



**North  
Northamptonshire  
Council**

## **Senior Lawyer**

### **Job Details**

**Job title:** Senior Lawyer

**Grade:** PS09 (Postcode NRTNJC0946)

**Reports to:** Principal Lawyer

**Directorate and Service area:** Law and Governance, Legal Services

### **Purpose of Job**

Governance is at the heart of everything we do, first and foremost we are part of a legal team working in local government. This role is expected to:

- Provide legally robust, timely and accurate professional legal advice within the specialist areas of the team.
- Manage complex and sensitive legal casework, including representation at courts, tribunals, hearings and committees.
- Ensure lawful decision-making, effective governance and the management of legal risk including providing advice to departments across a range of services of the organisation.
- Contribute to service improvement, practice development and the consistent application of high professional standards.
- Deputise for the Principal Lawyer as directed to ensure resilience within the service and continuity of service delivery.

### **Key Responsibilities:**

#### **Core Casework and Advice**

- Manage a caseload of complex and high-risk legal matters, providing solution-focused advice to officers and Members.
- Provide legal advice on governance, projects, policies, consultations and statutory processes relevant to all areas of work within the team.
- Identify, explain and mitigate legal, financial and reputational risks.
- Escalate high-profile or politically sensitive matters appropriately.

#### **Advocacy and Representation**

- Represent the Council in courts, tribunals, inquiries, mediation and negotiations.
- Prepare pleadings, statements of case, evidence bundles and associated documentation.
- Support the briefing of elected Members and senior officers when directed.
- Attend as legal advisor or representative of Monitoring Officer at Committees and Council bodies of the Council as directed within the specialisms of the team.

#### **Drafting and Transactional Work**

- Draft, negotiate and review contracts, agreements, policies, orders and other legal documents.

- Ensure documentation is accurate, enforceable and compliant with legislative and constitutional requirements.

#### Professional Support, Collaboration and Supervision

- Provide line management of legal officers and legal assistants.
- To support the Principal Lawyer with line management responsibilities of up to four lawyers within the team.
- To act as the first point of escalation and triage for mentoring and peer support to team members within the team and escalate where appropriate.
- Support training, knowledge-sharing and quality assurance across the legal team.
- Support improvements to precedents, procedures, processes and systems, ensure implementation and adoption of this across the service.

#### External Legal Providers

- Manage or monitor instructed Counsel and external solicitors where allocated.
- Ensure value for money, high quality and appropriate instructions.

#### Corporate Responsibilities

- Promote good governance and lawful decision-making across the Council.
- Support delivery of strategic priorities through timely and effective legal support.
- Promote the Council's Annual Delivery Plan and contribute to the development and promotion of the Legal Services Service Plan.
- Comply with all Council policies including equality, safeguarding, financial regulations and health and safety.
- Identify opportunities for financial sustainability alongside the Legal Business Manager, Principal Lawyer and Head of Legal, to secure value for money in the delivery of the service with regard to the wider directorate and organisation budgets.

### **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.

**Person Specification –**

<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Essential Criteria</b>	<b>Desirable Criteria</b>
Education, Qualifications and Training	<p>Qualified Solicitor, Barrister or FCILEx</p> <p>Evidence of continuing professional development</p>	<p>Additional specialist legal training or accreditation such as higher rights of audience.</p>
Experience and Knowledge	<p>Experience in local government or wider public sector including strong knowledge of local government law, governance, the Constitution and decision-making processes.</p> <p>Experience handling complex, sensitive or high-risk casework.</p> <p>Experience advising on governance, statutory obligations and public sector decision making.</p> <p>Up-to-date knowledge of legislation, case law and regulatory frameworks relevant to the council services aligned to the legal team.</p> <p>Experience representing clients in courts/tribunals/hearings/committees</p>	<p>Knowledge of administrative systems and case management tools.</p> <p>Experience of leading teams with mixed specialisms within a complex organisation.</p>

<p>Ability and Skills</p>	<p>Strong analytical ability and interpretation of complex legislation.</p> <p>Clear, proportionate and solution-focused legal advice.</p> <p>Excellent drafting, advocacy, negotiation and communication skills.</p> <p>Ability to prioritise effectively and manage complex workloads and support and develop lawyers to manage and experience complex matters.</p> <p>Strong interpersonal and team-working skills.</p>	
<p>Equal Opportunities</p>	<p>Ability to demonstrate awareness /understanding of equal opportunities and other people's behaviour, physical, social and welfare needs.</p>	
<p>Additional Factors</p>	<p>Promote and display the Council's values of being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer-focused</li> <li>• Respectful</li> <li>• Efficient</li> <li>• Supportive</li> <li>• Trustworthy</li> </ul> <p>Ability to handle sensitive and distressing case material.</p> <p>Ability to travel for work purposes.</p>	