WHERE CAREERS THRIVE

When potential is unlocked, talent *thrives*

West Northamptonshire Council

Job description and person specification

Corporate Director of Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer)

Thank you for your interest in this role. Our vision at West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) is: 'to make West Northants a great place to live, work, visit and thrive'.

We truly stand by this and work hard every day to make this a reality, and at WNC it's about our people. People who thrive with ambition, bring new ideas, demand better ways of working, care about every detail, and who never shy away from a challenge.

West Northamptonshire Council

Our culture is a gateway for new experiences. A place to forge new opportunities. To empower you in your career and unite you with like-minded people. When potential is unlocked, talent thrives.

Purpose and impact:

As a member of the Council's Senior Management Team, the Corporate Director is strategically responsible for a group of significant services, ensuring they operate in line with the council's values (THRIVE) and ensuring the use of resources and assets are maximised to achieve priorities within agreed budgets.

This role provides strategic leadership to the Law & Governance service grouping which includes Legal Services, Democratic Services, Electoral Services, Coroners Service, Crematorium and Mortuary, Registration Services, Regulatory Services, Information Governance and Local Land Charges.

Specifically the role:

- is responsible for providing expert legal and governance advice and guidance to the Chief Executive, Members and peers to drive forward the Council's vision, strategic priorities and objectives.
- drives and delivers the governance, legal, statutory frameworks and governing mechanisms that support the Council in achieving its aim of being a high performing, compliant, and efficient Council.
- carries out the statutory responsibilities of Monitoring Officer, in accordance with Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (as amended); providing oversight, advice and challenge to support lawful, transparent and effective decision-making and exercising the Monitoring Officer's statutory reporting responsibilities where required.develops and maintains an 'enabling approach' within services to the wider organisation, embedding a performance culture that delivers results through continual improvement, ensuring that resources are targeted on organisational priorities and meets customer's needs.

This role supports the Councils ambition for delivering Efficient and Enabling Services as set out in our One West Northants Plan. This means striving to be a top performing council delivering good quality services while being efficient and effective with taxpayers' money. There is a strong focus on governance with a clear focus on opportunities to innovate and improve, whilst working ambitiously with our partners to shape our place and our opportunities.

Accountable to:

Executive Director of Resources. The role sits within the Resources Directorate.

Role Specific Responsibilities:

1. Share collective responsibility with senior leadership colleagues for the Council's overall performance, financial sustainability, governance, risk and reputation, providing constructive challenge and corporate leadership beyond the postholder's own service area.

2. Drive a value for money culture which continually improves the overall use of the resources by the council and its partners, optimising the use of resources and driving a cost reduction ethos.

3. Discharge the statutory duties of the Monitoring Officer functions accordance with Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 as amended by paragraph 24 of Schedule 5 Local Government Act 2000, ensuring the Council fulfils its lawful obligations and statutory duties in accordance with the Council's constitution.

4. Deliver, develop and evolve the governance framework to ensure the effective administration of member level decision making processes and ensure that the Chief Executive and members are appropriately supported in fulfilling their responsibilities. Responsibility for the operation of the council's constitution.

5. Leadership and management of the following services: Legal Services, Democratic Services, Electoral Services, Coroners Service, Registration Services, Regulatory Services, Information Governance, Local Land Charges and the Crematorium and Mortuary Services, ensuring the Council has dynamic and highly effective services which meets the changing needs and expectations of Councillors, Managers, partners and other stakeholders, and delivered in accordance with relevant government legislation

6. Provision of expert and timely advice, guidance and challenge to the Chief Executive, leadership team, Members, partners and other stakeholders to ensure that complex legal and governance advice and risks are clearly and concisely explained, and ensuring the council complies with statutory requirements and that decision making is lawful and in accordance with the Council's policies and procedures. Working collaboratively to agree the strategy and approach regarding legal matters across services.

7. Accountable for the management of budgets and the delivery of the medium-term financial plan across the services, ensuring resources are allocated effectively for the delivery of intended outcomes and in a manner which demonstrates value for money and compliance with relevant policies and guidelines.

8. Maintain the oversight of the Children's Trust, in respect of governance and legal processes.

9. Lead the Council's ethical governance and Member standards framework, including the Code of Conduct, registers of interests, standards complaints and investigations, Independent Persons and arrangements for promoting high standards of conduct.

10. Lead the Council's Corporate Governance Assurance Framework, including the Local Code of Corporate Governance and Annual Governance Statement, ensuring high standards of governance across the organisation.

11. Provide strategic legal and governance assurance for Council-owned companies, partnerships, shared services and other alternative delivery arrangements, ensuring appropriate accountability, transparency and management of conflicts of interest.

12. Maintain strategic oversight of significant legal, governance and regulatory risks, including major litigation, commercial arrangements and high-risk or high-profile matters, ensuring appropriate escalation and mitigation.

13. Act as the Proper Officer for access to information – ensuring that Member decisions (and officer decisions as appropriate), reasons for those decisions and relevant officer reports and background papers are properly recorded and publicly available and retained for public access in accordance with legal requirements.

14. Supporting civic responsibilities and member engagement, representing the Council on formal occasions, undertaking the necessary Civic duties as appropriate and providing Councillor support, development and standards.

15. Lead on the Electoral Registration process to ensure that all electoral or related matters are conducted lawfully and effectively.

    Provide strategic leadership and assurance for information governance, transparency and information rights, ensuring effective arrangements are in place to meet statutory requirements and manage associated organisational risk.

16. Lead the council's Regulatory Service functions, ensuring they meet the statutory duties of the authority and have a strong focus on continuous improvement. Ensure that delivery achieves the agreed outcomes in accordance with local priorities and develops and delivers sustainable income streams which reduce reliance on base budget.

17. To lead the Countywide Coroner's Service, and provide the statutory support to HM Coroner in relation to the management and conduct of inquests and postmortems.

18. To lead the council's new Bereavement Service, which includes the management of the Council's burial and cremation services, the management of the Council's facilities for body storage and disposal, mortuary, the Crematoria and any other sites as applicable. Responsible for delivering value for money on significant capital spending and an annual turnover of c.£3m.

19. To lead Registration Services for West Northamptonshire Council and to provide the management of the Head of Registration in her dual responsibility for the management of the North Northamptonshire and West Northamptonshire Registration Service.

20. Promote a culture of political awareness amongst officers to help translate political will into appropriate future strategies and delivery of objectives.

21. Be outward focussed, bringing ideas, best practice and innovation to the design and delivery of services in order to deliver efficient and enabling services which are productive and deliver value for money. Represent the council positively at internal and external meetings, building effective relationships with other Local Government employers.

22. To maximise personal productivity, minimise duplication and errors; and manage our information efficiently and securely to reduce risk, though effective use of Office 365 and our internal IT systems and applications.

23. Actively challenge and seek to eliminate any directly or indirectly discriminatory practice or behaviours.

24. Demonstrate awareness and understanding of other people's behavioural, physical, social and welfare needs and ensure that reasonable care is taken at all times for the health, safety and welfare of yourself and other persons.

25. Any other duties commensurate with the level of seniority and at the discretion of the line manager.

Executive Director/Director Standard Responsibilities:

1. **Culture & wellbeing**
   Responsible for the establishment and maintenance of a positive organisational culture within the directorate, where safety is integral to all activities and wellbeing principles are prioritised, to support a healthy, motivated and resilient workforce.

2. **Compliance**
   Promoting and ensuring compliance across the Directorate with the Council's Constitution and all corporate policies and practice in respect of Equalities, Human Resources, Finance and Contract Procurement across the Directorate.

3. **Resources/Financial Management**
   Accountable for the management of budgets and delivery of the Medium-Term Financial Plan within the Directorate, including the effective use of WNC resources and exercising of strong budgetary control, taking a proactive approach to risk management and business continuity planning on areas of accountability.

4. **Governance**
   Responsible for ensuring sound governance and performance management is in place supporting and contributing to organisational effectiveness, value for money and customer excellence.

5. **Health & Safety**
   Ensuring adherence to corporate health, safety and wellbeing strategy, policies and procedures so that the Council complies with, and fulfils its legal and regulatory obligations.

6. **Partnerships**
   Act as the Councils voice in local and national agendas, forming strong relationships and partnerships that drive forward joined up thinking, better uses of resources and more joined up thinking.

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.

Person specification:

The requirements for the role are outlined below and will be part of the selection process. Each of the criteria listed below will be measured by:
(A) Application Form, (T) Test, (I) Interview, (P) Presentation, (D) Documentation.

Minimum levels of knowledge, skills experience and qualifications required for this job.

Skills and abilities:	Essential / Desirable	Measured by
Demonstrable professional independence, integrity and sound judgement, with the confidence and resilience to provide authoritative advice and constructive challenge at the highest levels.	E	A, I
Strong management skills and a successful track record of delivering at a strategic and operational level. The ability to lead and influence others, make informed decisions and build and maintain successful relationships and networks.	E	A, I
Proven ability to provide strategic leadership across a broad and diverse portfolio of professional, statutory and customer-facing services, including services outside the postholder's own professional specialism with a proven ability to motivate and develop teams and individuals to enhance performance and service standards.	E	I
Strong communication, negotiation, influencing, collaboration and interpersonal skills.	E	A, I
Ability to see the big picture, interpret it and develop relevant strategies, plans and deliverables to address complex issues.	E	A,I
Demonstrate ability to work well under pressure, achieving deadlines. Prepared to quickly and flexibly react to the needs of the council, its customers and partners	E	I
A skilled influencer with the confidence to challenge organisational practices and individual behaviours as appropriate.	E	I
Ability to encourage and create innovation and empower teams	E	I

Knowledge:	Essential / Desirable	Measured by
Comprehensive knowledge of the statutory role, responsibilities and personal accountabilities of the Monitoring Officer, including the ethical standards and governance framework applying to local authorities.		
Substantial knowledge and understanding of the laws and practice relating to local government.	E	A, I
A good understanding of the current issues and future challenges facing the sector and their impact across a range of local government services.	E	I
Understanding of, and commitment to, equality of opportunity in its widest sense; possesses knowledge of best practice in inclusive leadership and removing barriers for opportunities and access to services.	E	A, I
Substantial knowledge and experience of interpreting local government constitutions and frameworks for decision-making.	E	A, I

Significant knowledge and understanding of effective leadership and management of professional staff.	E	A, I

Relevant experience:	Essential / Desirable	Measured by
Demonstrable successful track record as a Monitoring Officer (or Deputy Monitoring Officer in a comparable organisation in respect of size and functions) specifically in the leadership and management of legal, constitutional and democratic processes.	E	A, I, D
Significant experience of leading constitutional governance, Member standards and corporate governance assurance, including managing complex or sensitive governance issues.	E	A, I
Proven experience of providing strategic legal and governance advice to members and senior officers on complex, high-risk or high-profile matters and managing significant legal, commercial or reputational risk.	E	A,I
A demonstrable track record of leading, motivating and managing large teams to achieve high performing and significant, sustainable service improvements and outstanding results, through internal and external partnerships.	E	A, I
Experience of developing and sustaining a culture that meets the needs of and engages with customers and staff within a safe, open and high-performing working environment.	E	I
Evidence of establishing a performance management culture to drive continuous improvement, including service planning, target setting, performance appraisal and the management of staff groups.	E	I
Effective partnership working and collaboration; developing and maintaining positive and productive relationships with a range of internal and external stakeholders and strategic partners.	E	A, I
A proven track record of applying commercial judgement in making decisions that will deliver cost-effective and efficient results.	E	A, I
Significant experience of operating successfully at a senior level within a complex political environment, working effectively with Members across political groups and responding appropriately to challenge and scrutiny.	E	A, I

Education, training and work qualifications:	Essential / Desirable	Measured by
Law degree / professional qualification	E	A, D
Qualified and/or practising solicitor, barrister or CILEX qualified lawyer with full practising certificate.	E	A, I, D
Evidence of continuing professional development.	E	A, I, D

All appointments are subject to standard pre-employment screening. This will include identity, references, proof of right to work in the UK, medical clearance and verification of certificates.

Day-to-day in the role:

Hours:	37	**Primary work base:**	One Angel Square
Job family band:	Strategic Management 14	**Worker type:**	Part-flexible
Salary range:		**Budget responsibility:**	£9million
People management responsibility:	Yes		

Working conditions & how we work:
This role has been identified as a part-flexible worker type, this means that you will be able to worker from other work locations and when not working from an office you will be working remotely for up to 3 days a week (including from home).

Our organisational values and behaviours

Everything we want to achieve for West Northants depends on having the right people in place and doing the right things and we want all colleagues to THRIVE, both personally and professionally. Our values and our behaviours framework underpin how we work and what partners and customers can expect from us. We want to do our very best for our residents, service users and businesses and for our staff – we want everyone to THRIVE.

T	Trust	We are honest, fair, transparent and accountable. We can be trusted to do what we say we will.
H	High Performing	we get the basics right and what we do, we do well. We manage our business efficiently.
R	Respect	we respect each other and our customers in a diverse, professional and supportive environment.
I	Innovate	we encourage curiosity, we are creative and seize opportunities to grow individually as an organisation and as an area.
V	Value	We continually strive for best practice and ways of improving existing procedures, practices and systems and thereby promoting efficiency and cost effectiveness
E	Empower	we believe in people, will listen, learn and trust them to make decisions. We help people to realise their ambitions.

"Valuing colleagues as individuals and encompassing our different perspectives to deliver our collective ambitions. One West inclusive culture"

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Choose a career that offers you a true sense of achievement, fills you with pride and challenges you in a positive way, everyday.

The benefits of a career at WNC include:

- **People** are at the centre of everything we do. Without our people, we wouldn't be able to deliver services to the people in our community.
- **Ambition** runs through everything we do at West Northants Council, we nurture and develop our people's ambition and willingness to succeed, to continually improve the service we provide to the community.
- **Care** is at the heart of West Northants Council, we care in so many ways; seen and unseen, helping our colleagues and community to thrive.
- **Flexibility** is key, we know work-life balance is critical to wellbeing, so we work hard to make sure our benefits package promotes and improves wellbeing; from annual leave, sick pay, family leave and flexible working, financial security offered by a local government pension scheme and life assurance, and discount schemes which make a difference to your day-to-day life, through to employee helplines offering free legal, health, financial and wellbeing advice and support.

We want you to have balance and be happy.

West Northamptonshire Council