior Coroner to ensure that the Coroner Service has planned for and is prepared for any significant emergencies which may occur or affect the Coroner Area.
6. To comply with the Coroners (Investigations) Regulations 2013 for 24 hour availability, if required. To take into account the religious and cultural requirements of faith communities.
7. Where necessary to assist the Senior Coroner to engage with the local community, for example giving talks and seeking feedback and views. To collaborate and engage with external agencies and stakeholders as required.
8. To work co-operatively with the Local Authority staff team and Police employees where applicable to ensure a safe, harmonious and effective working environment.
9. To deal with claims for treasure when required in accordance with statutory regulations and guidance.
10. To keep an up-to-date working knowledge of Coroner law, practice and guidance, and advise staff on developments as appropriate.
11. To undertake compulsory Judicial College and Chief Coroner training, as appropriate.
12. To be committed to ensuring expenditure is reasonable and controlled, working closely with the Senior Coroner to regularly monitor expenditure and report possible risk.

**4. PERSON SPECIFICATION**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Essential (E) or Desirable (D)** |
| **Qualifications** |  |
| Be under the age of 70 and satisfy the judicial appointment eligibility condition on a 5 year basis (i.e. you must be a barrister or solicitor with at least 5 years post qualification experience). | E |
| **Experience** |  |
| Experience of conducting investigative enquiries including demonstrating clarity of thought in identifying issues relevant to the investigation | E |
| Experience of preparing cases for court hearings | E |
| Experience as a Coroner, Deputy or Assistant Coroner and of running a Coroner’s Court | D |
| Experience of holding an inquest, including jury inquest | D |
| Experience of judicial or tribunal work | D |
| **Knowledge/Skills** |  |
| Knowledge of the law of evidence, the administration of the legal system and the procedure of courts. | E |
| An up to date knowledge of legislation and law relating to the role of the Coroner | E |
| Knowledge of police procedure, in particular those relating to the investigation of sudden or suspicious deaths | E |
| Excellent written and verbal communication skills with a range of audiences, particularly in demonstrating sensitivity to the bereaved. | E |
| Excellent analytical, decision making and administrative skills. | E |
| IT literacy, including experience of using Microsoft Office and familiarity with e-mail and internet systems. | E |
| Ability to develop and maintain effective working relationships with a wide range of partners and stakeholders. | E |
| Ability to deal with emotionally charged situations that require sensitive handling and confident, positive judgement together with the ability to handle sensitive situations with tact, diplomacy and empathy. | E |
| Ability to respond flexibly to the work requirements of the senior coroner and to be able to provide cover at short notice when necessary. | E |
| Knowledge of the extent to which cultural and religious requirements can be met within the constraints of Coroner law and practice. | E |
| Knowledge of the organisational structures of Local Government including an understanding of the challenges facing Local Government, both at present and in the future. | E |
| An ability to drive the service and be receptive to new ideas, reforms and diverse needs. | E |
| Use of IRIS Law Coroners software. | D |
| Full current driving licence (unless precluded by disability) and use of a vehicle for work purposes. | D |

### 5. SUMMARY OF TERMS & CONDITIONS

The conditions of service applicable to the post are those set out in Schedule 3, Coroners and Justice Act 2009. The Assistant Coroner holds office on whatever terms are from time agreed. You will be appointed by but not employed by Bolton Council.

**Salary**

The post is fee paid and the current fee is £454 per day pro-rata, which will be paid by the Council after deduction of tax and National Insurance where appropriate.

**Hours of work**

As these are fee paid positions the Assistant Coroner will work on days and times as agreed with the Senior Coroner.

You may be asked to participate in an out of hours service, by agreement with the Senior Coroner.

**Pension**

Successful applicants will be eligible to join the Local Government Pension Scheme if they so wish.

**Holiday Entitlement and Sick Pay**

None (fee paid appointment).

**Payment of expenses**

Expenses will be paid in line with the Council’s expenses policy. Reasonable expenses for attendance at Judicial Training (including travel expenses, accommodation where necessary and a normal sitting fee payable for each day of training) will be paid by the Local Authority.

**Indemnity**

The Council will indemnify the Assistant Coroner for costs or damages in relation to legal proceedings in accordance with Regulation 17 of The Coroners Allowances, Fees and Expenses Regulations 2013.

**Notice period**

The Assistant Coroner may resign from office by giving notice in writing to the relevant authority, however the resignation does not take effect unless and until it is accepted by the authority. There will be a minimum of 3 months notice of resignation to be given in writing.

**Politically restricted post**

This post is politically restricted under the terms of Schedule 3, paragraph 4 of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009.

**The Guide to Judicial Conduct**

The Assistant Coroner will comply with the standards as set out in the Guide to Judicial Conduct and other associated guidance.

**6. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCESS**

**Applications**

Potential applicants are asked to submit their curriculum vitae along with a personal statement within which they demonstrate how they meet the criteria set out in the person specification.

It is important that your personal statement fully addresses the essential and desirable critiera in the person specification. If you do not complete a full personal statement your application will be rejected. Please ensure you include your work, home and mobile contact numbers, home address and e-mail addresses where applicable. Please note that correspondence will be via e-mail unless otherwise stated. All correspondence and details provided will remain confidential.

Completed applications should be sent by email to [**coroners@bolton.gov.uk**](mailto:coroners@bolton.gov.uk)for the attention of the **Senior Coroner, Professor Jennifer Leeming - clearly marking the subject of their email: ‘(FULL NAME) Application for the Post of Assistant Coroner Manchester West’.**

**All applications received will be sent an acknowledgement of receipt by email.**

**Closing date: Friday 7th September 2018 at 5pm**

**Interview dates: Tuesday 2nd, Wednesday 3rd and Thursday 4th October 2018**

Potential applicants are welcome to contact Professor Jennifer Leeming, Senior Coroner for an informal discussion before submitting an application. Professor Leeming can be contacted at [coroners@bolton.gov.uk](mailto:coroners@bolton.gov.uk) or by telephone on 01204 338799.

**Employment references**

Please include the name, address and contact details for two references. Candidates should also state their relationship to the referee and at least one should be your current/most recent employer/head of chambers/relevant authority. References will be taken up for short-listed candidates.

**Evidence of qualifications**

Candidates will be required to bring evidence of their qualifications to the interview.

**Employment checks**

The successful candidate will be required to undergo the Council’s pre-appointment medical screening.

**Disciplinary proceedings and criminal convictions check**

Due to the nature of the post, it is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and therefore any conviction, whether spent or unspent, must be declared. Applicants invited to interview will be required to complete a declaration form. The successful candidate will be required to undergo a DBS check.

Applicants must specify in their application if they are subject of any complaint or disciplinary proceedings by any professional body to which they belong and clearly the outcome.

The candidate should declare any other matters which they believe should be brought to the attention of the Local Authority, particularly bearing in mind the basic set of guiding principles in the Guide to Judicial Conduct.

**Eligibility to work in the UK**

Candidates must be eligible to work in the UK. The successful candidate will be required to provide original evidence of their eligibility to work in the UK.

**Interview**

You will be required to undertake a short presentation as part of the interview process.

**Chief Coroner’s role in the process**

All appointments are subject to the Chief Coroner and the Lord Chancellor’s consent.

Local Authorities appoint Coroners but do not employ them. Once appointed a Coroner becomes and remains an independent judicial officer holder.

**RECRUITMENT TIMETABLE**

Closing date: Friday 7th September 2018 at 5pm

Interview dates: Tuesday 2nd, Wednesday 3rd and Thursday 4th October 2018

The interview panel will be:

Professor M Jennifer Leeming HM Senior Coroner

Alan P Walsh Area Coroner

Neeta Graham Deputy HR Busines Partner

We are aiming for the successful candidate to take up post as soon as possible.