

COUNCIL	AGENDA ITEM No. 15(a)
22 FEBRUARY 2011	PUBLIC REPORT

APPOINTMENT OF A DEPUTY CORONER FOR PETERBOROUGH

R E C O M M E N D A T I O N S
FROM : Solicitor to the Council
That Council: Approves the appointment of Simon Milburn as the Deputy Coroner for Peterborough

1. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

Following acceptance of the offer of appointment to the office of H.M. Coroner for Peterborough, David Hemming will commence holding office as a Coroner for this jurisdiction on the 1st April 2012 and is required by s.6 of the Coroners Act 1988 to appoint a Deputy Coroner.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** Subject to approval of Council, the Coroner shall appoint a Deputy Coroner and thereafter may appoint one or more Assistant Deputy Coroners. David Hemming has advised of a suitable Deputy Coroner that, if approved, will commence on 1st April 2012. Subject to Council approval, he intends to appoint Simon Milburn. Mr Milburn, a Solicitor of 20 years, is Director and Head of the Criminal Department at Hunt and Coombs Solicitors, Peterborough and has handled many high profile matters. Being a busy advocate he has all the necessary skills needed to run a Coroners Court subject to obtaining suitable training.
- 2.2** David Hemming has advised that he wishes to appoint Anna Spriggs as Assistant Deputy Coroner (her current position), as Ms Spriggs has expressed a desire to continue with this role. Furthermore, Mr Hemming believes it also necessary to appoint Gordon Ryall as Assistant Deputy Coroner for a period of time after 1st April 2012 to assist with some of the historical complex cases left in the system.
- 2.3** The Deputy Coroner provides cover for the Coroner during periods of annual leave, sickness, training, meetings and to assist with any essential workload when the Coroner is conducting inquests scheduled to last for more than a day. He is entitled to an allowance paid by the council in accordance with nationally agreed rates.
- 2.4** The Deputy Coroner will not be a Council Officer, but an independent judicial office holder, and therefore the Employment Committee does not have the authority to make the appointment.

3. IMPLICATIONS

Legal

- 3.1** The Coroner is legally obliged to appoint a Deputy Coroner, under s.6 of the Coroners Act 1988, and is entitled to make his own choice of the most suitable candidate, subject to the approval of Council. It should be noted that the Coroner may at any time revoke this appointment, but the revocation shall not take effect until a successor has been appointed by the council.

Financial

- 3.2** There are no specific financial implications to appointing a Deputy Coroner, aside from officer time.

4. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985).

None.