

## **Chief Lawyer Contracts & Procurement**

### **Job Description**

#### **Job Details**

Job title: **Chief Lawyer Contracts & Procurement**

Grade: **SM1 (£53,609 - £65,492)**

Reports to: **Assistant Director, Legal & Democratic Services**

Responsible for: **Contracts & Procurement team**

Directorate and Service area: **Governance & HR, Legal Services**

#### **Purpose of the job**

To provide the council, as constituted by its Elected Members and Officers, with access at all times to appropriate advice and support in order to carry out its functions lawfully, effectively and efficiently. This role will provide legal advice on complex or politically sensitive matters directly to Members and Officers.

To support the Monitoring Officer, providing professional advice on governance, compliance with the Constitution, Code of Conduct and associated legal areas.

Working with the Corporate Leadership Team to ensure that North Northamptonshire Council and any subsidiary organisations has access to appropriate legal advice, this will include acting as the council's "intelligent client" in the commissioning of Legal Services from external private law firms and counsel, monitoring and ensuring the council obtains value for money in commissioning, robustly monitoring delivery and cost-effectiveness.

#### **General responsibilities applicable to all jobs**

1. Demonstrate awareness/understanding of equal opportunities and other people's behavioural, physical, social and welfare needs.
2. Comply with the Council's policies and procedures including (but not limited to) safeguarding, financial regulations, promotion of equalities, customer care, agreed audit actions and health and safety (ensuring that reasonable care is taken at all times for the health, safety and welfare of yourself and other persons).
3. Carry out any other duties which fall within the broad spirit, scope and purpose of this job description and which are commensurate with the grade of the post.

This job description reflects the major tasks to be carried out by the post holder and identifies a level of responsibility at which they will be required to work. In the interests of effective working, the major tasks may be reviewed from time to time to reflect changing needs and circumstances. Such reviews and any consequential changes will be carried out in consultation with the post holder.

## **Principal responsibilities of this job**

4. As part of the management team to proactively lead and develop the Legal Services team to provide a full in house service to client departments. Whilst leading in own specialist area to also contribute to the strategic development and delivery of the Governance and HR Directorate and Council wide initiatives in accordance with Council policy requirements, attending management team meetings as required;
5. To ensure through the provision of legal advice that NCC, its Members and Officers are aware of their statutory duties and legal obligations, to enable them to act confidently within the law and the NCC Constitution in fulfilling their roles.
6. To support the statutory role of Monitoring Officer in the exercise of the functions delegated to the Monitoring Officer in the Council's Constitution. To act as the Council's 'conscience' as a professional legal source of sound objective judgement on issues where ethical considerations may need to be determined.
7. To provide high quality and complex legal and procedural advice to support the statutory services at all stages of the Council's decision making processes.
8. To build a strong corporate governance culture with decision making by members meeting the highest standards of ethical and corporate governance. Support the guardianship of the council's Constitution and the Code of Corporate Governance and to promote continuous improvement in governance standards across NNC through strengthening corporate discipline.
9. To provide sound advice to members and officers of NNC on key administrative and legal issues to ensure probity and sound governance.
10. Commissioning of legal services from external providers and counsel ensuring that value for money is obtained in the commission of these services. Also to robustly monitor delivery and cost effectiveness.
11. In conjunction with the Director and Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services, to ensure that service delivery complies with current regulations, accepted professional standards, the Council's policies and procedures and appropriate legislation. This includes legislation on equalities, health and safety and safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.
12. To provide legal research and investigation support, draft reports, review, comment on and prepare legal advice and comment for reports to the Council, its Executive, Full Council, other Council committees and Officer/Member level meetings in consultation with other Officers and Director and Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services and Democratic Services. This may include instructing external legal advice when necessary
13. Other duties – the job description indicates the main areas of activity for this role. From time to time other tasks / duties may be required which are commensurate with the general area of responsibility and grade of the post

## **Special features of the post**

### **Political Restriction**

Under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 this post is classified as a politically restricted or sensitive post. Holders of such posts are disqualified from seeking election to or being a member of the House of Commons, the European Parliament, or a Local Authority, other than a Parish Council

## Person Specification

| Attributes                                    | Essential Criteria   | Desirable Criteria   |
|---|--|--|
| <b>Education, Qualifications and Training</b> | <p>Relevant law degree / conversion.<br/>Qualified Solicitor or Barrister licensed to practice.</p>  | <p>Postgraduate level management qualification.</p>  |
| <b>Experience and Knowledge</b>               | <p>Legal knowledge and experience in dealing with Contracts and Procurement.</p> <p>This will include a proven track record of providing advice in connection with the delivery of statutory and non statutory services within a local authority environment.</p> <p>Record of providing advice and acting as legal advisor to members and officers within a local authority/public sector.</p> <p>Likely to have held more than one role in different organisation and to demonstrate working across different subject areas since qualification.</p> <p>A thorough understanding of Local Government Law and the legislative framework governing the operation of local authorities and public sector bodies more generally.</p> <p>Experience of advising in relation to matters of corporate governance and legal structures.</p> <p>Experience of overseeing corporate processes and procedures and ensuring compliance with the law.</p> | <p>An understanding of the market for legal services and the mechanisms available to procure legal advice. A thorough understanding of the tools and techniques available to instruct external legal services and to monitor the quality and value for money of legal service provision.</p> <p>Will have worked within a public sector organisation and managed internal and external stakeholders in a complex and changing environment</p> <p>Demonstrate experience of having worked in a political environment with experience of working with elected members and officers in a complex organisation</p> |

|                           |   |   |
|---------------------------|---|---|
|                           | <p>Experience in the following work areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparing contract documentation</li> <li>• Providing relevant legal advice on competitive processes and/or mitigating procurement risk</li> <li>• Advising on governance and compliance requirements, including in relation to the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and Public Procurement legislation</li> <li>• Negotiating and drafting agreements of all types (including agreements for services, funding agreements, grant agreements, variation, novation, and concessions)</li> <li>• Intellectual Property</li> <li>• Alternative delivery models: trading companies, partnerships and joint venture arrangements, including the establishment of social enterprises, shared services arrangements between public bodies</li> <li>• Contractual disputes</li> </ul> |   |
| <b>Ability and Skills</b> | <p>Ability to influence on legal issues to secure desired outcomes by earning the trust confidence and respect of officers and elected members.</p> <p>High quality negotiation skills and personal credibility.</p> <p>Strong analytical and problem solving skills including the ability to draw clear recommendations from complex information.</p> <p>Anticipates stakeholder needs, identifies possible alternative course of action and able to provide implications to aid decision making.</p> <p>Strong organisational skills able to demonstrate an ability to manage a large complex and varied workload while maintaining a high level of accuracy and attention to detail.</p>   | <p>Politically astute with the ability to operate successfully within a complex and political environment and to find innovative solutions to intractable issues.</p> <p>High-level presentational and inter-personal skills with the ability to communicate complex issues clearly and succinctly through a range of media and to a varied audience.</p> <p>Ability to foster strong working relationships and alliances to identify and build a network of relevant colleagues and influencers.</p> |

|                            |   |   |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Equal Opportunities</b> | Ability to demonstrate awareness/understanding of equal opportunities and other people's behaviour, physical, social and welfare needs.   | Developing others - coaching or mentoring others to achieve their best. |
| <b>Additional Factors</b>  | Promote the Council's values of being: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer-focused</li> <li>• Respectful</li> <li>• Efficient</li> <li>• Supportive</li> <li>• Trustworthy</li> </ul> |   |
| <b>Work Type</b>           | Flexible / Hybrid (office attendance as required across the Council's sites)  |   |