# Job Description and Person Specification

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| Job title | Legal Officer (Children’s) |
| Strategic team/Directorate | Corporate Services |
| Service | Legal Services |
| Business unit | Adult and Children’s Legal Team |
| Responsible to (day to day issues) | Senior Solicitor (Adult and Children’s Legal Team) |
| Accountable to (line manager) | Senior Solicitor (Adult and Children’s Legal Team) |
| Salary grade (spinal column points only) |  |
| JE ref | LEG13 |

# 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. To contribute to 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.

# 3. List key duties and accountabilities of the post

3.1 To contribute to the efficient operation of the Team and its effective provision of legal advice and services to the client department, having proper regard to their expectations.

3.2 To undertake the preparation of legal documentation in support of legal proceedings in the Family Courts.

3.3 To gather, collate and analyse moderately complex information and data of a legal, technical or practical nature and summarise the results.

3.4 To undertake and summarise moderately complex research of a legal, technical or practical nature.

3.5 To take enquiries/ instructions and provide legal advice and services in a variety of both routine and moderately complex work relating to Children Services (including court appearance and attendance at Legal Meetings and client meetings as appropriate), and other areas as required to a very high professional standard.

3.6 To be knowledgeable (and to keep up to date) on the general law (and current issues) relating to local government and on developments within the areas of work handled by the Team, particularly areas in which the post-holder practices namely children’s.

3.7 To attend quasi-judicial bodies including appeal hearings as legal adviser and to accompany counsel at hearings.

3.8 If appropriate to undertake advocacy in Court (Children’s) in relation to routine hearings in respect of cases held.

# 4. Budgetary/Financial Responsibilities of the post

* 1. None

# 5. Supervision/Line Management Responsibilities of the post

5.1 None.

# 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 changing priorities.

* 1. The post holder is required to be able to travel to Court hearings and meetings.

6.3 The post holder is likely to handle cases of a sensitive and emotive nature concerning matters which may have caused persons distress and upset.

# 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 enquiry files offsite with appropriate manual handling equipment provided to enable 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 homeworking, travelling and working away from the office.

# 9. Key contacts and relationships

**External** Contact with other Local Authorities, the Family Court, The Police, the local legal profession, Experts such as psychiatrists, psychologists and risk assessors, partner organisations and relevant regional and national agencies and organisations.

**Internal** Senior Solicitor, team members, other colleagues in Legal Services and officers in client departments and Members of the Council.

# 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.
* 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.

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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## Skills and effectiveness

### Essential skills and effectiveness

1. Effective verbal and written communication skills
2. Ability to give clear and accurate legal advice.
3. Able to influence, support and advise.
4. Ability to build and maintain positive working relationships, especially within a team environment.
5. Ability to work effectively and efficiently and prioritise workload with conflicting deadlines.
6. Ability to use IT effectively.

8. Ability to work under supervision but with capacity to work on own imitative when necessary and prioritise own work effectively.

### Desirable skills and effectiveness

1. Analytical and problem-solving skills.
2. Effective presentation skills.
3. Ability to adapt to new areas of work.

## Knowledge

### Essential knowledge

1. Awareness of the legal system *I* processes and procedures.
2. Knowledge of the law relating to children’s social care

### Desirable knowledge

1. Understanding of the nature of a Local Government in-house Legal Service.

## Experience and achievements

### Essential experience and achievements

1. Experience of law and practice relating to Child Care and Adoption
2. Experience of and ability to effectively use IT equipment

### Desirable experience and achievements

1. Previous experience of Local Government in-house Legal Service.

## Qualifications/professional memberships

### Essential qualifications/professional memberships

1. Educated to A level standard or equivalent practical experience.

### Desirable qualifications/professional memberships

1. Law degree
2. Student or Member of CILEX

## 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 travel efficiently around the Bay/South West/UK in order to carry out duties.

1. Ability to accommodate unsociable hours.
2. Ability to accommodate shift patterns.
3. Ability to accommodate occasional/permanent home-working.

23/11/2023