

Senior Property Lawyer

Department	Legal and Democratic Services
Pay Grade	CG8 - 9
Responsible to	Principal Property Lawyer

Role Purpose

To assist the Head of Legal and Democratic Services in providing an efficient, effective, and economic legal service to the Council in relation to all aspects of property law and practice.

To train and supervise other and junior staff (e.g. Legal Assistants) in relation to various transactional work. To help, assist and develop those staff in their transition to become fully qualified lawyers

Role Specific Responsibilities / Accountabilities

- To assist with, provide advice on and undertake conveyancing and property work of all kinds on the Council's behalf, or other client's including some more complex work, particularly (but not limited to): -
 - the acquisition and disposal of land.
 - the grant, taking and modification of business and residential leases.
 - the grant, taking and modification of rights over land.
 - easements and licences.
 - landlord and tenant matters.
 - development schemes.
 - housing enabling work.
 - drainage and highway agreements.
 - development agreements.
 - the use of compulsory acquisition powers.
 - the drafting and completion of contracts and other types of property agreements.
 - the drafting, processing, issue and service of notices.
 - Assets of Community Value nominations.
- To give legal advice to the Council, its members, officers and services in respect of any and all of the Council's functions relating to property matters and to deal with relevant enquiries from members of the public.
- To liaise with members and advise members and client services on current issues such as the impact of legislation and codes of practice on particular proposals, local policies and Council practices in relation to the work areas of the post-holder.

- To draft, prepare and comment on committee reports, policy documents and other briefing papers as required by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.
- To instruct counsel or external solicitors in respect of seeking advice or representation at planning inquiries or court hearings.
- To ensure that the post-holder's performance targets contained in any appraisal document, best value or other performance document, specification or service level agreement are met.
- To carry out all work using the legal services' case management system; to time, record, work and adopt modern working practices and make use of technologies provided to legal services.
- To ensure that all work produced is reflective of best practice and is of a high professional and modern standard.
- To ensure compliance with legal services' practice manual and quality assurance requirements.
- To represent the Head of Legal and Democratic Services at meetings with members, committees, sub-committees, panels, working groups, public meetings, public agencies and external professional representatives.
- To contribute to the effective working relationships within legal services and between legal services and client services, external solicitors, counsel, other professionals, public agencies and members of the public. To carry out any of the above work for any external clients as necessary.
- To carry out such training as the Head of Legal and Democratic Services considers appropriate.
- Please note the Lawyer Career Grading document which should be read alongside this job profile.

Knowledge, Skills and Qualifications

Minimum knowledge, skills and qualifications required to perform this role, relevant experience may be a substitute.

Desirable Criteria

- Experience of working in local government and local government legal practices.
- Knowledge of the local government structure and experience of dealing with Council members.

Essential Criteria

- Able to demonstrate practising experience in property law and practice.
- Good customer services skills.
- Flexible and adaptable.
- Clear, concise, modern and authoritative written, typed and verbal communication skills.
- Able to communicate with a range of people from different backgrounds, including ethnic, social and professional, both verbally and in writing.
- Able to draft a range of complex legal documents, including leases and agreements.
- Able to use all available methods of research.
- Logical and systematic in approach.

- Able to prioritise work and respond to deadlines.
- Good time management and organisational skills; able to use time management system.
- Able to handle own caseload and provide prompt, clear and accurate advice in specialist fields.
- Prepared to think creatively and to use initiative.
- Able and willing to work well as part of a team and also to work well independently and on own initiative.
- Prepared to learn and undertake personal development.
- Competent IT user, able to use different systems and packages, particularly Microsoft Word and Outlook - efficient use of IT is essential.
- Have an interest in local government and the public service.
- Educated to both GCSE and A Level, or equivalent.
- Admitted as a Solicitor, Barrister or Fellow Chartered Legal Executive.

Appendix

Generic Employee Responsibilities / Accountabilities

- Engage and participate in delivering the corporate objectives of the council and contribute to the collective leadership, development and management of the organisation to assist in the implementation and realisation of the council's strategic objectives and District Plan through the development of business plans.
- Participate in a culture of learning, collaborative working and excellence to build a culture of high performance, which inspires and supports the delivery of the council's District Plan.
- Ensure that all duties are carried out in compliance with relevant statutory processes, corporate policies and the council's constitution.
- Proactively seek opportunities to improve ways of working by evaluating activities to determine what adds value and where necessary, implement those changes.
- Assist with the development of team members' skills and knowledge through a culture of learning, collaborative working and excellence to build a culture of high performance which inspires and enables people and supports the delivery of the council's District Plan and strategic objectives.
- Develop good working relationships with local people, local businesses, the voluntary sector, regional authorities, government and a wide range of other partners in order to promote the interests and uphold the reputation of the council and so building a positive image of the organisation.
- Assist in the participation, recruitment, leadership and development of team members as required.
- Support in the management of budgets and resources ensuring that they are deployed effectively with robust internal controls to deliver intended outcomes in a manner which demonstrates value for money and compliance with relevant policies and guidelines.
- Contribute in the provision of advice and guidance to cabinet / Council, Scrutiny Committees and Advisory Groups to assist in supporting the translation of political objectives and priorities into coherent initiatives that will deliver their intended outcomes for Horsham District

- Promote equality, diversity, access to services and tackling discrimination both within and outside the council to ensure there is a clear and consistent focus across the organisation and its partners in delivering an inclusive customer experience to all.
- Generally to comply with the Health and Safety policy and guidance ensuring the required mechanisms are used and to support the promotion of a culture of good health, safety and welfare, especially if nominated or appointed specifically to carry out simple checks at your place of work and log the activity.
- Follow the council's safeguarding procedures and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults across council services.
- Assess risk management in service areas and follow reporting procedures, as appropriate, to minimise risks to the council's operations.
- Follow and adhere to all Data Protection procedures and processes in accordance with relevant legislation ensuring all personal data of employees, members of the public and clients is used appropriately and retained within guidelines.
- The Returning Officer in this constituency is responsible for the election process. There is an expectation that council employees will, as reasonably requested to do so, assist the returning officer in election processes.
- In the event of a major incident or disaster you may be required to provide assistance in whatever capacity necessary to provide the necessary organisation, co-ordination and supply of resources to support the local key emergency services.

Generic Employee Behaviours

Our behaviours framework links to our values and identifies the core knowledge, skills, behaviours and attitudes we require from our people to deliver services.

Customer Focus

- Deliver a high standard of customer services
- Develop effective customer relationships
- Improve customer service to meet local needs and aspirations

Achieving Excellence

- Strive to be excellent
- Deliver increasing efficiency / effectiveness
- Use tax payers' money wisely to deliver the highest quality services to the satisfaction of our customers

Our People

- Work collaboratively together as one team
- Invest in own performance and career and support colleagues
- Work creatively and responsibly