**Job Title Senior Solicitor: Safeguarding Legal & Democracy**

**Grade PO14**

**Job Description**

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| **Job Purpose** |
| Reporting to the Lead Lawyer: Children & Adults in Legal & Democracy, the post-holder is responsible for undertaking a specialist and complex local government safeguarding workload |
| **Major Tasks** |
| To undertake a workload of specialist, highly complex, high profile, high value legal advice matters subject to direction from the Lead Lawyer: Children & Adults. The post holder will be expected to advise on a varied area of local government safeguarding matters particularly relating to the following areas with an expectation that the post holder will have expert knowledge in at least one of the areas set out; children safeguarding, adult safeguarding, education, judicial review, high court proceedings and associated local government processes and decision-making. In addition the post holder may undertake an additional area of legal specialism undertaken by the Children & Adults Team including civil litigation, criminal litigation, tribunals, public protection, town and country planning, employment, information law, council tax and business rates, leisure and community services and associated local government processes and decision-making.  To attend Council, Cabinet and/or Committee meetings as required particularly, but not exclusively, in relation to the post holder’s specialist area of expertise as referred to in paragraph 2.1.  To provide advice, assistance and support to council officers, elected members and external clients at all levels including; advocacy, training, document drafting and review, attending meetings and providing written advice.  To liaise with external individuals and organisations to further the aims and objectives of the Council including; counsel, external legal advisors, other expert advisors and witnesses, other public bodies, bidders for Council services (and/or their representatives), private sector partners and contractors and external clients  To work collaboratively with other fee earners in the Children & Adults, Litigation & Regulatory and Property & Commercial Teams on a regular basis and in particular with the Solicitor(s): Safeguarding and the Safeguarding Legal Assistant.  To provide support for any other team in the Legal & Democracy Team as and when required.  To deputise for the Lead Lawyer: Children & Adults when required.  To assist the Monitoring Officer in the oversight of the ethical framework.  To promote legal services to external clients  To undertake such other duties as may reasonably be required by the Lead Lawyer: Children & Adults or the Legal & Democracy Service Delivery Manager. |
| **Contacts & Relationships** |
| The post holder will be expected to be in regular contact with the following:  Elected members of all levels, members of parliament, officers of all levels of seniority, counsel, Courts and Tribunals of all levels, external advisers, external partners and contractors, local and national groups and organisations working with the Council, external clients and prospective clients, members of the public, opponents and/or prospective opponents in litigation or other proceedings and/or their representatives. |
| **Creativity** |
| Prepares and reviews the following subject to direction from the Lead Lawyer: Children & Adults:   * Reports to full Council, Cabinet, Committees and other bodies on matters which may be extremely complex, high value, highly sensitive, innovative * Documents often of the highest complexity in the post holders area of expertise as set out above, including; briefs to counsel or other experts, statutory notices, agreements/contracts/memorandums of understanding or other similar documents, written advice to internal and/or external clients, court/tribunal documentation including particulars of claim/skeleton arguments/statements, training and promotional material for colleagues and (internal /external) clients as appropriate. * Brings together case law, statute, regulations, guidance, external advice to provide documentation and advice to address complex issues. |
| **Decisions** |
| Undertakes the following decisions   * Decisions on legal advice and assistance work of the highest complexity of the post holders expertise as set out at 2.1 above subject to the direction of the Lead Lawyer: Children & Adults where appropriate |
| **Management & Supervision** |
| Supervisory tasks are not the main aspect of this role but will be needed from time to time as follows:   * To supervise legal assistants and administrative support staff where appropriate on specific tasks to either; support the post holder in their own work, form part of training and knowledge transfer, assist a colleague using the post holders specific knowledge or skills or in the absence of another fee earner when tasks require completion in their absence. * To support and assist a solicitor, legal assistant or other fee earner * Occasional supervision of any apprentice or individual undertaking a work placement may be required. |
| **Supervision Received** |
| The post holder will receive direction on their area of expertise from the Lead Lawyer: Children & Adults or more senior Managers in Legal & Democracy. |
| **Complexity** |
| The post holder will be required to undertake the most complex, demanding, high value and high profile work and assist others in Legal Services with such work of their own. This will include drafting, interpretation of statute, case law and other documentation, advice, high level advocacy in contested proceedings contested proceedings, new legislation and regulations sometimes within short timescales.  The complex work will involve new, innovative areas of law and local government procedure which may be outside of existing policy, procedure and precedents. |
| **Resources** |
| The post holder has the responsibility for the following resources:   * The recruitment of team members where appropriate, following consultation with the Legal & Democracy Service Delivery Manager * Processing “Personal Sensitive Information” as described in the Data Protection Act principle schedule 2 & 3 and “commercially sensitive” Council information. * Specialism in childcare law and advice |
| **Impact** |
| * This role will assist in ensuring that the Council operates legally in respect of legal work undertaken by the Children & Adults Team * The role exists to help ensure that the Council is appropriately represented and/or defended in relation to the scope of legal matters covered by the Children & Adults Team. This is so as to ensure that the Council reputation and financial position are sufficiently protected. |
| **Physical Demands** |
| Going to Court on a regular basis with hearing bundles |
| **Working Environment** |
| Normal office/business environment and attendance at Court. Whilst at Court they may have to deal with members of the public who are verbally abusive. |
| **Emotional Context** |
| The post holder may have contact with upsetting and/or distressing subject matter when advising on legal matters such as child abuse and domestic violence. |
| **Other** |
| The postholder will be expected carry out any other duties as are within the scope, spirit and purpose of the job, commensurate with the grade.  The postholder will be expected to actively follow Telford & Wrekin Council policies, including those such as Equal Opportunities, Human Resources, Information Security and Code of Conduct etc.  The postholder will be expected to maintain an awareness and observation of Fire and Health & Safety Regulations. |

**Person Specification**

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| **Criteria** | **Standard** |
| **Qualifications** | A qualified solicitor, barrister or equivalent with a valid practising certificate to practice law in England and Wales.  Evidence of continuing professional development in subject(s) relevant to the post. |
| **Experience** | Substantial experience of providing specialist advice and assistance in one of the areas set out in paragraph 2.1 of the job description  Significant experience of working in or for a local authority  Experience of representing an organisation at meetings, proceedings, presentations and training |
| **Knowledge** | Significant up to date knowledge of local government law and procedure with high level expertise in the areas of law defined in 2.1 of the job description.  High level knowledge of local government decision-making, council meeting procedure, court procedures including judicial review. |
| **Skills** | Skills to advise in writing and in person to elected members, officers and external clients at all levels  Ability to communicate well with other colleagues, elected members, members of the public, internal and external clients, external organisations at the highest level including government departments and the High Court.  Skills to supervise legal assistants and other administrative support staff  Ability to manage a caseload of safeguarding and other matters as set out at 2.1 that are complex in nature  Ability to undertake high level advocacy in contested proceedings in the Magistrates Court, County Court and other Courts and tribunals as required  Ability to work alone or as part of a team on often complex matters to short and urgent timescales.  A competent user of MS office and able to operate a case management system.  Ability to train elected members, officers and external parties in areas of local government law relevant to the post.  Ability to use transferable skills to assist others with supervisory responsibilities.  Ability to co-ordinate high profile and/or high value cases involving the use of senior counsel, experts, senior officers and senior elected members.  Ability to work with external/partner organisations and represent the Council at meetings, presentations and similar events. |
| **Personal style & behaviours** | * As a council employee you will be supported and expected to demonstrate the Councils Core Behaviours. Please note that these may be updated from time to time and are available on the Council’s intranet pages.   Develop good relationships with others by behaving with integrity and treat people with respect  Promote diversity and equality of opportunity  Promotes involvement with corporate initiatives and projects  A progressive and innovative approach to service delivery and problem solving demonstrating an ability to take on new ideas and motivate others to do the same.  An ethic towards team work, collaboration, taking responsibility, following corporate policies and objectives and advocating a ‘can do’ attitude.  Committed to Legal and Democratic Services objectives particularly relating to the marketing of services and income generation.  Committed to focussing on outcomes and meeting the objectives of clients. |
| **Fluency Duty** | * This post has been identified as a customer facing role and therefore the Council is required to fulfil their statutory duty under Part 7 of the Immigration Act 2016. As a public body the Council is obliged to ensure member of staff in such roles are able to have a command of spoken English which is sufficient to enable the effective performance of their role. * The reason for this is that the role requires an understanding of complex legal matters and the ability to explain these to others and lay persons. |
| **Political Restrictions\*\*** |  |

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We will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that no disabled applicant is placed at a substantial disadvantage. This person specification includes what we believe are fully justifiable essential selection criteria. Provided that the selection criteria unconnected with the disability are met, we will make ALL reasonable adjustments in order that someone with a disability can undertake the duties involved.

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| **Type of criminal records checks required for this post** | **Ticked as required** |
| None | x |
| Basic Disclosure |  |
| Standard Disclosure |  |
| Enhanced Disclosure |  |
| Working with Adults - Regulated Activity |  |
| Working with Children - Regulated Activity |  |

Information on types of criminal records checks is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check>

*\*\* Political Restrictions*

*Certain posts in the council are designated as ‘politically restricted’, which means that the post holder must not have any active political role either in or outside of work. Employees who have politically restricted posts are responsible for ensuring they do not engage in restricted activities. Where a post has been identified as politically restricted, the following statement must be included within the Person Specification:*

This post has been identified as being politically restricted.

*Where the post has been identified as* ***not*** *being politically restricted, the following statement must be included:*

This post is not subject to political restrictions.