

WHERE  
CAREERS  
THRIVE

When potential  
is unlocked,  
talent *thrives*



West  
Northamptonshire  
Council

Job description and person specification

## Principal Contracts Lawyer

**PosCode:**

Law and Governance, Corporate Services

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:**

- Being the lead lawyer on all contractual matters for goods, services and major projects
- Engage in stakeholder relationship management including with partner law firms
- Leading a team of senior lawyers, lawyers, and legal assistants, allocating caseloads, ensuring provision of high-quality legal advice from colleagues, and delivering supportive leadership
- Managing a caseload of contracts and procurement matters from a wide range of client departments
- Deputising for the Head of Legal (Corporate) where required
- Advising the Council on a wide range of contractual matters, delivering training where necessary
- Advising in relation to grant funding agreements and subsidy control
- Advising on policy, strategy and procedure relating to contract related issues

## **Accountable to:**

This post is accountable to the Head of Legal (Corporate).

The post sits within Law and Governance, part of the Corporate Services Directorate in West Northamptonshire Council. The post is responsible for all employees within the designated legal team.

## **Responsibilities:**

1. To provide specialist legal advice and representation on complex cases within the designated legal team to Senior Officers, their service areas and departments.
2. Establishing and maintaining effective working relationships with elected councillors, internal and external partners and stakeholders.
3. Promoting a positive image of the Council.
4. Assisting the Head of Legal in leading, managing and inspiring members of the designated legal team including providing day to day management of designated team members within the team.
5. Providing ad-hoc legal advice to the Council, the Cabinet, committees, sub committees, panels and working groups; including the obtaining of external legal advice and opinion, where appropriate.
6. To provide support and deputise for the Head of Legal (Corporate) in undertaking any legal work and in planning, managing and administering the designated legal team activity to ensure effective service delivery.
7. To promote, develop and ensure that the Legal Service is delivered to the highest standard, through service improvement and transformation being an agent of change within the designated legal team.
8. To identify and summarise developments in areas of practice and cascade these developments to legal team members and other service areas across the Council / elected Members to include the delivery of training on areas of practice.
9. To actively promote and champion a commercial approach to the operation of the Legal Service.
10. To assist the relevant Head of Legal to actively explore income generation opportunities and exploit opportunities for the digitalisation of legal services.
11. To actively support service areas in the preparation of reports and policies to ensure that they reflect key legislation, best practice, risks and governance processes.
12. Leading by example in modelling the conduct, behaviour and values expected of the Council's employees and establish a working environment within the designated legal team in which individuals can excel.
13. To maximise personal productivity, minimise duplication and errors; and manage our information efficiently and securely to reduce risk, through effective use of Office 365 and our internal IT systems and applications.
14. Actively challenge and seek to eliminate any directly or indirectly discriminatory practice or behaviours.

15. 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.

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
Relationship skills – Demonstrate an ability to build effective working relationships with a diverse range of stakeholders.	Essential	A and I
Communication and influencing skills - Excellent communication skills both verbal and written including the ability to shape and influence successful outcomes	Essential	A and I
Research skills - Excellent research skills to effectively and confidently advise on a wide variety of legal issues.	Essential	A and I
Demonstrate effective use of Office 365 (incl. Teams, OneDrive, etc.) or willingness to undertake training during the probation period.	Essential	A/T/I

Knowledge:	Essential / Desirable	Measured by
Local Authority - Knowledge of the legislation governing the operation of Local Authorities.	Essential	A and I
Designated legal team knowledge - Knowledge of the legislation governing the service specific areas of the designated legal team.	Essential	A and I
Leadership - Knowledge to effectively support the relevant Head of Legal in leading and managing the designated legal team.	Essential	A and I

Relevant experience:	Essential / Desirable	Measured by
Advising experience - Proven experience as a Lawyer providing post qualification advice.	Essential	A and I
Working flexibly - Experience of working flexibly to respond to the variety of legal queries received and meet the demands of the service.	Essential	A and I
Working under pressure - Experience of working well under pressure to agreed objectives / targets	Essential	A and I
Management experience - Experience in the supervision, development and management of people and resources.	Desirable	A and I

Education, training and work qualifications:	Essential / Desirable	Measured by
Legal qualification – Solicitor of the Supreme Court of England and Wales or Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Legal Executives or comparable alternative.	Essential	A and D
Management qualification - Institute of Leadership and Management Qualification or comparable alternative / experience.	Desirable	A and 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:

<b>Hours:</b>	37 hours per week	<b>Primary work base:</b>	The Guidhall, Northampton
<b>Job family band:</b>	Grade 10	<b>Worker type:</b>	Part-flexible
<b>Salary range:</b>	£52,194 - £55,943	<b>Budget responsibility:</b>	None
<b>People management responsibility:</b>	Yes		

### Working conditions & how we work:

We are open to discussions about flexible working.

This role has been identified as a part-flexible worker type, this means that you will be able to work 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.

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



# When potential is unlocked, talent *thrives*

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.

