# Job Description and Person Specification

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| Job title | Senior Solicitor |
| Strategic team/Directorate | Corporate Services |
| Service | Legal Services (Planning, Property and Environment Team) |
| Business unit | Legal Services |
| Responsible to (day to day issues) | Head of Legal Services |
| Accountable to (line manager) | Head of Legal Services |
| Salary grade (spinal column points only) | Grade L - SCP 40-43 |
| JE ref | LEG31 |

# 1. Key purpose of job

* 1. To manage the Planning, Property and Environment team to ensure that the team provides a high quality efficient and effective legal service and contributes to continual improvement of Corporate Services
  2. To contribute towards and encourage a culture of learning, knowledge sharing and excellence.

# 2. Anticipated outcomes of post

* 1. To ensure the efficient and effective provision of Planning, Property and Environment advice and services to the Council, its Members and Officers.

2.2 The personal delivery and delivery by the team, of high quality legal advice and services to the highest standards of professional conduct and ethics, in a way that furthers and promotes good customer care within Corporate Services.

# 3. List key duties and accountabilities of the post

3.1. As a member of the Service’s management team, to contribute to the efficient and effective management and development of the Service. As required by the Head of Legal Services, to lead on (or support) management or other initiatives.

3.2. To ensure the efficient and effective provision of Planning, Property and Environment advice and services, having proper regard for the expectation and needs of the Council.

3.3. To proactively manage the delivery of efficient and effective policy and practice throughout the Council.

3.4. To manage (and keep under review) the operation and development of the Planning, Property and Environment Team, effectively implementing any changes agreed with (or required by) Legal Services.

3.5. To ensure the proper and fair allocation of work throughout the Planning, Property and Environment Team, and be responsible for monitoring its timely, efficient and proper completion.

3.6. To provide appropriate guidance and support to members of the team and encourage flexible and innovative working practices.

3.7. Personally to provide legal advice and services in relation to Planning, Property and Environment matters.

3.8. To provide legal advice and services in relation to other areas of local government law as required by the Head of Legal Services.

3.9. 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.

3.10. To be knowledgeable and up to date on the general law relating to local government, including freedom of information and data protection.

3.11. 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.

3.12. To attend quasi judicial bodies as legal advisor, including Council Committee meetings.

3.13. To provide training as required to client departments.

# 3.14. Deputy Monitoring Officer (training will be provided, where necessary).

# 4. Budgetary/Financial Responsibilities of the post

4.1. To advise and work with the Head of Legal Services on any emerging pressures, or areas within which savings could be made in respect of the Planning, Property and Environment Team.

# 4.2. To explore and develop opportunities for income generation as agreed with the Head of Legal Services.

# 5. Supervision/Line Management Responsibilities of the post

5.1. The post holder is required to lead and manage the Planning, Property and Environment Team, providing support and supervision to officers within the team.

5.2. The post holder will allocate work to Solicitors, Lawyers, Legal and Business Support officers and be responsible for assuring the work of these officers.

# 6. Working environment and conditions of the post

6.1 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.

6.2. The post holder is required to be able to travel to site visits, Court hearings and meetings.

# 7. Physical demands of the post

7.1 The post holder may occasionally be required to handle heavy documentation e.g. deed parcels, court bundles and public inquiry files offsite with appropriate manual handling equipment provided to ensure safe working.

# 8. Specific resources used by the post

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

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

# 9. Key contacts and relationships

**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.  
  
**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

**Other**

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.

# 10. 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.
* 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.

# 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.

Wherever 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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| Service | Legal Section |
| Business unit | Legal Section (Planning, Property and Environment). |

## **Skills and effectiveness**

### Essential skills and effectiveness

### Highly effective communication and interpersonal skills.

### Ability to give clear and accurate legal advice.

### Analytical and problem solving skills

### Effective presentation skills.

### Ability to build and maintain positive working relationships.

### Able to influence and persuade others at a high level both inside and outside of the Council.

### Advanced negotiating skills.

### Ability to manage a full and substantial workload.

### Ability to lead and manage a team. 10. Able to work as an integrated part of the wider Legal Services team, and be supportive of colleagues and management.

11.Ability to command respect and authority with those persons the post holder is required

to influence, support and advise.

### Desirable skills and effectiveness

## 1. 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 disciplines.
2. A detailed knowledge of the law applicable to Local Government.
3. A general working knowledge of the duties and responsibilities of the Monitoring Officer.
4. 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. Experience of providing supervision to junior colleagues.
4. 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. Educated to GCSE/O Level standard or equivalent.

### Desirable 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.

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## 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 accommodate occasional/permanent home-working.