

Principal Barrister / CILEX Lawyer / Solicitor

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Reading
Borough Council
Working better with you

Job Description

Job Title Principal Barrister / CILEX Lawyer / Solicitor

Location Mix of home working & office working at the Civic Offices, Bridge Street, Reading. (Precise mix to be agreed with your line manager and based on Service need).

Grade/Salary Range Grade RG10 SCP 50 - 53
From £55,838 to £60,005

Service/Directorate LEGAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT
DIRECTORATE OF RESOURCES

Job Purpose

1. To lead a team to provide a range of high quality legal services to ensure the delivery of best value services to the Council and its partners

Designation of Post and Position within Departmental Structure

1. Reports to: Team Leader or Legal Services Manager
2. Deputises for: To deputise for the Team Leader or Legal Services Manager in the management of the team when required.
3. Responsible for: Legal Assistants, Paralegals, Trainees, Lawyers, Senior Lawyers

Main Duties and Responsibilities

1. To lead on the provision of advice to Members, Officers and Partners on legal matters, policies and corporate issues, ensuring the Council's best interests are achieved within the law.
2. To lead on the successful achievement of the Council's strategies and policies, in particular through advice and support to Assistant Directors and Executive Directors
3. To be accountable for the timely delivery of effective legal services to the Council and its partners with maximum efficiency and economy.
4. To lead on the development and delivery of better working through legal technology in the team. To maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of the team through such technology. To lead change projects where necessary.
5. To lead strategic and service objectives identified in the Legal Services Strategy and the Legal and Democratic Services Service Plan and to be accountable for outcomes.
6. To lead Service improvement initiatives identified in the Service Development Plan or Legal Services Strategy.

7. The management of a specific Team assigned by the Team Leader or Legal Services Manager.

Legal Services Requirements

8. To give advice to officers, Senior Managers or Members of the Council on more costly, complex or sensitive matters within your expertise. To commission that advice from other sources when it is not available in-house.
9. Day to day operational management of the Team allocated to you and its work.
10. Lead the Team to deliver a caseload of matters and to proactively report to customers on the progress of that work.
11. Undertake advocacy in any Court or Tribunal to the level appropriate to your qualifications and experience.
12. To ensure the Team utilises the information systems at its disposal to ensure effective delivery of a quality legal service, and lead the effective deployment of new systems and processes for continuous improvement.
13. Record all time in accordance with departmental policy. Ensure that staff under your supervision comply with the policy. Ensure that appropriate monitoring is carried out in the team.
14. To ensure the team utilises the resources at its disposal for efficiency, effectiveness and economy in the delivery of legal services.
15. Ensure that all systems in the Team, for the charging and collection of income, are operating efficiently in accordance with departmental and corporate policy. To investigate and deliver new ways of driving income into the Team.
16. Ensure appropriate systems are deployed to monitor and report on the desired performance outcomes for yourself, your Team and the staff within it.
17. Specialism: Required - to be agreed with line manager in accordance with Service needs and departmental policy.
18. Flexibility: May be required - staff may be asked to work in different legal specialisms from time to time in accordance with Service needs and departmental policy.

Land Charges Requirements (*If managing LLC section)

19. Ensure that Services work with the LLC team to keep the register up to date. Ensure that the Service levels required by HMLR for registration of new charges are met.
20. Ensure that the data within the LLC register is kept up to date. Ensure that the Service levels required by HMLR are met.
21. Ensure accurate search results to customers and HMLR. Ensure relevant Key Performance Indicators for the Service are set and achieved.
22. Ensure a high quality and professional service is delivered to LLC customers. Ensure that there is effective communication between the Service and its customers and HMLR.

23. To ensure that fee income is monitored and recorded. Report performance to Legal and Democratic Services Management Team.

Service Development

24. Develop the existing Legal Service of the Team in line with the Team Reading corporate values and identify innovative ways of improving service provision and user satisfaction. To be responsible for the delivery of a Service Development Plan for your Team.
25. Provide effective Project Management for Service Development Plan and Legal Services Strategy projects. Be accountable for the delivery of expected benefits.
26. To deliver training and development activities for Services and external partners.
27. Identify innovative ways in which customers can make better use of Legal Services, through process improvement, technology or training and assist the customer in the implementation of new ways of working to reduce their reliance on Legal Services. To be accountable for such initiatives through the Service Development Plan.
28. Participate actively in the development of the Council's policies and objectives as required, including responsibility for specific projects as may be allocated, and participation in multi-disciplinary projects.

Policy requirements

29. Promote equality of outcomes in service delivery to ensure that all members of the community are treated fairly, paying particular attention to those who have special needs or who are disadvantaged. Ensure that the work of the Team complies with Council
30. Ensure that your actions, and those of your staff, comply with departmental and Council policies, Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and the Code of Conduct for Council Officers.
31. Respect the confidentiality of material which is provided to you or to which you have access in the course of your duties. To keep this material confidential during and after your employment with the Council. Ensure that effective systems and processes
32. Ensure that you safeguard the personal data which is provided to you or to which you have access in the course of your duties. To ensure that you undertake ongoing training to keep your knowledge up to date in this area. Ensure that effective processes
33. Ensure that systems and training are in place so that the Team can comply promptly with all Council policies to provide information to the public or partners as required by law. To ensure that you undertake ongoing training to keep your knowledge up to date in this area.
34. If required by your line manager in the needs of the service, to assist in such other work outside your area of expertise as is reasonable according to your level of qualification, knowledge, skills and experience.

Scope of Job (Budgetary/Resource Control/Impact)

1. Financial Scope. Responsibility for departmental income under the Income Policy and ensuring all team members charge income and follow financial procedures.
2. Debt recovery. Ensure that all legal costs from third parties are correctly identified and recovered in accordance with departmental policy. Ensure that the Team correctly operates departmental procedures for costs recovery.

Special/Other Requirements/Responsibilities of this Post

Level of DBS check required for this post Standard

What other security/safer recruitment clearances are required for this post? (excluding standard identity/work permit/education qualification checks) Not applicable

Is this post “politically restricted”? YES

Responsibility for Health & Safety: LEVEL 3

Please specify any other Statutory Duties and/or responsibilities of this post not already covered in the “Main Duties & Responsibilities” above Assist the Monitoring Officer as required in the achievement of their statutory obligations

Person Specification

Qualifications/Education/Training

1. **Primary legal qualification.** Admitted Solicitor, Barrister, or Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Legal Executive with a current practising certificate and entitled to practice in **England and with at least 10 years' post qualification experience.**
2. **General education.** Good general education with at least 5 GCSEs at Grade 4-9 (or equivalent) including Maths and English.
3. **Management education.** Evidence of continuing management development appropriate to the seniority of the role.

Experience

1. In-depth experience of providing legal services for a range of local government services.
2. Experience of advising on the corporate governance related aspects of their specialist area. Awareness of sensitive or complex issues.
3. **Minimum 7 years' post qualified experience in their field of expertise**
4. Supervision of staff including, recruitment, training and development and leadership of improvement initiatives for the legal dept.
5. Experience of day to day management of a multi skilled team including monitoring progress and accuracy of work

Skills, Abilities & Competencies

1. Able to deal effectively with complex legal matters and problems.
2. Able to handle a complex workload of politically sensitive transactions.
3. Excellent IT skills with a focus on implementing new uses of technology for improving the system of work within the team and Service
4. Excellent verbal and written communication skills and the ability to communicate effectively with internal and external contacts to a high level, including service managers and councillors. Able to undertake effective and complex advocacy in Court or Tribunal settings.
5. Ensure good communication and positive working relationships in the Team
6. The ability to produce political legal briefings of a high standard which concisely identify solutions, risks and issues
7. Excellent time management skills and the ability to organise and prioritise workload to meet service needs

8. Effective personal organisation to balance competing pressures and deadlines
9. The ability to take responsibility for legal and corporate issues and to ensure that they are followed through to a satisfactory conclusion
10. Effective leadership of a team and promoting effective team working with all team members.
11. Able to inspire confidence and to influence and motivate others, including those at a senior level in the organisation
12. Able to delegate effectively and ensure that Team goals are dealt with at the appropriate level. Ability to ensure legal work is done at the correct level by constantly updating the relevant Task Profiles and Training and Development Plans.
13. Able to demonstrate personal resilience to effectively manage the demands of the role
14. Able to keep abreast of developments in law and best practice, and to implement change by appropriate action
15. Able to identify and implement opportunities for team, service and corporate improvement
16. Ability to work largely unsupervised
17. Politically aware and able to anticipate and resolve politically sensitive issues
18. A flexible approach to work focused on providing the best possible service to all stakeholders

Specific Working Requirements

1. Some flexibility over hours will be required to meet the demands of the service. (Note there is a flexi scheme available).
2. Team members working from home must complete and keep up to date a Display Screen Equipment Assessment and other risk assessments to ensure that the home working environment is safe and effective.

Team Reading Leadership and Management Behaviour Framework

In addition to the qualifications, experience etc above, you will also be expected to role-model the Team Reading values through your behaviour with peers, employees, customers and partners, and set a great example to others on a day-to-day basis by doing so. This is explained further in our Leadership and Management Behaviour Framework below.

TEAM Reading

The Team Reading values aim to create a more engaged and motivated workforce who take pride in what they are doing and have faith in and support those around them. Great leadership and management behaviour is at the heart of achieving this. We are committed to

ensuring that our leaders and managers behave in a way that inspires, motivates and supports employees, creating better working relationships, greater collaboration and an organisation which provides excellent services to the people of Reading.

Central to this framework are our Team Reading values



T.... works together as one Team

The Council’s leaders and managers will champion and inspire a culture which ensures that all employees across the organisation work together to provide excellent outcomes for Reading residents

How we expect our managers to behave
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To work collaboratively with colleagues, customers and partners to build effective relationships and networks to achieve common goals and excellent services for Reading residents.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To lead by example, be visible, open and honest and effectively communicate the vision and values of the Council whilst seeking the opinion of others through meaningful, two-way communication.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To inspire others by being enthusiastic and positive; recognising, promoting, celebrating and rewarding innovation and success by engaging with and supporting employees to meet the Council’s objectives.

E.... drives Efficiency

The Council’s leaders and managers will create an environment in which resources are used efficiently and employees’ skills are developed and used effectively

How we expect our managers to behave
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To continuously review performance to ensure resources (e.g. staff, money and equipment) are allocated in a fair and consistent manner, deploying the skills and expertise available to maximum effect.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To actively seek out best practice and encourage opportunities to improve efficiency and outcomes for Reading residents through the use of new technology and income generating activity.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To take active responsibility for budget and performance management, identifying and implementing opportunities for creating savings and efficiencies and delivering value for money.

A.... is Ambitious

Our leaders and managers will be ambitious, aspiring to deliver excellence and inspire and support others to reach their potential

How we expect our managers to behave

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To celebrate success and empower others through support and effective performance management; showing appreciation for effort and recognition for outstanding work |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To explore and challenge ways of working with a view to achieving ongoing, continuous improvement in service delivery and outcomes for Reading residents. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To inspire confidence in others, encourage talent and embed a learning culture, identifying and responding to the development needs of others. |

M.... Makes a difference to Reading residents

Our leaders and managers will inspire a culture in which the customer is the focus and where change is welcomed as an opportunity

How we expect our managers to behave

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To proactively engage and consult with customers, challenge inequality, promote diversity and implement new and improved ways of working. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To continuously monitor service delivery, customer feedback and demand failure to improve services, whilst being sensitive to the collective and individual needs of our customers. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To welcome, own and manage change and to aspire towards excellence in all areas, whilst being supportive and sensitive to the needs of individuals. |