

## Chief Lawyer – Contracts

<b>Reports to:</b>	Director of Law and Head of Law – Commercial		
<b>Department:</b>	Chief Executive's	<b>Grade:</b>	Hay 6
<b>DBS Status:</b>	Standard	<b>Politically restricted:</b>	Yes
<p><b>Job Purpose:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Secure the continuous development, improvement, efficiency and success of the Department and Council as a whole, through effective leadership, budget management, strategic direction, planning management and governance.</i></li> <li>2. <i>To provide expert legal advice to the council, its members and officers and to be the main point of contact for senior members and officers on legal Commercial, Contracts and Contract Dispute matters.</i></li> <li>3. <i>To provide expert legal advice to the council, its members and officers and to be a primary point of contact for senior members and officers on contract and governance matters.</i></li> <li>4. <i>Lead on the development, planning and delivery of a high profile professional service, focussing on key Council priorities.</i></li> <li>5. <i>To have overall responsibility for Contracts, Commercial and related local government and administration law.</i></li> <li>6. <i>Represent and act on behalf of Brent Council at meetings of key local government bodies.</i></li> <li>7. <i>To manage a team of professional staff within the team to ensure the delivery of a high quality legal service and to contribute to the management of legal services.</i></li> <li>8. <i>To contribute to and co-ordinate the Legal Services business planning and work programming activities and effective integration of the service development and budget planning processes.</i></li> </ol>			
<p><b>Values</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborate proactively.</li> <li>Lead inclusively.</li> <li>Embrace change.</li> <li>Be bold and curious.</li> <li>Celebrate and share our success.</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Overall Description</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wide range of internal and external contacts including directors, senior managers, elected members, professional bodies, partner organisations and government functions involving the use of a wide range of interpersonal skills.</li> <li>• Partner other local authorities, public sector organisations and agencies, local businesses, the voluntary sector and other stakeholders.</li> <li>• Developing partnership working with key external stakeholders across the public, private and voluntary sectors.</li> <li>• Management and leadership of a high performance team.</li> <li>• Lead role in the development of the council's services in this area.</li> <li>• Operates within a framework set by Corporate and Departmental Management teams but with considerable freedom to shape services.</li> <li>• Leads on policy and development and ensures implementation of new legislative requirements.</li> <li>• Ensures high professional standards</li> </ul>			

## **Job specific roles and responsibilities**

1. Make a positive contribution to the delivery of the service, this will include working flexibly and positively to achieve the objectives of the council.
2. Manage and lead staff to achieve high performance and effective operational delivery, including developing and improving staff capability.
3. Manage a customer focused service and the effective use of resources.
4. Ensure that the council's overall vision, values and ethos are central to the requirements of the service.
5. Support effective working relationships and act as an ambassador and advocate with external organisations
6. Keep up to date with developments in service delivery and best practice to ensure the service performs effectively and to the highest standards.
7. Work collegiately with colleagues on the Corporate Management Team (CMT), and make a proactive contribution delivering departmental and corporate objectives.
8. Lead and manage a portfolio of customer focused services in alignment with both corporate and departmental aims and priorities.
9. Provide leadership and management to achieve high performance and effective operational delivery; which will include managing the effective use of resources and staff.
10. Work closely with the Strategic and Operational Directors to support effective working relationships with relevant portfolio holders.
11. Support and develop partnership working, including acting as an effective ambassador and advocate with external organisations.
12. Provide leadership to staff teams to achieve high performance and effective operational delivery, which includes developing and improving the capability of staff within the work area, motivating and mentoring them to better meet the current and future requirements of the unit.
13. Ensure legality of decision making within the post-holder's area of responsibility including considering committee reports as appropriate.
14. Give proactive high level legal advice to the Council, its committees, members and officers to promote a positive approach to the provision of legal advice to meet the needs of the council.
15. Act as Council's principal advisor on complex case work as required.
16. Give expert advice within areas of responsibility of the post, in particular, in areas of corporate and strategic advice and advice on highly complex commercial and contracts matters and governance matters for all council departments and external clients.
17. Deal with Members' enquiries and complaints as required.
18. Contribute to the management of Legal Services.
19. Undertake specific projects of a corporate, legal or senior management nature and participate in the work of corporate policy and working groups. Provide strategic and high level input to Council policies.
20. Provide training and briefings for officers and members on issues of law and practice arising within the remit of the job to enable them to perform their job more effectively.
21. Manage both financial and staffing resources to obtain value for money and ensure that the unit remains within budget by monitoring spend and traded income.
22. Lead on the Legal Services traded services to schools arrangements.
23. Manage the commissioning of external legal services.
24. Work with partners, Council staff, local organisations and residents of the Borough to proactively identify where legal services can add value and develop solutions in support of strategic goals and improved organisational and departmental performance.
25. Ensure all the statutory duties of the Council are fulfilled.
26. Design, deliver, monitor and evaluate organisational change across all Public Protection functions in the Authority and its key partners.
26. Contribute both to the aims and objectives of the wider service areas within the council.

27. To work as part of multi-disciplinary project teams to enable the breaking down of divisional and departmental barriers and to encourage the concept of both internal and external partnerships.
28. To lead the drive for commercial change and improvement in the Council and its supply chain.
29. Encourage high individual and team performance by encouraging the rotation of staff, sharing of expertise, flexible working, project management skills and support a culture of innovation, self-challenge and continuous improvement.
30. Respond to new policy initiatives and legislative changes.
31. To provide out of hours advice as required

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and all employees are required to act in such a way that at all times safeguards the health and well-being of children and vulnerable adults.

Carry out duties with due regard to the Council's Customer Care, Equal Opportunities, Information Governance, Data Protection, Health and Safety and Emergency Planning & Awareness (including to provide assistance where available) policies and procedures.

Employees should embed environmental sustainability into their work, actively contributing to Brent becoming a carbon-neutral borough in 2030.

Undertake any other duties commensurate with the general level of responsibility of this post.

### **Essential Requirements (key skills & qualifications)**

- Qualification as Solicitor, Barrister or Filex.
- Evidence of significant relevant Continuing Professional Development (CPD).
- Full understanding of risk management in the context of corporate governance.
- Expert knowledge of contract and commercial law and practice and governance law and practice.
- Track record of achievement at a management level in a similarly large and complex organisation including:
  - delivering customer focused services and service improvements managing demands and pressures on the service and tight deadlines
  - ensuring that the service is effectively resourced to deliver to the required standard
  - planning for a minimum of one year anticipating priorities, changing landscape and predict the future service;
  - Demonstrate a significant track record of successfully delivering high level legal projects that enable the council to achieve its outcomes.
  - Experience of delivering services through commissioning.
  - Well developed understanding of contract management.
  - Track record of leading teams and developing staff to deliver top level performance and support them effectively through periods of change.
  - Comprehensive knowledge of the law affecting local government and its trends in the UK.
  - Experience of providing advice to members of a Council/ Board Members on legal issues both in public meetings, through presentations, briefing reports etc.
  - Experience of contributing to corporate decision making and development of corporate policy and strategy. Strong Leadership and management skills including people, performance and budget management
- Communication, negotiating and influencing skills
- Work collaboratively corporately and departmentally creating a strong team spirit



- Strong role model who demonstrates a personal commitment to high standards of public service, honesty and integrity and professionalism
- Comprehensive written and verbal communication skills.
- Able to write concise, effective reports for varying audiences including elected members and CMT.
- High level analytical skills to identify issues and develop responses and solutions.
- Demonstrate the ability to successfully manage budgets and secure external funding bids.
- The ability to communicate effectively at all levels, using a variety of media and styles appropriate to the audience.

#### **Budget Responsibility and Overall Headcount**

Responsible for Budget of around £2m. Responsible for keeping spend on external legal services to a minimum and responsible for procurement and effective performance of external lawyers.

*Within reason these key deliverables may evolve to meet service need and it is expected that the postholder will be flexible and adaptable in their delivery to meet both service and council wide needs.*