



Role profile

Role title	Senior Legal Officer
Corporate directorate	Customer and Support Services
Service	Legal
Grade	L
Reports to (role title)	Principal Legal Officer
Version	1.4
JE code	003042

Approving manager	Matt Stokes, Head of Legal
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If you would like this information in another format please contact:

Cornwall Council
County Hall
Treyew Road
Truro TR1 3AY

Telephone: **0300 1234 100**
 Email: **enquiries@cornwall.gov.uk**
www.cornwall.gov.uk

Role purpose

To be responsible and accountable for a personal caseload of high profile and/or complex legal matters within the specialist legal team to which you are aligned (Adults, Children, Commercial & Employment, Planning, Property & Highways or Regulatory & Litigation). The role holder will provide legal advice, which is politically sensitive and high risk.

To be a senior legal advisor within the context of the areas of work which fall within the remit of the role holder's team and provide advice at Council, Cabinet and Committee meetings. The role holder may also be required to provide advice on areas of law outside of the remit of the Team.

To work with the Senior Legal Officers, Principal Legal Officers, the Group Managers, and other colleagues, to identify and implement Service improvements to the efficiency and performance of the Service, to enable the Council to meet its corporate objectives and priorities to improve the quality of life in Cornwall.

To mentor and provide guidance on a day to day basis the work of lawyers, non-lawyers and trainees.

Deputise for the Principal Legal Officer as required.

Dimensions

Annual financial accountability

Accountable as required by the Principal Legal Officer and Group Manager for any budget assigned to the Team or for receiving or making payments in the course of conduct of cases.

Management accountability

Nature of management:

Day to day mentoring and guidance of up to 12 staff within a specialist legal team. This post will provide mentoring and guidance to Legal Officers, Senior Legal Assistants, Legal Assistants, Legal Professional Support and trainees.

Undertake supervision, development and motivation of members of the Team as required by the Principal Legal Officer.

Number of staff managed:

None directly. Formal management accountability remains with the Principal Legal Officer.

Accountabilities

Cornwall Council is a dynamic organisation and the particular duties and accountabilities may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the role or the level of responsibility entailed. Individual objectives will be agreed via the PDS appraisal process

- To carry out day to day supervision, mentoring and guidance for qualified lawyers, non- qualified lawyers and trainees within the Team. This will develop the capacity and capability of Legal Officers, Senior Legal Assistants and Legal Assistants and forms a part of the management of risk in the Council
- To provide general and specialist legal advice to Client Officers (at all levels) of high quality on issues of varying complexity, within agreed timescales and to proactively support clients in all areas of their work which have a legal dimension
- To assist the Council in meeting its overall objectives and to minimise financial, operational and reputational risks
- To manage and progress, a caseload of straightforward and complex and/or politically sensitive legal work for specified Directorates/Services and external clients
- To keep relevant stakeholders informed of the progress of cases, taking due regard of Key dates, priorities, deadlines and Service Level Standards etc. in order to ensure excellent client care and promote high levels of client satisfaction
- To undertake legal research, drafting of legal documentation, negotiations, training, presentations, attendance at case conferences and/or client and/or project meetings, and updating internal management at a senior level
- To undertake, as required, significant advocacy work in relation to both contested and uncontested cases in the civil and criminal courts, to attend and represent the Council at Public Inquiries, Coroner's Inquiries and Tribunals
- To liaise with Officers of the Courts, Government Office, Solicitors, Barristers and their staff and members of the public in respect of appropriate cases
- To obtain or procure external legal support, as required, on cases of significant complexity
- To advise the Council, the Cabinet, Committees and Sub-Committees, Members, Chief Officers and staff in the Council's Directorates on legal and policy matters within the remit of the Team and generally affecting local government
- To deputise for the Principal Legal Officer
- To ensure that output and quality of work is of the highest quality and accords where appropriate with current regulations/legislation and Court/Tribunal practice
- To update client Services on changes in the law relevant to their services
- To participate positively and constructively in the Service's PDS (appraisal) scheme
- To build positive working relationships within the Legal Service
- To work constructively with the Principal Legal Officer and Group Manager to identify strengths and agree actions in relation to development needs and to evaluate own working processes, identifying effective working methods
- To manage own time effectively, prioritising workload, delegating tasks and supervising the work of others on specific tasks, as appropriate
- To develop a detailed up-to-date knowledge of the law in relation to areas most commonly encountered by the team
- To proactively develop and maintain IT skills needed to work effectively and efficiently
- To maintain confidentiality of information acquired in the course of undertaking duties for the Service
- To be responsible for own continuing self- development undertaking training as appropriate.
- To undertake other duties appropriate to the grading of the post as required

Corporate accountabilities

Information security and governance

Manage information in line with the Council's policies, procedures and guidance on subjects such as Data Protection, Freedom of Information, confidentiality, information security and sharing, the information lifecycle and data quality, to ensure compliance and efficient and effective information governance

Safeguarding

Maintain awareness of Council policies and practices regarding the safeguarding of children, young people and/ or adults who may be at risk. Report concerns/ allegations in accordance with corporate guidance and procedures

Equality & Diversity

Work to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and report incidents as they occur. Treat everyone with dignity and respect and ensure individual's needs are met. Challenge inappropriate behaviour and language constructively, advising on alternatives so the opportunity for change can be considered

Customer Experience

Drive to continually improve customer satisfaction and maintain a clear and consistent focus on delivering outstanding customer experience

Health, Safety and Wellbeing

Proactively manage health and safety risks and lead on the creation of a positive health and safety culture to safeguard the health, safety and wellbeing of yourself and others. Understand your health and safety responsibilities and lead on compliance with council policy and procedures.

Key objectives

- Integrating successfully into the team and wider Service.
- Ensuring the smooth transition and progression of client matters.
- Familiarising yourself with the specialisms undertaken in the team to which you are aligned.
- Building effective relationships with colleagues at all levels in the Service, and clients.
- Contributing to a culture of flexibility, empowerment and accountability.

Competencies and other requirements

We use the following criteria below to assess your suitability for the role; please refer to the recruitment & selection column to establish at which stage the criteria are assessed. Requirements assessed at the 'Application' stage represent the minimum essential requirement for shortlisting purposes

Behaviours	Recruitment and selection
<p>Working together</p> <p>You understand and focus on customer satisfaction and work well with colleagues and partners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You deliver exceptional customer service – you understand 	

<p>and are attentive to the needs of your customers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You listen to the views of others and seek them out • You support and show consideration for others • You work well with colleagues and partners and acknowledge the different ideas, perspectives and backgrounds of others • You are committed to the protection and safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults • You share information and expertise with others • You are honest, you respect and you build relationships of trust • You share your achievements and acknowledge the achievements of others 	
<p>Resourceful</p> <p>You apply expertise, solve problems and make improvements to deliver the best possible customer outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You plan and organise your work and manage your time effectively • You gather relevant information, analyse it and make timely informed decisions in the course of your work • You are flexible and adaptable • You respond constructively to change • You demonstrate financial awareness relevant to the job you do • You use your initiative and are creative in problem solving • You deliver results and demonstrate commitment to serving customers 	
<p>Personal responsibility</p> <p>You take responsibility for your work, your environment and your development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are trustworthy and reliable • You pay attention to your own health, safety and wellbeing and that of others • You acknowledge errors, report them as appropriate and play your part in addressing them • You appropriately challenge unhelpful behaviour • You seek feedback and review your own contribution • You are open to change and improvement • You take responsibility for your development • You are enthusiastic about and take pride in your work • You act as an ambassador for the Council to our customers 	
<p>Engaging leadership</p> <p>You create a healthy and engaging working environment by building trusting and supportive relationships, encouraging development, recognising achievement and tackling</p>	

<p>underperformance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You give clear direction, you delegate appropriately and you provide a supportive environment in which team members can learn, grow and take responsibility • You take opportunities to influence and contribute to strategic planning and development • You help your team to understand how their work contributes to delivering the Customer Service Promise and what the Council is trying to achieve • You create opportunities to interact personally with all members of your team, you actively encourage team members to share their views and concerns and you give feedback on the outcome • You take time to understand the strengths of your team and you encourage and support their development • You coach your team to fulfil their potential and recognise individual and team achievements • You identify and effectively address your responsibilities for customers, people, finance, performance and change management 	
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Knowledge, skills & experience	Recruitment and selection
Up to date knowledge of local government legislative framework and administrative law	Interview and/or Assessment
High level negotiating, influencing and mediation skills	Application
Practical experience of democratic decision making processes	Application
Ability to analyse and evaluate complex information and apply knowledge of the law to create solutions to complex and strategic problems	Interview and/or Assessment
Understanding of management of major projects and relationship between legal and financial considerations	Application and Interview
Successful experience of giving advice to and building relationships with elected Members and/or Senior Officers or equivalent	Interview
Ability to deal with complex legal work being an expert within one or more of the legal specialisms of the Team	Application and Interview

Other requirements	Recruitment and selection
Degree level or equivalent qualification and relevant professional qualification and/or membership of a relevant professional body - Solicitor or Barrister or Fellow of the Institute of Legal Executives with significant relevant post qualification experience; or a person with significant proven practical and theoretical legal experience and expertise on the matters falling within the remit of the Team	Application

Evidence of continuing professional development.	Application
The normal duties of the role may involve travel on a regular or occasional basis. It is a condition of employment that the role holder can exercise satisfactory travel mobility in order to fulfil the obligations of the role. For those journeys where an alternative form of transport is unavailable or impracticable the role holder will be required to provide a suitable vehicle	Application
This position is subject to a criminal records disclosure check	CHILDREN AND ADULTS TEAMS AND OTHERWISE AS REQUIRED
This is a politically restricted position	YES