

Candidate Information Pack

HM SENIOR CORONER

Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin area

Relevant Authority:

Shropshire Council (Lead Authority)

Telford & Wrekin Council

23rd January 2026

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

1. ADVERT

Senior Coroner for Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin

Salary £137,379 to £148,105

Closing date: 5pm Friday 20th February 2026

Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Councils are seeking to appoint a new Senior Coroner to succeed the current post-holder who retires in July 2026.

About the Post:

The Senior Coroner stands at the head of the local coroner service and statutory coroner area and takes the lead on coroner work and will be expected to conduct inquests which are difficult or complex or will be likely to attract significant publicity.

The number of reported deaths pa is 1716 (2024). Accordingly, we appoint our Senior Coroner with a salary on a full-time basis.

The salary will include payment for out of hours availability by agreement (i.e. organ donation, faith deaths, out of England removals).

Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Councils are looking for an exceptional candidate with excellent proven organisational, management and efficiency skills, as well as experience of exercising sound judgement and communicating effectively. You will work closely with Shropshire Council (as the lead authority) to ensure the running of an efficient coroner service that puts the bereaved at the heart of the service. Collaborative working with the local authority, the police and other stakeholders is essential.

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.

It is essential that the successful candidate has proven experience of running or sharing running a coroner's jurisdiction including carrying out investigations, case management, and conducting inquests.

Who can apply:

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 which means they will have five years of experience *whilst* holding that qualification. They will be under the age of 75, have experience of working as a Senior Coroner, area coroner or assistant coroner and be subject to the appointment and eligibility conditions within the [Coroners and Justice Act 2009 \(s.23 and Schedule 3\)](#).

Statutory terms of the Appointment:

Once a Coroner is appointed, they are then a Judicial Office holder until they reach the age of 75 years (compulsory retirement age) unless they choose to resign or are removed by the Lord Chief Justice or Lord Chancellor prior to their 75th birthday.

How to apply:

If you wish to have an informal discussion or arrange a visit, please contact Tim Collard, Service Director – Legal, Governance and Planning on 01743 252756 or tim.collard@shropshire.gov.uk

Suitably qualified applicants are requested to email their CV and supporting statement (which should include disclosure of any convictions or disciplinary proceedings) to molly.ashelford@shropshire.gov.uk

Notification

The vacancy for this post has been notified to the Chief Coroner and Lord Chancellor (as required by statute).

2. CORONER SERVICE INFORMATION

Area information

The Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin coroner area includes an area of 1346 square miles with a current population of around 530 000. Bordering counties and local government areas include Cheshire, Staffordshire, Worcestershire, Herefordshire, Powys and Wrexham.

The number of deaths registered annually averages 5500 with approximately 1700 cases (30%) referred to the senior coroner. Post-mortem examinations are conducted at Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital Trust by hospital pathologists. Paediatric cases are referred to a range of specialist pathologists. A pilot study to utilise scanning facilities at the Hospital will shortly be undertaken to assess whether CT scanning will be a viable proposition in the future. In 2024, 245 inquests were held (15%) and 565 post-mortem examinations (33%).

The coroner area contains sections of the M54 motorway as well as several major A-roads and main rail lines to/from Birmingham and Cardiff. There is 1 prison, which serves as both an adult male prison and a young offender prison; there is also a mental health adult inpatient centre within the jurisdiction.

There are 3 acute hospitals, Royal Shrewsbury Hospital, Princess Royal Hospital (Telford) and Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital well as several community hospitals. Close and efficient working relationships have been established with the Medical Examiner Service which is based at Royal Shrewsbury and Princess Royal hospitals.

Daily Operations and accommodation

The service is located in dedicated accommodation, including offices and court in Shrewsbury at the Guildhall. The service is located in the same building as the Registration Service. The coroner's court, which is located within 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 opening to hearing is currently 19 weeks.

Six coroner's officers are employed by Shropshire Council and supervised by managers within the Coroner's and Registration Service. The Senior Coroner, the assistant coroners and coroner's officers are supported by an administrator and a Coroners Administration and Systems Manager, employed by Shropshire Council.

All staff are co-located with the Senior Coroner.

The administrative support staff are responsible for answering incoming calls from the public on weekdays 9.30am – 4.00pm

3. JOB SUMMARY

The role of the coroner:

- Coroners are independent judicial office holders. When made aware that a body or bodies of deceased persons lie within the coroner area, the coroner is responsible for conducting investigations and holding inquests when required (with or without a jury) into deaths to determine **who** the deceased was, **when** and **where** the deceased came by his or her death and **how** that death occurred. A referral is made to the coroner when there is reason to suspect that:
 - i. The deceased died a violent or unnatural death
 - ii. The cause of death is unknown; or
 - iii. The deceased died while in custody or otherwise in state detention.
- Conducting investigations of this kind will include where appropriate directing pathologists and others to determine these answers. Coroners also have a duty to produce Prevention of Future Death reports should an investigation give rise to concerns about future deaths occurring from the circumstances that caused the death. Coroners also deal with claims for treasure when required in accordance with statutory regulations and guidance.

Overview of the role of a Senior Coroner:

The senior coroner stands at the head of the coroner service and leads in that area to ensure that a high-quality coroner service is provided to the local community that puts the bereaved at the heart of the process. This includes preparing for any significant emergencies which may occur and to be available to provide 24-hour availability as well as holding regular team meetings and liaising with stakeholders. The Senior Coroner will be responsible for submitting annual returns to the Chief Coroner and Lord Chancellor as and when required. This will include working effectively with the local authority and police authority and to hold regular meetings with both and with local Registrars. The Senior Coroner acts as the Data Controller for the coroner's service, ensuring that all relevant legislation is observed and necessary security measures are put in place to protect against accidental or unlawful destruction, loss, alteration and disclosure of data. The Senior Coroner oversees the management of all post-decision challenges that are brought within the area to ensure compliance and that the challenge is properly dealt with.

Senior Coroner Role Responsibilities and Assessment criteria

As with other Judicial roles the Judicial Skills and Abilities Framework 2025 [JSAF 2025 230725](#) outlines the essential skills and competencies expected of judicial office holders, aiming to enhance recruitment and development processes within the judiciary. It will be helpful to read them as the JSAF has been drafted by judges, for judges and prospective judges to enable them to evidence their experience and suitability for judicial office. The JSAF highlights the key skills that all judicial office holders or prospective judicial office holders should demonstrate across their application or career.

The specific assessment criteria for Senior Coroners is set out below:

Assimilating and clarifying information

Senior Coroners are expected to be able to quickly assimilate information to identify essential issues, seeking clarification where necessary so a clear understanding of this information is gained. This will include possessing the ability to explain legal and medical terms to people from non-legal or non-medical backgrounds. Senior Coroners are responsible for assimilating information to write reports about the jurisdiction.

Assessment criteria

- 1. Excellent analytical skills and a consistency of decision-making and administrative direction.**
- 2. An ability to analyse information in order to support the effective running of a team.**
- 3. The ability to explain complex terms to those from non-legal or non-medical backgrounds.**

Managing work and leading effectively

A large amount of coronial work takes place outside of the court setting and therefore Senior Coroners are expected to be able to lead and manage the work of the team effectively. Senior Coroners will be expected to sit on the more complex and challenging inquests whilst providing an effective and efficient coronial service for the local community. When conducting inquests, Senior Coroners are required to lead by running hearings efficiently to facilitate a fair conclusion, minimise delays and effectively deal with case management. Senior Coroners must respond calmly and flexibly to changing circumstances and prioritise work to make the most of available resources whilst taking in to account any budgetary considerations as appropriate. The Senior Coroner manages resources and assists the local authority with the appointment process of area and assistant coroners. Senior Coroners are committed to ensuring that any expenditure is reasonable and controlled and works to monitor this regularly with the local authority.

Assessment criteria:

- 4. An ability to prioritise work effectively to minimise delays.**
- 5. Able to work at speed and under pressure.**
- 6. Demonstrates resilience responding calmly and flexibly to changing circumstances.**
- 7. Is able to manage and lead a team effectively.**

Working with others

An ability to work constructively with others whilst demonstrating an awareness of diversity and showing empathy and sensitivity in building relationships is required in this post. Senior Coroners must be able to constructively lead members of the coronial team and interact well with bereaved families and external stakeholders (e.g. relatives, police officers, medical personnel, mortuary staff, Registrars, witnesses and the media). The Senior Coroner will engage with the local community, for example giving talks and seeking feedback and views.

Assessment criteria:

- 8. Must have knowledge of the extent to which cultural and religious requirements can be met within the constraints of coroner law and practice.**
- 9. An ability to drive the service and be receptive to new ideas, reforms and diverse needs.**
- 10. Treats people with respect, sensitivity and in a fair manner without discrimination; ensuring the requirements of those with differing needs are properly met.**
- 11. An ability to work collaboratively with staff and their employers, internal and external stakeholders and relatives.**

Communicating effectively

Senior Coroners must be excellent communicators and have the ability to express themselves with authority when required. They must be sensitive and, as far as possible, responsive to the needs and requirements of those who engage with the coroner service and also possess the awareness to manage their expectations of the process. Senior Coroners must be IT literate and able to provide clear directions to staff on coroner investigations whilst creating a safe, harmonious and effective working environment through co-operative working and holding regular team meetings.

Assessment Criteria:

- 12. Excellent verbal and written communication skills.**
- 13. Establishes authority and inspires respect and confidence.**
- 14. Remains calm and authoritative even when challenged.**

Exercising judgement

Senior Coroners must demonstrate integrity and apply independence of mind to make incisive, fair and legally sound decision. Senior Coroners must also possess the ability to use sound judgement in leading the team such as deciding suitable allocation of resources.

Assessment criteria

- 15. Able to deal with emotionally charged situations that require sensitive handling and confident/positive judgement.**
- 16. Experience of conducting investigative enquiries including demonstrating clarity of thought in identifying issues relevant to the investigation.**
- 17. Reaches clear, reasoned decisions objectively, based on relevant law and findings of fact.**

Possessing and Building Knowledge

It is the responsibility of the Senior Coroner to keep an up-to-date working knowledge of coroner law, practice and guidance, and advise staff on developments as appropriate. Coroners must undertake compulsory Judicial College and Chief Coroner training as appropriate and the Senior Coroner, in conjunction with the local authority runs any local training. The Senior Coroner arranges and ensures that appraisals for all assistant coroners are completed.

Assessment criteria:

- 18. All applicants must be a barrister or solicitor or Fellow of the Institute of Legal Executives and satisfy the judicial-appointment eligibility condition which includes a requirement for the candidate to hold a relevant qualification, to have also gained experience in the law for a total period of at least 5 years *whilst holding that qualification* and be under the age of 75: paragraph 3 of Schedule 3.**
- 19. Thorough, up to date knowledge of legislation, case law and guidance relating to coroner's duties.**
- 20. Knowledge of structures and procedures of the police, in particular those relating to the investigation of sudden or suspicious deaths.**
- 21. Knowledge of the organisational structures of local government including an understanding of the challenges facing local government, both at present and in the future.**
- 22. Experience of holding inquests, including jury inquests.**
- 23. Previous experience as a senior, area or assistant coroner**

In relation to each competency, please provide specific, examples and instances which demonstrate the relevant competency. Generalised assertions, such as 'it is my practice to...' or 'I generally/always do x, y or z' or 'I have the following general skills' do not assist the sifting panel in determining if the competency has been met.

Please detail the coroner work that you have undertaken including:

- (a) how many days worked as coroner
- (b) the nature of the work
- (c) the division of time between office and court
- (d) the extent of experience in completing CN2 forms
- (e) the number and type of inquests conducted
- (f) the number of long inquests and their subject matter; and
- (g) the number of Jury inquests conducted

(h) experience of digital case management systems

24. Please include details of any other judicial appointment held.

Desirable criteria:

24. Full current driving licence (unless disability precludes this) and use of a vehicle for work purposes.

4. SUMMARY OF TERMS & CONDITIONS OF THE SENIOR CORONER

The conditions of service applicable to the post are those set out in Schedule 3, Coroners and Justice Act 2009. The senior coroner holds office on whatever terms are from time to time agreed between the coroner and the relevant local authority. You will not be an employee of the Local Authority.

Salary

The annual salary for the post is **£137,379 to £148,105** for a basic 40 hour a week together with the provision of an out of hours service according to the working requirements of the position.

Pension Scheme

A Senior Coroner may join the Local Government Pension Scheme (LPGS) in accordance with any provisions relating to coroner appointments as applied to that scheme.

Hours of work

Following discussion and agreement with the local authority, the Senior Coroner will arrange for an out of hours service. In accordance with The Coroners (Investigations) Regulations 2013, the Senior Coroner shall ensure that a coroner is available in the area at all times to address matters relating to an investigation into a death, which must be dealt with immediately and cannot wait until the next working day, including emergencies and other urgent requests.

The Senior Coroner is normally expected to live within one hour travelling distance of the office and to work on a daily basis during the week in the office provided. Please include details in your application as to how you will fulfil this requirement.

Holiday entitlement

The Senior Coroner will be expected to take an annual leave entitlement of 28 days (rising to 33 days after 5 years' service) excluding bank holidays and public holidays.

Payment of expenses

Expenses will be paid in line with the Council's expenses policy.

Indemnity

The Council will indemnify the Senior 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 Senior 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. The Senior Coroner will be expected to give six months' notice of retirement or resignation to enable the Council to comply with the provisions of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 in filling the vacancy.

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

5. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCESS

Applications

To apply for this position, you are required to submit a CV and a full supporting statement of up to two sides of A4 (no smaller than font 11). It is important that your supporting statement fully addresses the assessment criteria detailed in **bold** in the job summary section above.

In particular please demonstrate how you meet the following criteria:

- 1. Assimilating and clarifying information**
- 2. Managing work efficiently**
- 3. Working with others**
- 4. Communicating effectively**
- 5. Exercising judgement**
- 6. Possessing and Building Knowledge**

If you do not complete a full supporting 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.

In relation to each competency, please provide specific, examples and instances which demonstrate the relevant competency. Generalised assertions, such as 'it is my practice to...' or 'I generally/always do x, y or z' or 'I have the following general skills' do not assist the sifting panel in determining if the competency has been met.

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.

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.

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 in your application from the outset.

All applicants will be required to complete a declaration and undertaking form when they attend for interview.

The successful candidate will be required to undergo a DBS check.

Applicants must specify in their application if they are the subject of any complaint or disciplinary proceedings by any professional body to which they belong (including personal conduct referred to the Judicial Conduct Investigations Office).

Applicants will also be asked in interview to declare anything about themselves including in their past that might be an embarrassment to the Local Authority, the Chief Coroner or the Lord Chancellor particularly bearing in mind the basic set of guiding principles in the Guide to Judicial Conduct:

[Guide to Judicial Conduct – Revised July 2023 - Courts and Tribunals Judiciary](#)

Interview

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

Chief Coroner's role in the process

The Chief Coroner or her nominee will be providing advice to the Council throughout the recruitment process, in particular so as to ensure that the process is fully transparent and fair. The Chief Coroner's nominee will attend the interviews. The precise role they play in the interview process will be agreed by the Chief Coroner and Local Authority.

No appointment may be made unless the Chief Coroner and the Lord Chancellor consent to it.

Once appointed a Coroner becomes and remains an independent judicial officer holder.

6. RECRUITMENT TIMETABLE

Suitably qualified applicants are requested to email their CV, their application and their signed declaration to: molly.ashelford@shropshire.gov.uk

Closing date: 5pm Friday 20th February 2026

Sift return date: 9th March 2026

Interview invitations will be sent out: w/c 16th March 2026

Interview date: w/c 23rd March 2026

If you do not hear by 23rd March 2026, please assume you have not been shortlisted.

The interview panel will be confirmed in the interview invitation

Observing/attending - Chief Coroner or nominee to be confirmed

We are aiming for the successful candidate to take up post on 7th July 2026.