# Job Description and Person Specification

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| Job title | Senior Lawyer |
| Strategic team/Directorate | Commercial Services |
| Service | Adult and Children’s Legal Team |
| Business unit | Legal Services |
| Responsible to (day to day issues) | Team Leader (Adult and Children’s Team) |
| Accountable to (line manager) | Team Leader – as above |
| Salary grade (spinal column points only) | Grade K (scp 36-39) |
| JE ref | LEG30 |

# 1. Key purpose of job

* 1. To assist the Senior Solicitor (Adult & Children’s Team) (SSACT) in the provision of specialist legal advice, representation and assistance to the Children’s Services Directorate and Schools in a format and within a timescale which assists them in conducting their business in the most efficient and effective matter.

# 2. Anticipated outcomes of post

* 1. The delivery of high quality efficient and effective legal advice and services to the highest standards of professional conduct and ethics, in a way that furthers and promotes good customer care within Legal Services.

* 1. To undertake all legal work as required, with minimal supervision and professional support.

# 3. List key duties and accountabilities of the post

* 1. To undertake case work, and provide advice within the specialist areas of law (Children Law)
  2. To provide legal advice and services in relation to other areas of local government law, as required by the Senior Adults and Children Solicitor (SACS)Team Leader or Head of Legal Services.
  3. To consider, prepare and conduct (including advocacy) matters in the Magistrates’ Court, Crown Court, County Court and High Court and in all other tribunals or hearings of whatever description, on behalf of the Council.
  4. To attend quasi-judicial bodies as legal advisor, including Council Committee meetings.
  5. To provide training as required to client departments.
  6. To be knowledgeable and up to date on the law, practice, and current issues within the specialist areas of law upon which the post holder advises on.
  7. To be knowledgeable and up to date on the general law relating to local government, including freedom of information and data protection.
  8. Assist the SSACT in the day to day running of the Adult & Children’s Team and to provide cover as and when necessary for colleagues.

# 4. Give examples of the typical types of problems and decisions the post will be required to make

The post holder will bring their experience and knowledge of legal principles to bear in finding solutions to novel problems within their area of practice. They will regularly exercise creativity and innovation in applying legal solutions to factual problems, of a highly complex nature in high profile, multi-disciplinary settings, which may include national issues. The post holder will have the support and supervision of senior colleagues where required, but more often will make autonomous decisions.

Examples;

* 1. To provide, and manage the provision of legal advice in respect of High Court litigation in respect of adults and children, with national media coverage (**postholder example**)
  2. To provide legal and practical advice to the Local Education Authority and schools on their statutory obligations and discretionary powers. (generic)

# 5. Budgetary/Financial Responsibilities of the post

5.1 None.

# 6. Supervision/Line Management Responsibilities of the post

6.2 The post-holder is required to provide informal support and supervision to junior members of the team and its Business Support Officers.

6.2 The post holder will allocate work to Legal Officers and assists the Team Leader in quality assuring the work of these officers.

# 7. Working environment and conditions of the post

* 1. The post holder operates in an environment governed by the need to meet deadlines (including those externally imposed) in a context of continually changing priorities and where the work is usually of a complex and/or sensitive nature.
  2. The post holder is required to be able to travel to Court hearings and meetings.
  3. The post holder is at risk of exposure to material and situations likely to cause distress.
  4. The post holder is likely to handle cases of a sensitive and emotive nature concerning matters which may have caused person distress and upset.

# 8. Physical demands of the post

* 1. The post holder may occasionally be required to handle heavy documentation e.g. deed parcels. Court bundles and public enquiry files offsite with appropriate manual handling equipment provided to enable safe working.

# 9. Specific resources used by the post

9.1 The post holder will have access to a laptop computer and other agile working equipment.

9.2 The post holder is required to ensure the security of confidential and sensitive information when transporting and using files and laptops when homeworking, travelling and working away from the office.

# 10. Key contacts and relationships

* 1. **External**

Contact with service users, other local authorities, partners and external bodies, Government Departments, other professionals (legal and others), courts and tribunals.

Contact with members of the public.

* 1. **Internal**

Contact with officers at all levels within the Council. Frequent contacts with Senior Officers. Contact with Members on specific case matters, including giving advice on courses of action and their legal risks and ramifications.

10.3 The post holder will represent the Council and be responsible for influencing and negotiating with others on contentious matters in circumstances where the relationships between contacts and the matters in question will usually be complex and may involve difficult situations requiring tact and sensitivity. The post holder will be responsible for advocating on behalf of the Council generally including, where appropriate, formal advocacy before Courts and Tribunals.

# 11. Other duties

To undertake additional duties as required, commensurate with the level of the job.

# Other Information

* All staff must commit to Equal Opportunities and Anti-Discriminatory Practice.
* The Council operates a Smoke-Free Policy and the post-holder is prohibited from smoking in any of the Council's buildings (including Council owned and Council leased buildings, but excluding designated areas in residential schemes), enclosed spaces within the curtilage of buildings, and Council vehicles. The Council does not permit smoking breaks within work time, however, in services where the flexi-scheme is in operation, employees may take reasonable break times outside of core hours, in accordance with flexi-time arrangements. Employees should follow the flexi-scheme procedure for agreeing time away from their duties in the normal manner with their immediate colleagues and line manager, with break start and finish times being recorded, as with any other break-time arrangement.
* The post-holder is expected to familiarise themselves with and adhere to all relevant Council Policies and Procedures.
* The post-holder must comply with the Council’s Health and Safety requirements as outlined in the H&S policy appropriate to the role.
* The post is eligible for both hybrid and permanent home working.
* The post-holder must be committed to the Council’s Core Values for employees – “Torbay Council employees are committed to being forward thinking, people orientated and adaptable - always with integrity”. Evidence will be sought during the probation and appraisal processes.
* If you are required to use your own vehicle on Council business or drive a council vehicle you will be asked to provide information on any driving endorsements by accessing [www.gov.uk/view-driving-licence](http://www.gov.uk/view-driving-licence) and providing a code to your Line Manager in order to share your driving licence information with the Council.
* You will be asked to complete a Criminal Records Self Declaration Form. Criminal convictions will only be taken into account when they are relevant to the post. You will only be asked to disclose ‘unspent’ convictions.
* Torbay Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and applicants must be willing to undergo the checks appropriate to the post applied for.
* The post holder is expected to work in a way that ensures vulnerable children and adults are safeguarded and report any safeguarding concerns in accordance with established policies and procedures.

# Person Specification

## Note for Candidate

### All Candidates

The supporting statement on your application form will be used to assess ability to meet the essential requirements of the role, so you should explain how you meet each of the numbered essential requirements within your supporting statement.

In a competitive situation, the desirable criteria may be taken into consideration, so you are encouraged to show how you also meet each of the desirable criteria.

### Candidates who consider that they have a disability

Reasonable adjustments will be made to the job, job requirements or recruitment process for candidates with a disability.

If you consider yourself to have a disability you should indicate this on your application form, providing any information you would like us to take into account with regard to your disability in order to offer a fair selection interview.

Where ever possible and reasonable we will make adjustments and offer alternatives to help you through the application and selection process.

If you have indicated that you have a disability on your application form you will be guaranteed an interview if you clearly demonstrate in your supporting evidence how you broadly meet the essential requirements of the role.

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## Skills and effectiveness

### Essential skills and effectiveness

1. Highly effective communication and interpersonal skills
2. Ability to give clear and accurate legal advice.
3. Analytical and problem-solving skills
4. Effective presentation skills
5. Ability to build and maintain positive working relationships
6. Able to influence and persuade others at a high level both inside and outside of the Council.
7. Advanced negotiating skills
8. Ability to manage a full and substantial workload.
9. Able to work as an integrated part of the wider Legal Services team, and be supportive of colleagues and management
10. Ability to command respect and authority with those persons the post holder is required to influence, support and advise.

### Desirable skills and effectiveness

## Ability to adapt to new areas of work.

## Knowledge

### Essential knowledge

1. A high level of knowledge of the law and procedure within the specialist discipline.

2. A detailed knowledge of the law applicable to Local Government.

3. A general awareness of the policies, aims and objectives of the Council.

### Desirable knowledge

1. Understanding of the nature of a Local Government in-house legal service.

## Experience and achievements

### Essential experience and achievements

1. Suitable training as a legal advisor and advocate

2. Experience of working within a legal environment.

3. Able to devise, prepare and deliver training.

### Desirable experience and achievements

1 Experience of working in an in-house local government Legal Service

2. Experience of working in accordance with the LEXCEL standards

## Qualifications/professional memberships

### Essential qualifications/professional memberships

1. Admitted and practicing Solicitor, Barrister or Fellow of the Institute of Legal Executives (or equivalent), with at least 3 years post qualification experience.

### Desirable qualifications/professional memberships

1. 1. Membership of the Children’s Panel

## Essential – Other requirements of the job role

1. Demonstrates a commitment to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people

2. Ability to carry out the physical requirements of the role (i.e. manual handling)

3. Ability to travel efficiently around the South West in order to carry out duties

4. Ability to accommodate unsociable hours

5. Ability to accommodate shift patterns

6. Ability to accommodate on-call working

7. Ability to accommodate home-working

15/02/2022