



GUIDANCE No.6

THE CORONER APPOINTMENT PROCESS

Introduction

1. This guidance sets out the recommended process to run efficient and successful appointment campaigns for Senior, Area and Assistant Coroners. It promotes consistency and good practice across the country and explains how the Chief Coroner will exercise her power under the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 (the 2009 Act) to consent to appointments.
2. Whilst the appointments process is in many respects a matter for the Local Authority, before the Chief Coroner will give her consent, she must be satisfied that a fair recruitment process has taken place, that each appointment is based on merit and that each candidate meets the good character requirements necessary for the holding of judicial office¹.
3. It is important to note that whilst Local Authorities 'appoint' Coroners, they do not 'employ' them in the conventional sense. The appointment of a Coroner by a Local Authority is very different to the other Local Authority recruitment. A Coroner is a Judge² and is required to make independent judicial decisions. Local Authorities pay coroners' salaries or fees, and agree other terms and conditions, but there is no contract of employment between a Local Authority and a Coroner. Coroners should not be equated in financial or other terms with Chief Officers.
4. All Local Authorities should appoint the best candidate(s) on the basis of merit through fair and open competition. The Chief Coroner aims to ensure that a wide pool of potential candidates is considered, and a fair and open appointment campaign takes place.

¹ When considering 'good character', the Chief Coroner will take into account the Good Character Guidance produced by the Judicial Appointment Commission, as it is appropriate to hold coroners to the same high standards as other members of the judiciary.

² *Forrest v Lord Chancellor* [2011] EWHC 142 (Admin) at para 27.

5. To be eligible for any coroner appointment a person must be under the age of 75 and satisfy the judicial eligibility condition³. This means that the candidate must hold a relevant legal qualification and have gained experience in the law for a total period of at least 5 years whilst holding that qualification.
6. There is no statutory requirement for coroners in Wales to speak Welsh, but details of Welsh language skills must be sought from candidates applying for any coroner posts in Wales.

Notice of a vacancy to the Chief Coroner's office

7. When a Local Authority notifies the Chief Coroner's office of their intention to commence an appointment campaign, the Chief Coroner's office will provide a copy of the relevant 'appointments pack', which includes the following:
 - guide to eligibility;
 - draft advertisement;
 - job specification;
 - scoring sheet;
 - individual assessment form;
 - declaration form;
 - link to The Guide to Judicial Conduct; and
 - step by step assurance guide.
8. These documents should be read carefully along with this Guidance prior to commencing any appointment campaign.

Appointment of a Senior Coroner

9. When recruiting a Senior Coroner, the Local Authority is primarily looking for a Judge to lead the coroner service in their area. However, the Senior Coroner role also includes wider responsibilities to support the Chief Coroner and the coroner service. The regional and national duties undertaken by Senior Coroners include assisting with the training and development of others, being members of specialist cadres, and undertaking outreach work to increase the understanding of the coroner

³ Schedule 3, paragraph 3 to the 2009 Act.

service. These are matters, which must be considered when identifying the Local Authority's preferred candidate.

10. Where the coroner area consists of more than one Local Authority, the relevant authority must consult the other authority or authorities before making a Senior Coroner appointment⁴. Although the 2009 Act is silent as to the approach with other Coroner appointments, it is likely that all relevant authorities will wish to take the same approach with all coronial appointments in their areas. The Chief Coroner will seek reassurance on this point when asked to give consent to appointments.

Mergers

11. Where a Senior Coroner vacancy arises, the relevant Local Authority must notify the Chief Coroner and the Lord Chancellor in writing as soon as practicable. Consideration may then be given by the Lord Chancellor to merging that coroner area with one or more other areas.
12. Before requesting an appointments pack, the relevant Local Authority should first engage with the Ministry of Justice to establish whether a merger of coroner areas is under consideration. This early engagement is necessary to ensure that any potential merger proposals are identified at the outset. The Chief Coroner will not issue an appointments pack until the Local Authority has confirmed that the Ministry of Justice has been consulted and that no merger proposal is under active consideration.

The Chief Coroner's nominee

13. To be able to decide whether to give consent, the Chief Coroner will either be directly involved in the recruitment process⁵ or will nominate an experienced Senior Coroner to act as her nominee. The nominee and the Chief Coroner's office will be available to assist Local Authorities throughout the appointment process.
14. The Chief Coroner or her nominee will attend the interviews. The precise role they play in the interview process will be agreed by the Chief Coroner and Local Authority.
15. The relevant authority will pay any nominee's reasonable expenses. These expenses will include a 'backfill' payment to the nominee's Local Authority to cover

⁴ Paragraph 1(2) of Schedule 3 to the 2009 Act. For the meaning of 'relevant authority' see paragraph 3, Schedule 2.

⁵ This may include delegating this responsibility to a Deputy Chief Coroner

the time spent on the appointment process. If reasonable in all the circumstances, this may include overnight accommodation. In most cases the nominee will not receive a fee because he or she will always be a full-time salaried Coroner. The Chief Coroner acknowledges that this may impose a modest financial burden on Local Authorities, but the representation of the Chief Coroner at Senior Coroner interviews is vital in preserving public confidence in the appointment process.

Timeline

16. The relevant Local Authority will need to consider timescales carefully prior to commencing the appointment process. To reach the maximum number of suitable candidates it is recommended that there is an application period of at least three weeks.
17. Time will be required to carry out the sift, and interview dates will need to be scheduled in accordance with the availability of panel members and whoever is representing the Chief Coroner.
18. There will also need to be sufficient time for whoever is representing the Chief Coroner to provide feedback on the interview process, and for the Chief Coroner and Lord Chancellor to provide consent.

The advertisement

19. The relevant Local Authority should notify the Chief Coroner's office of any forthcoming appointment campaign by emailing: chiefcoronersoffice@judiciary.uk in the first instance.
20. The Chief Coroner's office will then provide a copy of the appointment pack.
21. The relevant Local Authority should prepare a draft advertisement using the template provided in the pack as a basis, ensuring it incorporates any specific information or requirements of the coroner area. The relevant Local Authority should then submit the draft advertisement to the Chief Coroner's office for comments and approval. A timetable should also be provided.
22. The relevant Local Authority should consider and respond to any comments from the Chief Coroner/her nominee and submit the final advertisement and job specification to the Chief Coroner's office for approval before the role is advertised.
23. It is recommended that this paperwork includes:
 - Terms and conditions of the appointment;

- Salary payable;
- Details of how to apply with specified application deadlines and interview dates;
- A job description;
- Reference to the eligibility conditions (see paragraph 5 above); and
- A requirement that applicants declare whether any formal complaint about their professional conduct has ever been upheld or remains outstanding by any professional body (including conduct referred to the Judicial Conduct Investigations Office), or whether there is anything about them or their past that if disclosed might cause embarrassment to the Local Authority, the Chief Coroner or the Lord Chancellor that they feel they should bring to the attention of those considering the application.

24. Once the advert is approved, the relevant Local Authority is responsible for advertising the position. The Chief Coroner's Office will advise the Local Authority as to the recommended routes when adverts are agreed.

The sift

25. The Local Authority conducts the sift. The best practice is for the sift to be anonymised. The sift is conducted based on the criteria specified in the advert and the sift panel decides who they wish to interview, providing the Chief Coroner's office with the sift results. A threshold or cut-off mark should be established, and the highest scoring candidates must be invited to interview. The sift results should include:

- The names of those of who applied with a copy of their CV and statement of suitability.
- Sift criteria details and the sift scores for all candidates. This should be recorded using the sift scoring table included in the appointments pack.
- The names of those who the Local Authority intends to call for interview.
- Comments on why candidates were successful or unsuccessful.

26. This information should be sent to the Chief Coroner's office for each candidate (whether or not they have been chosen for interview) before any candidates are notified of the outcome.

27. It is important for the Chief Coroner/her nominee to consider all the papers and the sift results to ensure that they have knowledge of the entire process and are satisfied it has been conducted properly.
28. Once the sift has been approved by the Chief Coroner/her nominee, the Local Authority should invite the chosen candidates to interview. These are senior appointments and confidentiality should be maintained throughout the entire appointment process.

The interviews

29. The Chief Coroner's nominee will need to see the questions and presentation topics, as well as copies of the applications and supporting statements from the candidates who have been selected for interview.
30. Local Authorities should seek assistance with any technical questions and scoring indicators and should submit proposed interview questions as early as possible in the campaign, so as not to delay the process.
31. The Local Authority should formulate relevant non-technical questions, for example in relation to budgets, collaboration and team working. These will be drafted and thought about carefully to include scoring indicators, so that they are relevant and can be robustly scored.
32. All interviews for Senior Coroner posts will require candidates to make a presentation to the interview panel. It is likely that some notice of the subject of the presentation will be provided.
33. It is important that before being interviewed, all candidates are asked to make a written declaration of good character, using the form provided in the appointments pack. This may be done when the candidate attends for the interview, prior to the interview commencing. The declaration confirms whether the candidate is subject to disciplinary or criminal proceedings or has had any findings made against them in past proceedings.
34. It is also recommended that all candidates are asked to declare in the interview whether there is anything they believe should be brought to the attention of the Local Authority, bearing in mind the principles set out in the Guide to Judicial Conduct.
35. The constitution of the interview panel is for the Local Authority to determine, with agreement from the Chief Coroner. Normally, the Local Authority will appoint senior officers to conduct the interviews. The Chief Coroner may invite the Local Authority to allow her/her nominee to sit on the panel if appropriate in all the circumstances.

Ideally the same interview panel should conduct the interviews, even if they take place over different days.

36. The interviews should be carried out using the interview scoring matrix provided in the appointments pack. The process must be objective, using the same pre-determined interview questions that are asked in the same way to all candidates.
37. Each panel member should complete their own score sheet for each candidate. They can complete it during the interview or at the end of each interview but should not be distracted from listening to answers.
38. The panel should compile the information on the individual score sheets to produce a document that includes the scores of all candidates, enabling their results easily to be compared.

Decision after interviews

39. After all the interviews are completed, the interview panel will discuss the relative merits of the candidates and come to a decision. The selection must be based on merit and the highest scoring candidate must be offered the post.
40. If there is more than one candidate who obtained the highest score, there should be a review of the overall scoring, and a fair justification found for choosing one candidate over the other. If in exceptional circumstances no legitimate justification can be found, there may be a determinative interview by another panel.
41. If the panel considers that no-one scored sufficiently highly, the panel should not recommend a candidate for appointment and the post should be re-advertised.
42. The Chief Coroner's nominee will prepare a report on the recruitment process and outcome and submit it to the Chief Coroner for consideration. A template nominee report is available from the Chief Coroner's office.

The appointment

43. The Chief Coroner and the Lord Chancellor give their consent separately in writing (or give reasons in writing for not giving their consent). Once the Chief Coroner has given consent, the Chief Coroner's office will automatically send a copy of the consent letter to the Ministry of Justice to seek the consent of the Lord Chancellor. Once consent from both the Chief Coroner and Lord Chancellor has been obtained an email will be sent to the relevant Local Authority containing both letters of consent.

44. Only after receiving consent from both the Chief Coroner and the Lord Chancellor may the relevant Local Authority notify all candidates (successful and unsuccessful) of the outcome. It will take at least 7 working days after the interviews for consent to be provided.

The announcement and swearing in

45. Once the appointment date has been confirmed, the Local Authority should notify the Chief Coroner's office.

46. The Local Authority is responsible for announcing the appointment, but should liaise with the Chief Coroner's office about the timing of their announcement. When the Local Authority's announcement is published, the Chief Coroner will inform all coroners in England and Wales of the appointment and will update the relevant judicial websites. New Senior Coroner appointments will also be mentioned in the Chief Coroner's newsletter.

47. Senior Coroners are formally sworn in at a ceremony held by the Chief Coroner.

Appointment of an Area Coroner

48. Some busy coroner areas will choose to appoint one or more Area Coroners, whose role is to assist the Senior Coroner and act as a nominated deputy in the event of the Senior Coroner being absent or incapacitated. As with Senior Coroners, Area Coroners are appointed by the Local Authority⁶.

49. Area Coroners are full-time or part-time salaried coroners who are appointed on a permanent basis. The process set out above in respect of Senior Coroner appointments will apply to the role of Area Coroner in relation to the Chief Coroner's nominee, timelines, advertisement, sift, interviews, decisions after interviews, appointment, swearing in and announcements.

50. For Area Coroner interviews, the Senior Coroner for that jurisdiction and/or a Chief Coroner nominee would be expected to sit on the panel and be involved in the drafting of the interview questions and presentation topic.

⁶ Section 23 of the 2009 Act, and paragraph 2 of Schedule 3.

Appointment of Assistant Coroners

51. Assistant Coroners, who are fee paid, are also appointed by the Local Authority⁷.
52. There is no requirement under the 2009 Act for the chairman of the Local Authority to approve such appointments. It will be for each relevant authority to determine who should sign off coroner appointments for their area. Elected members may well choose to delegate this function to officers.
53. The Chief Coroner and the Lord Chancellor must consent to the appointments of all Assistant Coroners⁸.
54. The Lord Chancellor may by order require the appointment for any coroner area of a minimum number of Assistant Coroners⁹. At present each coroner area must have at least one Assistant Coroner¹⁰.

The Annual recruitment cycle for Assistant Coroners

55. In August 2024, the Chief Coroner announced a new system for the recruitment of Assistant Coroners. After carefully reviewing the arrangements, and considering the mandatory induction training requirement, it was announced that from January 2025 there would be an annual appointments cycle with a clear timetable to follow should Local Authorities wish to appoint Assistants.
56. The new appointments system puts Assistant Coroner appointments on an annual footing, similar to other judicial appointments. It also streamlines the process and makes efficiencies in terms of Judicial College induction training.
57. Each year the Chief Coroner's office will disseminate an end-to-end timetable for Local Authorities to follow if they wish to appoint Assistants in that annual cycle. It is expected that:
 - Recruitment forecasting will take place between November and February.
 - In February the Chief Coroner's Office will publish on the [Coroner Vacancies - Courts and Tribunals Judiciary](#) webpage a list of those Coroner Areas who are intending to recruit.

⁷ Section 23, and paragraph 2 of Schedule 3

⁸ Paragraph 2(5) of Schedule 3

⁹ Paragraph 2(1)(b) of Schedule 3

¹⁰ Coroners and Justice Act 2009 (Coroner Areas and Assistant Coroners) Transitional Order 2013.

- There will be a designated period for: requesting recruitment packs; placing adverts; sifting candidate applications; and interviewing.
- To enable the appropriate consents to be sought from the Chief Coroner and Lord Chancellor the recruitment process must be completed by 31 July.
- The yearly appointments process will feed into the one Assistant Coroner Induction training course. This training is held in two parts the first towards the end of the year (December) and the second part in the middle of the year (June).

58. The process for appointing Assistant Coroners should be similar to the process for appointing Senior and Area Coroners. The main differences are as follows:

- Although the appointment of new Assistant Coroners is a Local Authority decision, the Local Authority should always involve the Senior Coroner for the area in the process, seeking the Senior Coroner's advice and assistance on (a) the number of Assistant Coroner appointments, (b) the sift in selecting candidates for interview, (c) drafting the technical interview questions and presentation scenario for interview and (d) as a member of the interview panel.
- As a result of the likely number of appointments, the Chief Coroner will not be able to be directly involved, so will always choose a nominee to assist in the process. This will usually be one of the Regional Leadership Coroners.

Forecasting

59. It will be for the relevant authority in each area, in consultation with the Senior Coroner, to determine how many Assistant Coroners are needed pursuant to business need.

60. In terms of how many Assistants to recruit, Local Authorities and Senior Coroners must bear in mind an appointment is a permanent position and whoever is appointed cannot be removed from office save by the Lord Chancellor with the agreement of the Lady Chief Justice after an investigation by the Judicial Conduct Investigation Office. They will therefore remain in office until retirement age unless they resign. As a result, areas should not seek to appoint an Assistant Coroner for a short-term appointment to deal with (a) a backlog of cases or (b) a particular inquest. If an area needs support with either of these situations, they should contact the Chief Coroner's office.

61. The opportunity to appoint will only be run once per year so Senior Coroners and Local Authorities will need to review existing appointments and consider any plans

they may have regarding sitting days or retirements when making plans for the forthcoming year.

62. The Chief Coroner runs a workshop for those seeking appointment as an Assistant Coroner. These workshops are advertised in advance.

Minimum sitting days

63. All Assistant Coroners must be offered a minimum of 20 days sittings per year. The minimum sitting requirement must be undertaken in each area to which an Assistant Coroner is appointed and cannot be shared between areas.
64. Senior Coroners and Local Authorities should not have Assistant Coroners who are not actively working in the jurisdiction and who despite being offered sittings, have not undertaken a minimum of 20 sitting days each year (except for some historic Assistant Coroner appointments where a minimum of 15 sittings days was agreed). If an individual is not actively working in the jurisdiction due to other commitments or having secured a salaried role, a discussion will need to take place with their Senior Coroner regarding ability to undertake the minimum sitting requirements.
65. An Assistant Coroner who has failed without reasonable excuse to comply with their minimum sitting requirements may be reported to the Judicial Conduct Investigations Office.
66. There is, however, an exception to the requirement to sit the minimum number of days in respect of resilience appointments (see 'Resilience Appointments' below).

Appointments pack

67. If a Local Authority decides to recruit new Assistant Coroners, they should request an appointments pack from the Chief Coroner's office in February. The pack will include the Chief Coroner's appointments guidance, a step-by-step assurance guide, a draft advertisement template (including job specification), sift and interview scoring sheets, and a declaration and undertaking form.
68. The Local Authority should make sure that the advertisement for the roles is widely publicised. It will be necessary in appointing Assistant Coroners to advertise more widely than amongst coroners, for example in legal periodicals, to attract the widest pool of applicants and enable new talent to enter the service.
69. In the advert for Assistant Coroner roles, it must be made clear that Assistant Coroners who are appointed for the first time (i.e. those who are not already

appointed in another coroner area) must attend a Judicial College Coroner Induction course.

The sift

70. The recruitment pack contains the competencies for appointment as an Assistant Coroner. It is important to check that all applicants satisfy the legal eligibility requirements at the time that the application timetable closes.
71. Local Authorities and Senior Coroners must not apply their own additional criteria unless these have been included in the advert (e.g. panels cannot sift based on their own assessment as to how long it will take an applicant to travel to the coroner area without making explicit enquiries).
72. Panels must also not make their own assessment of how many sitting days they think a candidate could offer. This is a matter that can be explored at interview, but candidates should not be sifted out on the basis of any assumptions.
73. Given the high number of applications Assistant Coroner competitions attract, panels should establish a robust marking system, using the sift scoring sheet in the appointments pack, that allows for sufficient differentiation between candidates. All candidates who scored above the threshold for interview mark must be invited to attend the interview stage.

Preparing for the interview

74. It is not unusual for applicants to be asked to prepare a scenario for presentation at interview. Candidates can be provided with the topic in advance, with it either being sent to them when they are invited to interview or provided a set period of time before the interview.
75. When setting a scenario, it is important to remember that candidates will come from different professional backgrounds and will have varying levels of knowledge and experience of Coroners' courts. It would therefore be sensible to draft a scenario that caters for limited knowledge of the coronial system, with more focused topics being better explored in the general interview questions.
76. Panels should set a time limit for the presentation. If a panel has asked for a ten-minute presentation, then it would be entitled to warn the candidate when they have two minutes remaining but should not give candidates more than the prescribed time.

77. It is sensible to include some questions to test the applicant's knowledge of coronial law and some questions to assess their judgement of situations.
78. Panels must compile indicators for the answer to each question so that a consistent scoring system is applied to all candidates. The Chief Coroner's office can supply draft questions so panels can see the structure.

The interviews

79. It is important that before being interviewed, all candidates are asked to make a written declaration of good character, using the form provided in the appointments pack. This may be done when the candidate attends for the interview, prior to the interview commencing. The declaration confirms whether the candidate is subject to disciplinary or criminal proceedings or has had any findings made against them in past proceedings.
80. It is also recommended that all candidates are asked to declare in the interview whether there is anything they believe should be brought to the attention of the Local Authority, bearing in mind the principles set out in the Guide to Judicial Conduct.
81. The constitution of the interview panel is for the Local Authority to determine, with agreement from the Chief Coroner. Ideally the same interview panel should conduct the interviews, even if they take place over different days. The Chief Coroner does not send a nominee to attend the interviews.
82. The interviews should be carried out using the interview scoring matrix provided in the appointments pack. The process must be objective, using the same pre-determined interview questions that are asked in the same way to all candidates. Each panel member should complete their own score sheet for each candidate. They can complete it during the interview or at the end of each interview but should not be distracted from listening to answers.
83. The panel should compile the information on the individual score sheets to produce a document that includes the scores of all candidates, enabling their results easily to be compared.

Decision after interviews

84. After all the interviews are completed, the interview panel will discuss the relative merits of the candidates and come to a decision. The selection must be based on merit and the highest scoring candidates must be offered the roles. If two or more candidates achieve the same score for one of the roles, there should be a review of

the overall scoring. A fair justification must be found for choosing one candidate over the other in these circumstances.

85. If the panel considers that no-one scored sufficiently highly, the panel should not recommend any candidates for appointment and the roles should be re-advertised.

86. It is wise, if there are a large number of good candidates, to consider whether more Assistant Coroners could be appointed.

Notification of results

87. Candidates must not be told the outcome of the interview on the day of interview or before the Chief Coroner and Lord Chancellor have given their consent. It will take at least 7 working days after the interviews for consent to be provided.

88. After the interviews, the Local Authority should make a written report for the Chief Coroner about the application and interview process and the reasons for proposing the successful candidate(s). The report submitted by the Local Authority should include the information listed below:

- The interview questions.
- The scoring criteria.
- The reasons why each candidate was successful or unsuccessful.
- The scoring matrix or summary of each candidate's interview performance.
- The name(s) of candidate(s) that the Local Authority wishes to appoint.
- A request for consent to the appointment(s) from the Chief Coroner and Lord Chancellor.
- Declarations from each candidate selected for appointment confirming whether they have any previous convictions, and whether they have any disciplinary proceedings or complaints recorded against them, together with confirmation that they were asked at interview to declare any matters that the Local Authority may need to know about, and the answer provided.
- Any confirmation of a reference check that has been carried out (this may be carried out in line with current Local Authority practices).

89. Each proposed appointment will be carefully scrutinised before being approved by the Chief Coroner. This requires (a) the Local Authority to satisfy the Chief Coroner that the process has been conducted fairly and that the chosen appointees have demonstrated the competencies necessary for appointment, and (b) the applicant to have completed the declaration that they are of good character.
90. The Chief Coroner and the Lord Chancellor give their consent separately in writing (or give reasons in writing for not giving their consent). Once the Chief Coroner has given consent, the Chief Coroner's office will automatically send a copy of the consent letter to the Ministry of Justice to seek the consent of the Lord Chancellor. Once consent from both the Chief Coroner and Lord Chancellor has been obtained an email will be sent to the relevant Local Authority containing both letters of consent. Only after receiving consent from both the Chief Coroner and the Lord Chancellor may the relevant Local Authority notify all interviewed candidates of the outcome. This will be at least a minimum of 7 working days after the interviews.
91. The Chief Coroner's office will discuss with the Local Authority how any announcements of appointments should be made.

Training

92. Contact details for all new appointees and confirmation of their training needs (i.e. whether they are a new Assistant Coroners and will require induction training) should be emailed to the Chief Coroner's office. This should include their name(s), date of birth, contact details (including a work and personal email address, and a contact telephone number) and their start date.
93. Once contact details have been provided by the Local Authority, each newly appointed Coroner will receive from the Chief Coroner's office instructions on how to access their ejudiciary account and details of their responsibilities in respect of that account. Ejudiciary accounts must be used to book coroner training through the Judicial College Learning System (JCLS).
94. Newly appointed Assistant Coroners must attend mandatory Assistant Coroner induction training. This training is held in two parts, Induction 1 towards the end of the year (December) and Induction 2 in the middle of the following year (June). Induction 1 must be completed before Assistant Coroners undertake any inquest work, including inquests in writing. This is in line with other judicial appointments.
95. All newly appointed Assistant Coroners who do not hold any other judicial appointments must also attend the 'Faculty Induction' course, which is run by the Judicial College and is mandatory for new judges across jurisdictions. This can be

accessed and booked through JCLS. However, it should not be booked until the appointee has completed some court sittings, as the course is intended to build upon the skills and understanding they will obtain in the early days of working as a judge.

96. All Assistant Coroners will be formally sworn in at the end of part one of the mandatory induction training by the Chief Coroner.
97. As with all coroners, Assistant Coroners must attend compulsory annual coroner continuation training. Requests for permission not to attend must be submitted to the Senior Coroner for the area and to the Chief Coroner for approval. In the absence of compelling personal reasons, such requests are likely to be refused, as training is an essential requirement.

Resilience appointments

98. The local structure of the coroner service can make it challenging to provide senior support to coroner areas in times of need. Where there are concerns about an area's resilience, the Chief Coroner and Lord Chancellor may decide to consent to the appointment of a salaried coroner from a nearby area as an Assistant Coroner in the vulnerable area. Such appointments will be made based on business need without following the appointment process outlined in this guidance. However, resilience appointments will only be made in exceptional circumstances. It is not appropriate for a resilience appointment to be made as an alternative to properly resourcing a coroner area, or for the cover arrangements in an area to rely routinely on someone who holds a resilience appointment. Where a resilience appointment exists, it should only be used where the senior coroner of the vulnerable area is absent and there is no-one ordinarily appointed to the area who can cover their work.
99. Where a resilience appointment is made, it is not expected that the appointed coroner will routinely sit as an Assistant Coroner in the area, so the usual 20-day sitting requirement does not apply.

Reasonable Adjustments

100. Local Authorities are expected to consider any request for reasonable adjustments to the recruitment process. It is suggested that any request is dealt with in line with the Judicial Appointments Commission's policy available publicly at: <https://judicialappointments.gov.uk/reasonable-adjustments>

Oaths

101. As noted above, coroners must take the judicial oath or affirmation on taking office. The form of the judicial oath in English and Welsh is set out at Annex A below [we'd set out the Annex wording after Alex's sign off]. There is no need for any additional oath of allegiance.
102. Coroners appointed before the implementation of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 may not have been required to take an oath on appointment. However, the principles underlying the oath/affirmation still apply to them.
103. Taking the oath or affirmation is not a pre-condition of sitting on an inquest or conducting an investigation, so swearing-in ceremonies will be arranged at convenient times following a coroner's appointment.

HHJ ALEXIA DURRAN
CHIEF CORONER OF ENGLAND AND WALES

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