

Housing Lawyer

Reports to:	Chief/Senior Lawyer		
Department:	Finance and Resources: Law	Grade:	PO4 / PO5
DBS Status:	None	Politically restricted:	Yes

Job Purpose:

1. To work in the Housing Litigation & Children Social Care Team
2. To provide proactive, clear and concise legal advice and assistance to clients.
3. To supervise Senior Legal Assistants, Legal Assistants and / or trainees as directed.
4. To deputise for Chief/Senior Lawyers as and when required.

Values

Collaborate proactively.
Lead inclusively.
Embrace change.
Be bold and curious.
Celebrate and share our success.

Job specific roles and responsibilities

At PO4 the post holder will:

1. Provide specialist legal advice and assistance on all issues arising within the post holder's area of responsibility.
2. Personally conduct advocacy on behalf of the Council and instruct counsel as appropriate.
3. Approve or amend legal aspects of reports to be submitted to members requiring decisions and attend committee and other meetings to give legal advice as necessary.
4. Provide proactive legal advice and assistance to meet the needs of members and officers and assist with client liaison.
5. Contribute towards the running of the team and Legal Services.
6. Actively contribute to developing policies and good practice.
7. Provide cover as necessary for other areas within Legal Services as a whole and to deputise for Principal/Senior Lawyers as

required.

8. To support with strategic and corporate legal work.
9. To deal with individual case work and prepare associated documentation.
10. To advise on disputes with third parties on behalf of the council
11. To advise on the council's powers and ensure the legality of the council's decision making.
12. To handle complex litigation arising within the areas of responsibility, including judicial review, undertaking advocacy and to instruct counsel where necessary.
13. To deal with corporate complaints and Members enquiries, data protection and FOI requests.
14. Keep up to date with changes in the law and other developments in the area of work allocated, to disseminate information on changes and advise on any action to be taken as a result.
15. Provide training to members, clients or members of the team.
16. 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.
17. Undertake any other duties commensurate with the general level of responsibility of this post.

Progression to scale PO5 at the appropriate time will be subject to the post holder demonstrating that s/he is capable of handling cases or projects that are more complex or which have a greater level of financial or operational risk attached to them.

Essential Requirements (key skills & qualifications)

Knowledge and Qualifications

- Admitted solicitor or qualified barrister or CILEX with litigation rights – (Chartered)
- Evidence of significant relevant Continuing Professional Development (CPD).
- Detailed knowledge of the Civil Procedure Rules, Housing Law - Disrepair, Possession Claims concerning secure tenancies (ASB, unlawful occupation and rent arrears), the Housing Act 1985, the housing Act 1996, the Equality

Act 2010, notices to quit, access & nuisance injunctions, succession, housing fraud and homelessness.

Experience

- Significant post qualification experience in the legal profession
- Experience of conducting housing litigation and advising on housing law specifically in relation to local authorities (preferably within the last 2 years).
- Experience of conducting advocacy in the County Courts to represent the Council on all housing matters

Skills and Abilities

- Ability to personally handle with minimum supervision all matters within the postholders area of responsibility and to carry a heavy caseload of housing litigation work
- Good presentation skills, including the ability to communicate clearly and concisely in writing and orally
- Ability to give clear and proactive legal advice in a manner which supports clients in achieving their organisational objectives
- Ability to prepare cases for hearings
- Ability to appear as an advocate
- Ability to analyse information, evaluate evidence, solve problems and present solutions at an appropriate level
- Ability to provide advice and present arguments in a confident, articulate and persuasive manner
- Ability to supervise the work of more junior staff and give guidance and training to others
- Ability to develop and maintain good working relations with clients
- Ability to instruct Counsel, attend conference with Counsel and attend in courts, tribunals and inquiries.
- Ability to deputise for the Chief/Senior Lawyer in the team
- Experience of contributing to corporate decision making and development of corporate policy and strategy.
- Ability to prepare or advise on the preparation of reports to Committee in respect of legal procedural or policy matters.
- Ability to assist with the development of policy
- Ability to prepare and advise on the preparation of reports to members and officers, to present reports to senior officers and members and to advise on clients' decision-making processes.
- Ability to handle complex legal matters within area of responsibility.

Overall Headcount: Day to day supervision of Senior Legal Assistants, Legal Assistants and / or trainees as directed

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.