

Report to: **Audit, Best Value & Community Services Scrutiny Committee**

Date: **4 September 2012**

By: **Assistant Chief Executive**

Title of report: **Overview of the Coroner's Office**

Purpose of report: **To provide the Committee with an overview of the Coroner's Office for East Sussex**

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**RECOMMENDATION: The Committee is recommended to develop an understanding of the role of the Coroner's Office and consider how it fits within the wider remit of the Committee.**

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## **1. Financial Implications**

1.1 There are no financial implications directly associated with this report. The 2012/13 budget for the Coroner's Office is £847,000.

## **2. Background**

2.1 The Coroner's Office falls within the remit of this Committee but has not been included previously as part of the work programme.

2.2 A coroner is an independent judicial officer, appointed and paid for by the relevant local authority. A coroner determines the identity of the deceased and how, when and where they died. When the death is suspected to have been either sudden with unknown cause, violent, unnatural, or whilst the deceased was in lawful custody, the coroner decides whether to hold a post-mortem and, if necessary, an inquest.

2.3 Alan Craze, the HM Coroner for East Sussex will provide the Committee with an overview of the Coroner's Office in East Sussex.

2.4 Some lines of inquiry might include:

- The use of 'Rule 43' (after an inquest, if a coroner believes further deaths may be prevented by taking action, the coroner may report the circumstances to a person who has power to take action).
- The impact of the newly created Chief Coroner (their role includes providing support, leadership and guidance for coroners, setting national standards and monitoring investigations into the deaths of service personnel).

SIMON HUGHES

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Background Documents

None