**Information for applicants for the role of Victims Advocate for the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner**

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# **About the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner**

The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) is responsible for hiring and firing the Chief Constable, setting the force priorities, setting the budget, supporting victims of crime, preventing offending and approving major spending decisions.

The PCC represents the three million people of the West Midlands, from Coventry in the east to Wolverhampton in the West.

Simon Foster was initially elected as the West Midlands PCC in May 2021. He was re-elected PCC in May 2024 and will serve a four-year term.

Preventing and tackling violence against women and girls and supporting victims, has always been and will always be, a top priority for the PCC. This is because, of the catastrophic and devastating impact it has on victims, their families and friends. The PCC has set high expectations of West Midlands Police within his Police and Crime Plan.

The PCC believes that the rights and welfare of victims – as set out in the Victims’ Code – must always be at the forefront of the service provided by West Midlands Police and the wider criminal justice system. It is absolutely essential that West Midlands Police and the wider criminal justice system comply with the Victims’ Code at all times. There is no excuse for not doing so.

The PCC has committed to continue to hold West Midlands Police to account to ensure that it complies with the Victims’ Code and that the rights and welfare of victims are at the forefront of the entire spectrum of the criminal justice system.

You find out more information on the PCC and their office here: [Meet your PCC - West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner (westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk)](https://www.westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk/your-commissioner/meet-your-pcc/)

You can read the PCC’s Police and Crime Plan here: [The-West-Midlands-Police-and-Crime-Plan-2021-25.pdf (westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk)](https://www.westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/The-West-Midlands-Police-and-Crime-Plan-2021-25.pdf?x32340)



# **Service Specification – Victims Advocate**

**£50,000 per annum with an expectation in the region of 26 hours a week**

1. The role of the Victims Advocate, is to support the PCC in discharging his legislative duties and functions, by providing challenge, oversight and scrutiny across the criminal justice system, with a particular focus on the rights and welfare of victims and compliance with the Victims Code. This will include, close oversight and scrutiny of WMP’s compliance and that of the wider CJS.
2. The Victims Advocate, would be required to utilise existing forums and platforms, to amplify the voice of the victim, to ensure that the development of all policy and strategies, relevant to victims of crime are underpinned with an acute and current understanding of victims needs and experiences.
3. The role will be part of the Police and Crime Commissioner’s team, with oversight given by the Chief Executive. The role will also work closely with the Policy Manager of the Victims team.
4. The Victims Advocate will:
	1. be a champion for the victims, survivors and witnesses of crime in the West Midlands.
	2. identify and report on potential improvements to the to the way in which victims experience the criminal justice system in the West Midlands.
	3. ensure that the voice of victims is heard at a strategic level, to ensure that they influence the development of services for victims.
	4. provide timely expertise and advice to the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), Chief Executive (CE) and PCC staff on all aspects of understanding the needs of and how best to respond to the needs of victims of crime so as to deliver the victim related elements of the Police and Crime Plan.
	5. be one of three members of the Accountability and Governance Board (alongside the PCC and DPCC) asking probing questions in relation to victims interests of the Chief Constable and Force Executive Team in support of the PCC’s function of holding the Chief Constable to account for delivery of policing in the West Midlands.
	6. work with the PCC’s Advisory Panel to inform the development of policy and strategic proposals.
	7. consider papers and reports and proposed decisions of the PCC and apply skill, knowledge and expertise. Provide constructive criticism, analysis, comments and views to the PCC in relation to victims of crime.
	8. scrutinise, support and challenge the overall performance of the force including against the priorities agreed within the Plan.
	9. advise the PCC in exercising his functions in setting the budget and precept.
	10. ensure that there is a regional multi-agency whole-system approach to identifying and responding to the needs of victims.
	11. promote the interests of all victims and witnesses across the West Midlands by amplifying their voices to influence the development of policy, strategy and commissioning.
	12. ensure the voice of victims is effectively represented through the work of the OPCC and its strategic partners, so that the experience and outcomes for victims within the criminal justice system can be improved.
	13. engage directly with victims of crime to ensure a wide range of understanding of the needs of, and issues faced by, victims of crime as they navigate the criminal justice system.
	14. chair and lead on the continued development and success of a number of strategic partnership meetings including the Victims Commission and the Victims and Witnesses Delivery Group and others as appropriate.
	15. ensure that the Victims Code of Practice and the rights of victims are upheld not only within the police service but throughout the entire spectrum of the Criminal Justice System, including the CPS, Probation, HMCTS and Prisons.
	16. represent the PCC at external events/conferences pertinent to the victim’s portfolio delivering speeches, presentations and partaking in panel discussions
	17. work with local, regional and national partners and stakeholders (statutory and non-statutory), to effectively influence the development of relevant policy, with a particular focus on fostering cohesive cross-agency action and opportunities for greater integration.
	18. support the PCC in providing oversight of West Midlands Police and provide challenge to the other criminal justice agencies in the West Midlands to continuously improve services for victims.
	19. champion compliance with the Victims Code of Practice and encourage responsibility and accountability through work with all criminal justice partners.
	20. lead on work to ensure an efficient and effective police service for the West Midlands which responds appropriately and sensitively to the needs of victims and is compliant with the Victims Code.
	21. ccollaborate with the APCC, Ministry of Justice, Home Office, National Victims Commissioner, National Domestic Abuse Commissioner, regional Commissioners and other organisations in relation to victims’ issues.
	22. influence national policy in respect of victims of crime by carrying out policy scanning and responds to developments at local, regional and national level.
5. Essential Skills and Abilities
6. Ability to empathise with victims and survivors of all kinds of criminal offences
7. Ability to work effectively in a political environment
8. Ability to work effectively with VCSE organisations
9. Ability to demonstrate the skills required to operate at board level, with the capability to advise the PCC and senior regional and national stakeholders.
10. Ability to deal with complex information, making assessments and responding/acting appropriately
11. Excellent communication, influencing and negotiating skills
12. The ability to bring disparate stakeholders together to positively progress an agenda
13. Excellent knowledge and understanding of the criminal justice system, nationally and in the West Midlands, especially as it pertains to victims
14. Demonstrable commitment to equalities, inclusion and diversity, ensuring that all matters relating to victims have proper regard to equality and diversity issues
15. Ability to work with a wide range of people at all levels.
16. Commitment to the values, objectives and commitments of the PCC.
17. General Responsibilities
* To be responsible for own health and safety and that of your colleagues and all others in the workplace, in accordance with OPCC Health and Safety policies.
* To work in accordance with data protection policies and adhere to Freedom of Information policies where appropriate.
* Maintain the highest standards of personal and professional integrity.

# **Terms of Appointment**

1. The Victims Advocate will not be a member of the Commissioner’s staff, nor will they have been an OPCC employee or long-term contractors within the last 3 years. They will be engaged on a contract for services with detailed terms and conditions which will secure the proper performance of their role in the public interest.
2. The Victims Advocate will be engaged for an initial period of 1 year, which may be subject to extension. The contract for services will be liable for termination by the Commissioner, at any time with immediate effect without any further payment other than outstanding fees. The contract for services will include a requirement for regular reviews of performance under the contract.
* Fees will be paid to a rate of £50,000 per annum, paid at regular intervals upon receipt of invoices from the Victims Advocate.
1. The Victims Advocate will be expected to work independently.
2. Successful applicants will need to be police security and management vetted due to the confidential nature of information and/or data being considered from time to time.
3. Attendance at Accountability and Governance Boards and Advisory Panel meetings and associated events will be monitored and failure to attend meetings without good reason may lead to deduction from fees or termination of the contract.

# **Appointment Process**

1. The selection process will be based upon the principles set out in the Code of Practice published by the Commissioner for Public Appointments which relate to ministerial appointments to public bodies. The three basic principles are that appointments be made on merit by an objective, fair and open selection process. The appointment will be made under the principles of public life set out by the Committee on Standards in Public Life (Nolan Principles).
2. Applicants are invited to submit a CV and a one page covering letter with references to: wmpcc@westmidlands.police.uk. by the deadline of 12 noon on **6 December 2024**
3. A provisional date for Interviews has been sent on **19 December 2024**, to be held in person. This date is subject to possible alteration. The interview panel will include:
* West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner, Simon Foster
* Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer, Jonathan Jardine
* Deputy Chief Executive, Alethea Fuller
1. The West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner understands that to effectively serve an area with such a rich cultural tapestry like the West Midlands, it is vital it is driven by people who reflect the diverse cultures and backgrounds that form its communities. To achieve this, we are seeking applications from people of all backgrounds and experiences to represent the West Midlands.
2. For an informal discussion about the role please contact Lucy Naylor by emailing: lucy.naylor@westmidlands.police.uk