# ASSISTANT CORONER, WEST YORKSHIRE (WESTERN) INFORMATION PACK

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This recruitment pack has been drafted in accordance with the Coroners and Justice Act 2009.

# ADVERTISEMENT

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| Post Title | Assistant Coroner |
| Section | Coroner’s Office, West Yorkshire (Western) |
| Location | Based at Coroners Court, The City Courts, Bradford, West Yorkshire BD1 1LA |
| Salary/fee | £400 per day (pro rata for half a day) |
| Hours | In accordance with the needs of the service must be available at all times to undertake urgent matters which cannot wait until the next working day |

**Details of Advertisement:**

Bradford Metropolitan District Council (BMDC) as relevant authority for three Coroner jurisdictions, namely, Bradford, Kirklees and Calderdale is seeking to appoint at least 5 Assistant Coroners to serve the coronial area of West Yorkshire (Western) and to support the Senior Coroner. Applications are invited from suitably qualified individuals.

An Assistant Coroner is an independent judicial office holder who is appointed by Bradford Metropolitan District Council but is not an employee of the Council.

The West Yorkshire jurisdiction covers an area with a population of over 1,000,000.

The successful candidate will be a barrister or a solicitor or Fellow 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).

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

You will preferably have significant and recent experience of coroner law and procedures. Although prior experience as an Assistant Coroner is not essential, you will be required to demonstrate knowledge and experience of coronial law, knowledge of basic medicine, have proven skills in conducting investigations and understanding of court procedure, and should be willing to prepare and hear the whole range of inquests from simple cases to those fully engaging Article 2 both with and without a jury.

You will have a sound knowledge of all aspects of the English and Welsh legal system with particular regard to coronial law and the laws of evidence, the administration of the legal system and court procedures. Equally, you should have practical experience in the conduct of court proceedings and will demonstrate the ability to handle highly sensitive or emotionally charged situations effectively. Your exceptional communication skills are important. You must have the ability to readily explain legal and medical terms to non-specialists, and you must be competent in dealing with sensitive situations involving relatives, witnesses, the police and the media. You should be willing to prepare and hear the whole range of inquests within the scope of

your abilities.

This is a fee paid position although it is likely to involve a regular commitment, which is to be agreed between you, the senior coroner and the local authority.

You must have the flexibility to accommodate such sitting dates as the Area requires, and be available for designated weekend cover and bank holidays, which on occasions, must be set at short notice.

You will be able to work closely with the Senior Coroner, Mr. Martin Fleming and you must be able to recognise the importance of continuous professional development (CPD) and your own role in your CPD.

Applicants should submit a CV and personal statement of no more than **3** pages of A4 paper in size 12 Font for both documents evidencing as appropriate the essential and desirable requirements for the post. In addition you are required to declare if you are subject of any complaint or disciplinary proceedings by any professional body to which you belong. Duplication in the CV and personal statement should be avoided.

The closing date for completed applications is **Monday 25th September 2017 at 23.59 Interviews** will be held in Bradford.

If you have not heard anything following your application by Friday 6th October 2017 please assume your application has been unsuccessful.

The successful applicant will be required to complete a Disclosure and Barring Application Form and to provide criminal conviction information.

Please submit your application to [shabana.asghar@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:shabana.asghar@bradford.gov.uk) or via email or to Shabana Asghar, Department of Corporate Services, 1st Floor Britannia House, Bradford, BD1 1HX.

If you incur any problems Rehfan Khan or Karen Hoyle can be contacted on 01274 434294 or 437455

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| **JOB PROFILE**  **Job Title**: Assistant Coroner, West Yorkshire (Western) | | | |
| **Reporting to**: Senior Coroner | | **Fee:** £400 per day (pro rata for half a day) | |
| **Location**:  The Coroner’s Court, The City courts, Bradford, West Yorkshire BD1 1LA | | | |
| **Overall Purpose of the Post**:  To support the Senior Coroner to deliver a high quality Coroner service to the people of West Yorkshire (Western) that includes the area covered by Bradford Metropolitan District Council, Kirklees Council and Calderdale Council.  Bradford Council is the Relevant Authority.  This post reports to the Senior Coroner of West Yorkshire (Western). | | | |
| **Requirements for the post.**  **Applicants should submit a CV and personal statement evidencing as appropriate the essential and desirable requirements for the post on no more than 3 pages of A4 paper in size 12 Font.** **In addition you are required to declare if you are subject of any complaint or disciplinary proceedings by any professional body to which you belong. Duplication between the CV and the personal statement is unnecessary and should be avoided.** | | | |
|  | **Essential** | | **Desirable** |
| **Qualifications/ Training** | Applicants must be a barrister, solicitor or fellow of CILEX and satisfy the judicial-appointment eligibility condition on a 5 year basis and be under the age of 70. | |  |
| **Knowledge** | Thorough, up-to-date knowledge of legislation relating to Coroner’s duties, including particularly the law of evidence, the administration of the legal system and the procedures of courts.  Knowledge of structures and procedures of the Police, in particular those relating to the investigation of sudden or suspicious deaths.  Knowledge of the extent to which cultural and religious requirements can be met within the constraints of Coronial law and practice. | | Knowledge of the structures and procedures of local authorities. |

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| **Experience** | Either worked within a coronial environment, or can demonstrate and evidence significant equivalent experience.  Experience of conducting investigative enquiries including demonstrating clarity of thought in identifying issues relevant to the investigation.  Experience of analysing complex situations resulting in clear decisions and positive outcomes. | Experience of holding inquests including jury inquests. |
| **Additional Skills** | IT literacy, including experience of using Microsoft Office package and familiarity with email and internet systems. | Full current driving licence (unless disability precludes this) and use of a vehicle for business purposes.  Advanced legal coroners software |
| **Competencies and other skills required** | Excellent analytical, decision making and administrative systems.  Ability to deal with emotionally charged situations that require sensitive handling and confident/positive judgement.  Excellent interpersonal skills demonstrating the ability to deal with the bereaved and those under great stress with tact, diplomacy and compassion.  Excellent presentation skills, the ability to demonstrate authority whilst ensuring the audience understand and remain engaged in complex processes.  Excellent verbal and written communication skills, the ability to distil complex medical, legal and other information into a format easily  understood by all. | Effective budget and resource management within an organisation.  Ability to lead and inspire multi-agency and multi - disciplinary teams to deliver excellence. |

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Ability to work in and manage conflict/sensitive situations involving competing personal and organisational priorities, with a wide range of stakeholders.

Ability to and experience of regularly reviewing and challenging processes to ensure standards are always maintained and systems remain efficient.

Must be able to recognise discrimination in its many forms and use the Equal Treatment Bench Book which is not at odds with the Council’s Equality and Diversity Policies into practice.

# Generic Accountabilities:

* + To support and assist the Senior Coroner to provide a high quality coroner’s service in accordance with the requirements of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 and other statutory provisions and associated guidance as issued by the Chief Coroner.
  + To be sensitive and responsive to the need and requirements of those who engage with the Coroner’s Service, including the bereaved, witnesses, the media, police and other interested persons in the process.
  + To ensure that the Coroner’s Service takes full account of the ethnic and cultural diversity of the population within the Coroner’s area and seeks to be responsive to the varying religious and cultural needs of their diverse communities.
  + To support the Senior Coroner to work collaboratively with the City Solicitor of Bradford MDC at all times to deliver the highest possible quality of service.
  + To support the Senior Coroner to organise the delivery of the Coronial Service in an efficient and effective manner, having full regard to the statutory requirements of the Coronial Service along with the financial and budgetary constraints associated with public sector funding.
  + To support the Senior Coroner and in liaison with other key stakeholders, to ensure that the Coronial Service has planned for and has prepared for any significant emergencies which may occur or affect the coronial area and which are in excess of the day to day resource and capacity of the local service.
  + To undertake any relevant training and development as required, including compulsory Judicial College training and ensure the training and development of

those under his/her supervision.

* + To support the Senior Coroner to manage the relationship between Local Authority Officers and Coroner’s Officers located at the Coroner’s Court to ensure a safe and harmonious working environment and promote the Council’s values and the performance of all aspects of their role.
  + To provide the Local Authority Officers and Coroner’s Officers with relevant and appropriate coronial advice and training as required.

# Specific Accountabilities:

* + To deputise for the Senior Coroner when he is unavailable as necessary, at the request of the Senior Coroner.
  + To make enquiries and if necessary investigate the circumstances of the deaths of all persons whose bodies are lying within the Coroner’s area where he/she has reason to suspect that the death was violent or unnatural or took place in custody or other state detention, where the cause of death is unknown.
  + To decide whether a post mortem examination or other form of non-invasive examination is necessary and, if so, give directions to a suitable practitioner.
  + To hold an inquest with or without a jury where he/she is satisfied that one is required in accordance with Section 6 of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009.
  + To notify, as appropriate, the relevant Registrar of Deaths of the findings of the enquiries, or, of no inquest is held, of the fact that the death reported does not need to be subject to an inquest.
  + To pay the relevant fees and allowances to witnesses and jurors and to submit accounts to the Senior Coroner.
  + To support the Senior Coroner to make annual statistical and other returns as required to the Chief Coroner and Lord Chancellor in connection with the inquests held and deaths he/she has enquired.
  + To notify the Chief Coroner of the investigations which have not been concluded or discontinued within a year of the Senior Coroner being made aware of the death (Section 6 CJA).
  + To deal with claims for treasure in accordance with the statutory regulations.

# Employees (Supervision):

None

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| **Additional**:  To treat all information acquired through appointment both formally and informally in confidence. To ensure that confidentiality is maintained at all times when dealing with paper based or electronic information. |
| **Routine communication**:  Chief Coroner  Senior Coroner and Coroner colleagues Bereaved families and other interested parties Local Authority Officers and Councillors Members of the Public  Bradford Council Press Office and Local and National Media  Senior Coroners, Area and Assistant, holding office in other jurisdictions West Yorkshire Police Service  Coroners Officers Ministry of Justice  Foreign and Commonwealth Office Central Government  Voluntary Organisations Council for Mosques  Members of the Medical Profession  Solicitors and Barristers representing interested parties Local Court Service  Registrars  Bradford Forensic Science Centre (Mortuary) Funeral Directors |
| **Working Conditions**:  To be willing to undertake the whole range of coronial cases and willingness to be on a rota to provide a comprehensive, 24 hour service across the jurisdiction in order to comply with The Coroners (Investigations) Regulations 2013. This will include the urgent release of bodies to meet the expectations of the diverse faiths so far as is compatible with the relevant law and liaison with other stakeholders across the coroner area of West Yorkshire (Western) including at weekends and bank holidays.  Able to travel across a wide geographical area in a timely and flexible manner at various times of the day.  Prepared to undergo relevant pre-appointment checks including enhanced DBS clearance. |
| **Characteristics of the post:**  Champion at all times the professional integrity of the service. |

**Date completed:** August 2017

# WEST YORKSHIRE (WESTERN) CORONER AREA – STATISTICS

There are currently 2 Coroners Areas covering the following areas within West Yorkshire:

West Yorkshire (Eastern) Area:

Local Authority Areas – Wakefield and Leeds

Relevant Council – Wakefield Metropolitan District Council

West Yorkshire (Western) Area:

Local Authority Areas – Bradford, Calderdale and Kirklees Relevant Council – Bradford Metropolitan District Council

The current estimated population figures, as reported by the Office of National Statistics, area as follows:

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| --- | --- |
| Local Authority | Population (Thousands) |
| Bradford | 531,200 |
| Calderdale | 208,402 |
| Kirklees | 434,321 |
| TOTAL | 1173,923 |

The current case load of the Western Area is as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Deaths** | |
| 2012 | 3238 |
| 2013 | 3095 |
| 2014 | 3051 |
| 2015 | 3114 |
| 2016 | 3454 |
|  |  |
| **Inquests** | |
| 2012 | 355 |
| 2013 | 445 |
| 2014 | 353 |
| 2015 | 492 |
| 2016 | 672 |
|  |  |
| **Post Mortems** | |
| 2012 | 1310 |
| 2013 | 1180 |
| 2014 | 1051 |
| 2015 | 1422 |
| 2016 | 1529 |

Please find below links to Bradford, Kirklees and Calderdale web sites for further relevant information on each council and their district

BRADFORD

<http://www.bradford.gov.uk/bmdc>

KIRKLEES

<http://www.kirklees.gov.uk>

CALDERDALE

[www.calderdale.gov.uk](http://www.calderdale.gov.uk/)

# SUMMARY OF TERMS AND CONDITIONS

**Eligibility Criteria**

For any new appointments under the Coroners and Justice Act 2009, a person must be under the age of 70 and satisfy the judicial-appointment eligibility condition on a 5-year basis. Section 50 to 52 of the Tribunals, Courts and Enforcement Act 2007 (‘the 2007 Act’) state that a person satisfies the eligibility condition if he or she holds a relevant qualification and, whilst holding that qualification, gains experience in law. A person holds a relevant qualification if he or she is a solicitor or barrister, or holds a qualification specified in an order under Section 51(1) of the 2007 Act. Also under The Judicial Appointments (Amendment) Order 2013 fellows of the Institute of Legal Executives hold a relevant qualification. A person who is a councillor for a local authority, or has been one during the previous 6 months, may not be appointed as a Senior Coroner, Area Coroner or Assistant Coroner that is the same as or includes the area of that local authority.

# Salary

£400 per day (pro rata for half a day) this will be paid to you through the Council’s payroll system.

# Hours of Work

This is a casual, fee based post and the post holder will be expected to work to meet the needs of the service. It is anticipated that the post holder will be required to work fifteen working days per annum subject to operational requirements.

The Senior Coroner will arrange for an out of hours cover service to comply with The Coroners (Investigations) Regulations 2013. The Assistant Coroner will be expected to support these arrangements and may be required out of hours and at short notice.

The Assistant Coroner is expected to live within a reasonable travelling distance of the Coroners area for which he/she is appointed.

# Appointments

# The Assistant Coroner position is a fee paid judicial appointment.

# Availability

The Assistant Coroner must be available to cover for the Senior Coroner in the case of sickness or leave.

# Payment of other expenses

The Council will pay or reimburse all payments actually made by the Assistant Coroner of items included in the Local Authorities’ schedule of allowance expenses and all other expenses incurred in or about the holding of an inquest, or other enquiries in accordance with the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 and associated Rules and Regulations, any policy of the Council, or any subsequent statutory enactments.

Except as otherwise provided for the Assistant Coroner may not accept any remuneration or fee in respect of anything done by them in the performance of his or her functions.

# Indemnity

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

# Notice period

The Assistant Coroner may resign office by giving notice in writing to the relevant authority but the resignation does not take effect unless and until it is accepted by the authority. The Assistant Coroner will be expected to give three months’ notice of retirement or resignation to enable the Council to put in place cover arrangements.

# Political restricted post

This post is politically restricted under the terms of the Schedule 3 Part 4 Coroner and Justice Act 2009.

# The Judicial Code of Conduct

The Assistant Coroner will comply with the standards as set out in the Judicial Code of Conduct along with guidance issued by the Chief Coroner of England and Wales.

# RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION ARRANGEMENTS

Applications

It is important that your written submission fully addresses the criteria as detailed in the Job Profile. Please ensure you include your work, home and mobile contact numbers, home address and e-mail addresses where applicable. In addition you are required to declare if you are subject of any complaint or disciplinary proceedings by any professional body to which you belong.

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. 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.

Pre-appointment checks

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

Criminal convictions check

Due to the nature of the post, it is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and 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.

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.

Chief Coroner Role

The Chief Coroner or his nominee may be providing technical advice to the Council throughout the recruitment process. Although the Chief Coroner or nominee may be at the interviews they are not a member of the panel and as such have no role in shortlisting or scoring candidates.

The Chief Coroner and the Lord Chancellor must consent to the appointments of all Coroners; therefore there will be a delay between the interviews and the appointment being made.

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

# Recruitment Timetable

**Monday 4th September 2017**

# (as near to this date depending on publication criteria)

Advert to be placed on the local authority’s web site and the Coroner’s Society website/email circulation

**Monday 25th September 2017**

Closing date for return of applications is 23.59 on Monday 25th September 2017

**Monday 2nd October 2017**

Long list of Applications

**Tuesday 10th October 2017**

Telephone interview with candidates who have been long listed

Shortlist of applicants

**Thursday 26th October 2017**

Assessment process for shortlisted candidates – Further details to be provided in invite letter