

**CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL**  
**JOB DESCRIPTION**

Job Title: Solicitor Legal Services – Litigation & Governance

Directorate: Corporate / Governance

Service: Legal Division

Grade: 8

Location: Civic Centre

Reporting to: Lead Lawyer

**Job Purpose and Role**

Under the direction of the Head of Service and the Lead Lawyer to be responsible for the provision of a range of legal services across the Council, the West Midlands Pension Fund, Wolverhampton Homes and other approved partner bodies.

The Role can be deployed across any of the following areas of work:

**Governance and Regulatory**

- The provision of corporate and propriety legal advice including governance
- Legal advice and advocacy for planning, highways, environmental services, trading standards, local licensing, Licensing Act, education, leisure and employment.
- Preparation of Statutory Orders.
- Information and intellectual property advice

**Litigation and Governance**

- Conducting litigation and undertaking advocacy for Client departments covering all aspects of civil, regulatory crime and public law, including:

- All aspects of housing management, including possession claims and injunctions for tenancy breaches anti-social behaviour and housing disrepair claims.
- Homelessness advice and the Council's associated obligations.
- Prosecutions against landlords for various offences.
- All aspects of debt recovery from initial advice through to final hearing and enforcement afterwards.
- Provision of advocacy to Client departments in Magistrates', Crown, County Courts and Tribunals.
- Delivering governance advice and experience including advice to democratic services and advice regarding proper formalities in decision making.
- Criminal prosecutions of regulatory matters including Health and Safety and Trading Standards.
- Possession of land and property.
- Insurance claims.
- Licensing advice and advocacy both in internal mini-committees, full committees, and Courts; and
- Working with and advising elected Members on the full range of practice areas and on standards issues.

### **Key Tasks and Responsibilities**

- To provide the efficient and cost-effective delivery of legal services in the Team within the culture of customer focus, continuous improvement, service excellence and employee motivations and development.
- To make an effective contribution to the organisation and performance management of the Division, Service Cluster and Council including:
  - Assisting in the preparation and monitoring of Service Plans and Balanced Scorecards.
  - Implementation of Employee Performance Review Scheme
  - Ensuring effective communication within the Team

- To maintain knowledge of current and developing trends in the areas of legal services for which the post holder is responsible and to ensure that the Team benefits from that knowledge.
- To undertake legal work with supervision from the Head of Service and/or Lead Lawyer commensurate with the post holder's skills and experience.
- To instruct external Solicitors and Counsel when authorised by the Head of Service/Lead Lawyer
- To prepare reports for and attend meetings of the Council, the Executive Scrutiny Board and Panels, Standing Bodies, Schools Appeals Panels and any other relevant Member and/or Officer groups.
- To appear as an advocate on behalf of the Council in Courts, Tribunals inquires or other hearings as appropriate.
- To undertake all preparation in connection with his/her appearance as an advocate.
- To be accountable as an Officer of the Court for the Conduct of cases.
- To promote and comply with the Council's Equal Opportunities and Health and Safety Policies and the Data Protection Act 1998.
- To act in accordance with the Council's Constitution and other Codes of Conduct.
- To undertake any other duties appropriate to the grad of the post, subject to any reasonable adjustments under the Disability Discrimination Act.
- The City of Wolverhampton Council is committed to Corporate Parenting. Corporate Parenting is the collective responsibility of the Council to provide the best possible care and protection for children who are looked after.

## **Person Specification**

### **Qualifications**

- Qualified Solicitor/Barrister (with current relevant practising certificate) or shortly to be admitted.

### **Knowledge**

- Demonstration of CPD as required by the Law Society or Bar Council. May have additional training in relevant areas of law. Production and presentation of training material.
- Working knowledge of one or more areas of law to be undertaken. May have working knowledge of local government law

### **Skills**

- Able to deal with high volume of advocacy.
- Effective written and oral communication skills
- Good analytical and risk management skills.
- Time management skills and ability to meet deadlines.
- Ability to appreciate and implement good practice management standards
- Experience in using IT in a legal environment.
- Proven ability to conduct litigation before Magistrates, County Court/High Court and/or Crown Court.

### **Personal qualities**

- Able to work as a team member demonstrating flexibility and confidence.

### **Interest and Motivation**

- Desire to provide legal services within a culture of customer focus, continuous improvement and service excellence.
- Desire to expand knowledge and skills

### **Commitment**

- Shows commitment to personal development through CPD and Employee Performance Review.
- High level advocacy skills or drafting and negotiating skills as appropriate enabling the postholder to deal with complex cases evidenced by the postholder's learning and development record and a portfolio of work undertaken.
- Able to take on a limited amount of legal work of the level undertaken by Lead Lawyer.