



Neutral Citation Number: [2024] EWHC 932 (Admin)

Case No: AC-2024-MAN-000005

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE
KING'S BENCH DIVISION
ADMINISTRATIVE COURT
SITTING IN MANCHESTER

Circulated: Monday, 22nd April 2024
Hand-down: Tuesday, 23rd March 2024

Before:

MR JUSTICE FORDHAM

Between:

**THE KING (on the application of
ROBERT BARTOSIK)**

Claimant

- and -

**OFFICE OF THE POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER FOR NORFOLK**

Defendant

The Claimant in person
Norfolk Constabulary Legal Services for the Defendant

Determination as to Venue

I direct that no official shorthand note shall be taken of this Judgment and that copies of this version as handed down may be treated as authentic.

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THE HON. MR JUSTICE FORDHAM

MR JUSTICE FORDHAM:

1. This is a judicial determination on the papers, but where – as with other Venue Determinations – I will give reasons embodied in a short judgment, to promote open justice. The claim for judicial review is dated 5 January 2024 and was filed in Manchester. The Claimant lives in Glasgow (G2). The target for judicial review is the decision (4.12.23) of the Office of the Police Commissioner for Norfolk. The subject matter of the claim is the manner in which a complaint made by the Claimant alleging a crime, received by Norfolk Police in December 2021, had been dealt with there and, specifically, how a review was dealt with by the Office of the Norfolk Police Commissioner.
2. Although the Claimant ticked the box in his Form N461 to say that the North West region of England was the region “with which the claim is most closely connected”, that was clearly wrong. This was spotted by the Lawyer who made the minded-to transfer order (28.3.24). In response, the Claimant has not sought to defend that position. Instead, the Claimant says (a) he himself has his closest connection with the North-West of England region and (b) London deals with a large volume of claims with a long waiting list. The Defendant supports transfer.
3. In my judgment, the region with which the claim has its closest connection is plainly the South-East of England and London (as the regional venue for the South-East) is where this case should be administered. I do not consider it “desirable to administer the claim” in Manchester “in light of the volume of claims issued at, and the capacity, resources and workload of” this court as “the court at which it is issued” (CPR PD54C §2.5(f)). The regional venues’ resources should, generally speaking, be directed at dealing with claims with their closest connection to that region. True, London has a large volume of cases, but it is equipped for them. The published Minutes of the User Group for the Administrative Court in Manchester (with our new “BEST Email Protocol”) records, in the public domain, the case-load challenges faced by this Court. Indeed, if and insofar as any delay has been injected by this venue issue having to be dealt with, the Claimant has brought that on himself by the choice he made when he filed the proceedings. Neither the Claimant’s closer links to Manchester (he does not reside in the North-West of England for the purposes of PD54C §2.5), nor considerations relating to case-load, militate against this claim being dealt with where it belongs. That is the South-East.

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