

JOB PROFILE

DIRECTORATE	Resources
JOB TITLE	Principal Solicitor
POST NUMBER	Principal Solicitor (Corporate Team) - Z00548 Principal Solicitor (Social Care & Education Team)- Z00549 Principal Solicitor (Regeneration Team) - Z00600
GRADE	Band 9 (£43,000 - £56,450)
RESPONSIBLE TO	Deputy Head of Legal
KEY LIAISON WITH	Staff of the Directorate and other Directorates, Elected Members Private practice barristers and solicitors and their staff Members of the public Outside bodies Partner organisations
JOB PURPOSE	To assist in providing a legal service to all Directorates of the Council, its clients, outside bodies and partner organisations To deputise for the Deputy Head of Legal To provide strategic corporate legal support to the Head of Legal and Directorates of the Council To deputise for the Monitoring Officer (MO) as directed by the MO or in absence
JOB PROFILE LAST REVIEWED	June 2009

KEY CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITIES	
1.	To work with colleagues to achieve service plan objectives/targets.
2.	To participate in Employee Development Scheme/Appraisals and contribute to the identification of your own and team development needs
3.	To actively promote the Council's Equal Opportunity Policy and Diversity Strategy and observe the standard of conduct which prevents discrimination taking place.
4.	To ensure full compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 etc., the Council's Health and Safety Policy and all locally agreed safe methods of work.

KEY CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITIES

5. To fully understand and be aware of the commitment to Section 17 of the 'Duty of Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to prevent crime and disorder'
6. At the discretion of the Head of Service, such other activities as may from time to time may be agreed consistent with the nature of the job described above.

KEY SERVICE RELATED ACCOUNTABILITIES

Overall purpose of the Job

- To manage teams of lawyers and relevant support staff and be responsible for the provision of high quality, responsive legal services to clients – including committees, other Council bodies, elected Members and staff within the Council's departments in relation to complex matters requiring legal input to provide legal advice and support in relation to all aspects of legal management and to specialise in at least one of the following:
 - Social Care (Adult & Children) & Education
 - Property, Planning & Regeneration/Environment
 - Litigation, Employment, Housing & Prosecutions
 - Corporate law & Governance, Contracts & procurement
 - Electoral Services
 - Registration
- To handle personally a caseload of highly complex matters insofar as they relate to relevant legal matters.
- To play a leading role in the management of Legal Services.
- To play an effective and leading role within the Legal Management Team to ensure delivery of the Council's corporate aims and objectives.
- To advise and generally deal with such other complex and strategic legal matters as may be required

Job Context

- The Postholder reports to the Deputy Head of Legal Services who also serves as the Council's Deputy Monitoring Officer
- The Postholder has variable, service wide, line management responsibility in addition to direct line management responsibility as directed from time to time for team members
- The Postholder has budget responsibility for ensuring all matters they are

allocated to have sufficient budget for the legal support and that is monitored and delivered within the budget agreed.

- The postholder may be required to work evenings, weekends and occasional public holidays, in order to meet service requirements.

Key Tasks and Accountabilities

- Key tasks and accountabilities are intended to be a guide to the range and level of work expected of the postholder. This is not an exhaustive list of all tasks that may fall to the postholder and employees will be expected to carry out such other reasonable duties which may be required from time to time.
- To deputise for the Head of Legal at meetings of full Council, Cabinet, committees, sub-committees, officer and chief officers on a regular basis or when required to provide legal advice as directed by or in absence of the Deputy and/or Head of Legal Services as required..
- To deputise for the Head of Legal Services as the Council's Monitoring Officer in accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 in the absence of the Head of Legal Services under direction.
- To advise the Council including the Mayor, the Cabinet, committees & sub-committees, Members, chief officers and staff in council departments on the law relating to matters within the remit of the work streams, and generally affecting Local Government for which the postholder is responsible.
- To prepare reports or to provide legal comments on reports to the Mayor, the Cabinet, committees and sub-committees of the Council.
- To deal with more complex, contentious or sensitive Corporate legal matters requiring legal input and to assist with policy development in the area of Corporate Law.
- To handle a caseload of complex legal matters including researching the law, drafting legal documents, liaising and negotiating with external solicitors and others and, where appropriate, instructing Counsel and external experts.
- To attend court, a tribunal or public inquiry (as appropriate), with or without counsel, to present the Council's case.
- To take the lead in negotiations with clients over the level and type of service provided to them and to ensure that the services provided by the teams drawn together to deliver service level agreements are responsive, evolve to meet changing client needs and receive a consistently high client satisfaction rating.
- To liaise with the senior management teams in client departments to ensure that Legal Services' business objectives are aligned with the Council's corporate strategic objectives and priorities.
- To respond to legal queries received from Members, Chief Officers, Members of Parliament, the Ombudsman and external organisations.
- To ensure that all LEXCEL standards are rigorously adhered to in the Team.
- To keep abreast of the law and to determine the effect of new legislation,

advising the Council, Members, individual departments and officers on relevant developments in the law.

- To keep methods of working under constant review and introduce new or revised methods where this is necessary to meet new requirements or to enhance the quality of services delivered to clients.
- To take a proactive approach and use initiative to resolve problems and issues.
- To manage and supervise any line reports and teams brought together to deliver major projects and to ensure that they achieve agreed outcomes.
- To oversee the training and development of staff and to run training courses for staff and clients on relevant areas of the law and practice.
- Provide managerial and professional support to the team and lead the team in developing a professional quality service culture.
- To ensure the project teams comply with the Lexcel quality standards and any other standards agreed with its clients.
- Together with other members of the Senior Management Team and Supporting Regeneration Team, to be responsible for the strategic direction of the Legal Service.
- To be a member of the Legal Services Management Team.
- To take a lead role on particular strategic management issues and initiatives across the service as requested by the Head of Legal Services such issues to include but not necessarily limited to, quality, monitoring, performance, development, complaints and the like.
- To comply with all Council policies and procedures.
- To undertake such other duties commensurate with the level and responsibilities of the post as may be requested from time to time.

STRUCTURE

The Principal Solicitor reports to the Deputy Head of Legal Services

PERSON SPECIFICATION

JOB TITLE: Principal Solicitor

DEPARTMENT: Legal Services

Information for Applicants: The Person Specification provides an outline of the experience, skills and abilities we expect the successful candidate to possess. You should match your own skills, experience, and abilities to those listed below. Tell us in what way you have carried out the criteria asked for. Disabled people will be offered an interview where they meet the Essential Criteria alone.

Method of Testing

- 1 = Application
- 2 = Interview
- 3 = Assessment Tests/Presentation

Weighting of Criterion

- 1 = Low Importance
- 2 = Medium Importance
- 3 = High Importance

<u>Key Competencies and Behaviours</u>	How Measured 1 - 3	Weighting of Criterion 1 - 3
1. Skills and Abilities – Essential		
Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist knowledge of one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Social Care (Adult & Children) & Education ➤ Property, Planning, Environment & Regeneration ➤ Litigation, Employment, Housing & Prosecutions ➤ Local Government administrative/Corporate law & governance ➤ Contracts & procurement/commissioning ➤ Electoral Services ➤ Registration 	1, 2	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and understanding of Local Government law and decision-making, including executive 	1, 2	2

<u>Key Competencies and Behaviours</u>	How Measured 1 - 3	Weighting of Criterion 1 - 3
<p>arrangements and ethical agenda.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the judicial review process and procedure of the High Court, County Court and Tribunals • Good communication skills both oral and written and the ability to explain issues clearly, objectively and in a personable manner. • Good advocacy, presentation and negotiation skills. • Ability to think creatively when faced with problems and adopting a solutions-focused approach • Ability to lead and motivate staff, initiate and manage change, adopt a proactive approach to providing legal advice and support and set clear targets for service delivery and performance enhancement • Ability to advise Members and Senior Officers and represent confidently the Council and the Service in meetings with Members, Staff, outside bodies and other contacts • Ability to work comfortably with many (often complex) tasks at any one time, work under pressure and meet tight deadlines • Ability to develop and maintain good working relationships and work constructively and co-operatively with staff at all levels and members of all political parties. • Ability to link the Council's key corporate policy objectives and values to the provision of the legal service 	<p>1, 2</p> <p>1, 2</p> <p>1, 3</p> <p>1, 2</p> <p>1, 2</p> <p>1,2,3</p> <p>1,2,3</p> <p>1, 2</p> <p>1,2,3</p>	<p>1</p> <p>3</p> <p>2</p> <p>2</p> <p>3</p> <p>3</p> <p>3</p> <p>3</p> <p>2</p>
1. Skills and Abilities – Desirable		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of recent relevant legislation and developments in social care and safeguarding/employment/contracts& public procurement/licensing/local government administration, democratic services processes, 	<p>1, 2</p> <p>1, 2</p>	<p>1</p> <p>1</p>

<u>Key Competencies and Behaviours</u>	How Measured 1 - 3	Weighting of Criterion 1 - 3
corporate governance and decision-making. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the needs and expectations of senior Members and Officers • Knowledge of use of case management technology and other management tools • Developing innovative and forward-thinking ways of working 	 1, 2 2 2	 1 1 1
2. Special Knowledge – Essential		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and experience of effectively running a high quality legal services team • Evidence of continuing professional development and/or performance management training 	 1, 2 1	 3 3
3. Experience – Essential		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 years' post qualification legal experience of working in or for a public sector organisation and demonstrating substantial experience in one or more of the following specialist areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Social Care (Adult & Children) & Education ➢ Property, Planning & Environment law & Regeneration ➢ Litigation, Employment, Housing & Prosecutions ➢ Local Government Corporate/administrative law & Governance ➢ Contracts/procurement & commissioning ➢ Electoral Services ➢ Registration • Experience of managing a team efficiently with evidence of achievement in motivating and leading staff and developing a team working approach • Experience of working as part of a team and on own initiative with minimum supervision • Experience of dealing with corporate complaints and members enquiries 	 1, 2 1, 2 1,2 1 1	 3 3 2 3 1

<u>Key Competencies and Behaviours</u>	How Measured 1 - 3	Weighting of Criterion 1 - 3
3. Experience - Desirable		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recent experience of advocacy in the Courts, tribunals and/or enquiries 	1	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recent experience of deputising at Senior level and/or carrying out Monitoring Officer duties 	1	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience of leading or working in and contributing effectively to multi-disciplinary project management teams 	1,2	3
4. Other Requirements – Essential		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualified Solicitor, Barrister or Legal Executive or has at least 5 years' continuous experience in this field of work 	1	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Showing a clear willingness to develop expertise or experience in other areas of law, policy and practice 	1	1
5. Equality – Essential		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An understanding of and commitment to equal opportunities and diversity in service delivery in a complex organisation 	1,2	3