

Job description

Job title: Business Partner/Senior Solicitor

Grade: Dorset Grade 15

Job evaluation reference: CS 700

Job family: Legal and Political

Purpose and impact

- To contribute to the provision of a legal service to Dorset Council and any other bodies to whom legal services are provided under contract.
- To ensure legality and propriety in Dorset Council matters.
- Responsible for leading and managing a team of advisers within Legal Services.
- To work in partnership with the appropriate Directorate Leadership Team (DLT) to gain an in-depth understanding of their key challenges and drivers. To feed-back and support the Legal Services Manager in making arrangements for provision of legal services to meet the requirements and assist Directorate in achieving their overall objectives in a lawful and legally compliant way.
- To undertake personally and to delegate to solicitors and other members of Legal Services staff nominated for the purpose, legal and advisory work arising from the functions of Dorset Council and from other bodies to whom legal services are provided under contract.
- To lead and manage a team within Legal Services.
- To act as a conduit for feedback between the relevant directorate and DLT and the wider Legal Service, representing service specific needs back to Legal Services colleagues and vice versa.

Key responsibilities

1. To advise and represent Dorset Council and its Directorates and in particular any Directorate specified within the Context Statement.
2. To assist Legal Services colleagues and the Legal Services Manager.
3. Generally, to provide a legal service, including the provision of advice, drafting, negotiation and advocacy in the relevant practice areas specified in the Context Statement.
4. To undertake, if required, preparation and conduct of litigation work including advocacy in relevant courts, public enquiries and tribunals, attendance at case conferences and other meetings where necessary, including the instruction of counsel as appropriate.
5. To represent the Head of Organisational Development and/or Legal Services Manager at such committees, sub-committees, working parties, departmental groups or meetings as may be allocated.
6. To undertake, if required, clerk duties, conduct appeals, panels and/or proceedings and deal with any related correspondence.
7. To secure the provision of legal services through the instruction of counsel or other suitable external providers.
8. To provide advice and assistance in relation to case law and legislative and procedural changes relating to the relevant practice areas specified in the Context Statement.



9. To reply to Ombudsman complaints for the relevant Directorate or Service as specified in the Context Statement.
10. To undertake such other duties specified in the relevant Context Statement or as from time to time may be allocated by the Legal Services Manager.
11. To personally undertake a range of highly complex legal work to support Dorset Council's objectives and priorities as determined by the Legal Services Manager.
12. To act as the leading qualified legal specialist within allocated specialist areas and to determine working standards, processes and approach to the management of work in these areas
13. To advise, guide and support Solicitors on specialist, complex or contentious legal issues and supervise areas of project or legal work delegated to Solicitors in accordance with Law Society quality standards.
14. To provide advice, guidance and support to Solicitors and Directorate operational services in respect of service entitlement, delivery, policy and procedure drafting, negotiation and advocacy in allocated areas of specialism.
15. To assist the Legal Services Manager as required.
16. To lead and manage staff including formal supervision, management and PDRs, as required.
17. To supervise, instruct and train trainee solicitors as required.
18. To undertake personally or allocate as appropriate the conduct of training seminars and interagency courses for legal and other staff, members and external clients.
19. To act as the primary Legal Services interface with the relevant directorate.
20. Any other lesser or comparable duties as required.

NB: The duties and responsibilities of this post are not restrictive, and the post holder may be required on occasion to undertake other duties. This will not substantially change the nature of the post.

Supervision and management

Reporting to: Legal Services Manager

Responsibility for: Supervision of any trainee solicitors and supervision and management of staff within a Legal Services team.

Other factors

Resources

21. Choice of instructing Counsel/external solicitors and expert witnesses (medical or other) and negotiating their fees.
22. Responsible for ensuring data quality and as such the integrity of management information through the proper use and safekeeping of data and record systems both manual and computerised.

Working Environment

23. Office based but required to attend court, tribunals, and other meetings both regionally and nationally.
24. Legal Services work in a busy, open plan office and the post holder will be required to meet communication demands through correspondence, phone calls, emails and personal visits.
25. As required, a need to provide out of hours advice (evenings, weekends and bank holidays).



Contacts & Relationships

26. Dealing with a range of complex and contentious matters requiring support, persuasion, advocacy and sensitivity, within the application of operational guidelines. The outcome may have significant implications for the contact or the service.

Work Demands

27. Dealing with difficult members of the public and being in adversarial situations.

28. An expectation and need to work over and above contracted hours and times where required including providing responses to unexpected or emergency situations.

Our values

Our values act as guiding principles, defining what we believe is important in the ways we work together. Our values are Respect, Together, Accountability, Openness and Curiosity. You will need to be able to demonstrate these values in action through the way you work, regardless of your role within the organisation. Information about our values can be found on our website.



Person specification

Your application will be assessed based on your demonstration of how you fulfil the following criteria: you should include clear examples of how you meet these criteria within your application form and during the assessment process.

Essential

Essential criteria are the minimum requirement for the above post and will be assessed through a combination of your application form, assessment, interview and references (as specified below). We will require evidence of the qualifications, training or registrations listed below.

Qualifications, training or registrations Required by law or essential to the performance of the role or both	Assessed through:
1. Qualified Solicitor or Barrister.	Application form
2. Educated to Degree level.	Application form
3. Local Government law	Application form
Experience	
4. Significant Post qualification work in relevant practice areas and any specific tasks as specified in the Context Statement.	Application form
5. Post qualification experience working within a local authority legal department.	Application form
6. Experience of working with and advising elected members in a local government environment.	Application form
7. Management and leadership experience.	Application form
8. Understanding and experience of the decision making process in a democratically accountable environment.	Application form
9. Experience of providing legal advice at strategic management level	Application form
Knowledge	
10. Demonstrable specialist knowledge of the relevant practice areas specified in the Context Statement including Local Government Law.	Application form Interview Assessment
11. Knowledge, understanding and experience of the legislative and policy framework within which Dorset Council works	Application form Interview Assessment
12. Knowledge and understanding of the law relating to democratic decision making in Local Government.	Application form Interview Assessment
Skills and abilities	
13. Ability to draft legal documentation relevant to the practice area specified in the Context Statement.	Interview Assessment
14. Research and problem solving.	Interview Assessment
15. Ability to use relevant IT facilities.	Interview Assessment
16. Ability to negotiate	Interview Assessment



17. Sound judgement skills and the ability to reach decisions taking account of the legal issues and local authority context.	Interview Assessment
18. Ability to work under pressure and deliver to deadlines.	Interview Assessment
19. Highly developed ability to communicate well with colleagues, clients and elected members.	Interview Assessment
20. Ability to undertake advocacy	Interview Assessment
Our values	
21. Respect	Interview Assessment
22. Together	Interview Assessment
23. Accountability	Interview Assessment
24. Openness	Interview Assessment
25. Curiosity	Interview Assessment
Other	
26. Ability to work as a business partner with the appropriate Directorate acting beyond personal specialism and representing the Legal Services Manager and wider Legal Service.	Application form
27. Ability and willingness to work as part of a team.	Application form
28. Understanding of and commitment to the importance of equal opportunities and diversity, both in service delivery and in employment practice.	Application form
29. Ability to fulfil the travel requirements of the post.	Application form
30. Ability to manage conflicting workload priorities.	Application form
31. Ability to work independently without detailed supervision.	Application form
32. Ability to contribute to practice management issues.	Application form

Desirable

Desirable criteria will be used in the event of multiple applicants meeting the minimum essential requirements and if applicable, will be assessed through a combination of your application form, assessment, interview and references (as specified below). If you meet the desirable criteria, we will require evidence of the qualifications, training or registrations listed below.

Qualifications, training or registrations	Assessed through:
33. Specialist qualifications in the relevant practice areas specified in the Context Statement.	Application form
Knowledge	
34. Knowledge of any additional and related practice areas specified in the Context Statement.	Application form Interview Assessment



35. Knowledge of Dorset Council's complaints policy and process and internal dispute resolution.

Application form
Interview
Assessment

Approval

Manager's job title:

Date:

