**GOVERNANCE Service Area**

**Legal Services**

# JOB DESCRIPTION

**Job Title:** Principal Lawyer – General Law

**Service Unit:** Legal Services

**Service Area:** Governance

**Grade:** L

**Job Purpose**

To provide and ensure the provision of general legal advice, representation and assistance and personally undertake legal casework in at least one of the general law team specialisms of pre and post litigation matters arising from a variety of Council activities, including prosecutions, civil litigation, adult social care, property, planning and highways, contract and major projects, and other inquiries, inquests, and tribunals together with the supervision and management of the General Law Team and contributing to the work of the wider Legal Management Team

To undertake the duties of the post in a positive manner to achieve the policy objectives of the Council and ensure that Legal Services provides an excellent and highly professional service within those policy objectives.

**Main Duties and Responsibilities:**

1. To manage and oversee the work undertaken in the General Law Team and to manage a team of lawyers and officers.
2. To be an active member of the Legal Management Team and to contribute to the effective and efficient management of the Service as ‘One Team’.
3. To personally undertake the more complex casework, together with routine casework as required;
4. To undertake and support legal work on a range of local government issues, including for example, statutory orders and miscellaneous environmental matters, adult social care and education, including academies;
5. To undertake advocacy at all levels of Courts, Inquiries and Tribunals as appropriate;
6. To provide a full range of professional legal advice and services to the Council on all aspects of the Council’s activities as required including support with information governance, data protection, FOI requests and ombudsman complaints;
7. To work with senior officers to ensure a responsive and cost-effective service is being provided;
8. To keep up to date with developments in local government and the law which are relevant to the post;
9. To use information and communications technology of Legal Services when carrying out work, including the Service’s case management and bundling system;
10. To present training courses and services to staff in Legal Services and other Services and Members of the Council as required;
11. To continually review, develop and improve systems, processes and services in support of the Council’s pursuit of continuous improvement and best value;
12. To maintain and follow appropriate office procedures and to provide relevant statistical and management information as may from time to time be required;
13. To support and provide cover for staff, to manage/supervise other staff as may be appropriate, to participate in development appraisal reviews and identification of training needs and generally to make an effective contribution to the management and operation of Legal Services; and
14. To undertake such other duties within Legal Services as from time to time may be required which are commensurate with the grading and general character of the post.

**GOVERNANCE Service Area**

**Legal Services**

**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

# PRINCIPAL LAWYER – GENERAL LAW

**A. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS/QUALIFICATIONS**

1. Three years’ post qualification as a solicitor of the Senior Courts (or equivalent) Essential

2. Relevant training Desirable

**B. EXPERIENCE**

1. Three years’ post qualification experience as a “practising” lawyer in an environment where legal services are provided Essential

3. Experience of advising local authorities Desirable

4. Experience of supervising/managing staff Desirable

**C. KEY SKILLS**

1. Ability to work under pressure Essential

2. Ability to communicate clearly both orally and in writing Essential

Ability to undertake advocacy before courts/tribunals/inquires as appropriate Essential

Ability to undertake complex drafting and negotiations as appropriate Essential

3. Ability to organise, prioritise workloads and drive progress Essential

4. High level legal skills Essential

5. Ability to work and apply the law in a practical and effective way Essential

6. Ability to adapt to and take on new areas of work Essential

**D. KEY KNOWLEDGE**

1. Substantial knowledge and experience in at least one of the general law team’s areas of work

Essential

2 good working knowledge of FOI, Data protection and Ombudsman Complaints Desirable

3. Good working knowledge of one or more of the following areas of law:

Public law/prosecutions /education/planning/adult social care/employment

/civil litigation/planning and highways/ contract and projects/ property Desirable

**E. KEY APTITUDES AND PERSONAL QUALITIES**

1. Confidence Essential

2. Good interpersonal and customer care skills Essential

3. Understanding and awareness of equality issues Essential

4. Commitment to modern local government Essential

5. Commitment to continuous improvement and improved service delivery Essential

6. IT literate Essential

7. Flexible and can-do approach Essential

8. Resilience Essential

**For Information:**

Essential Requirement without which the candidate would be unable to carry out the duties of the post.

Desirable features are those which would normally enable the successful candidate to perform the duties and tasks better and more efficiently than one who did not have the qualifications, training, experience.