

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

<b>Job Title:</b>	Principal Lawyer (Planning)
<b>Office:</b>	LGSS Law Limited
<b>Directorate:</b>	Planning Team
<b>Reports to:</b>	Head of Property, Planning & Highways and Contracts and Procurement
<b>Grade:</b>	MB4
<b>Location:</b>	Sheffield/Northampton
<b>Hours:</b>	37 hours per week

**OVERALL PURPOSE OF THE JOB**

To lead and manage a team of lawyers providing innovative and pragmatic legal advice to a range of public sector bodies regarding their property connected with their functions and other areas of legal practice where necessary.

To be the main point of contact and offer supervision in the Sheffield and Northampton offices in relation to the Planning and Highways Team.

**MAIN ACCOUNTABILITIES**

1. To provide legal advice and services to client organisations in the areas of planning, development and highways matters and other corporate or constitutional and administrative matters to ensure compliance with statutory duties and obligations and to protect the best interests of the client organisations.
2. To provide high quality, innovative, well researched and comprehensive specialist legal advice to clients including elected members and senior officers, managing a complex caseload and delivering advice within the timescales required by the client.
3. Act as a source of legal advice and support to any of the client Councils’ Committees and Directorates as directed to cover the absence of colleagues.
4. To lead, direct, develop and improve the service to client organisations, in the areas of property to ensure the provision an excellent standard of client care and value for money.
5. To act as a legal advisor to client organisations to ensure compliance with statutory duties and obligations and to protect the best interests of the client organisations. To develop and improve the service officers in relation to the planning, highways and property related areas of practice. To ensure that professional guidance is given, that expertise is employed and that work is allocated evenly within the team.

6. To develop and improve the service offered in relation to the planning and highways related areas of practice. To ensure that professional guidance is given, that expertise is employed and that work is allocated evenly within the team.
7. To act as a legal advisor to client organisations to ensure awareness of their safeguarding responsibilities and ensure compliance with statutory duties and obligations and to protect the best interest of the client organisations.
8. To build highly effective working relationships with clients to ensure that LGSS Law delivers a seamless and client focussed service to all its clients.
9. To liaise with heads of service to ensure that the legal service provided to them meets their needs and is focused on delivering high quality legal services, customer care and service improvements.
10. To develop effective partnerships, networks and joint working arrangements to ensure the most effective provision of Legal Services to meet the needs and aspirations of clients.
11. Where required, to provide training to clients in specialist areas of law.
12. To ensure the effective identification and management of risks associated with the relevant areas of legal practice.
13. To deputise for the Head of Property, Planning and Highways and Contracts and Procurement where required.
14. To support the LGSS Law leadership team in building and maintaining effective working relationships with clients to ensure the delivery of a seamless and client focussed service.
15. To support the LGSS Law leadership team by complying with all Legal Services' practice management requirements including time recording, billing, Lexcel and other accreditation schemes.
16. To support the Executive Director and other colleagues in contributing to the overall management of the team including staff performance, financial and practice manager. This includes ensuring the effective use of the ICT systems and working in accordance with the standards set out in the team's Lexcel manual.
17. To manage the activities of the team to include performance, caseloads and productivity, motivation and development, recruitment and selection and appraisals.
18. To attend courts and tribunals undertaking advocacy where required (and to) represent clients in negotiations and discussions with third parties in matters (regarding the areas of legal practice) relevant to the (post).
19. To represent clients in negotiations and discussions with third parties in matters regarding the areas of legal practice relevant to the post.
20. To support the LGSS Law leadership team in developing and maintaining effective partnerships, networks and joint working arrangements to ensure the most effective provision of Legal Services to meet the needs and aspirations of clients.

21. To contribute to the development, training or mentoring of colleagues where required.
22. Develop and provide legal input into training courses for a range of professional clients including to reduce the directorates need for legal services and to increase their self sufficiency
23. To supervise other members of the team in a line management capacity. To provide overall management of the teams complex and politically sensitive case load to ensure the provision of high quality, well researched and comprehensive legal advice within the timescales required by the client.
24. To provide supervision and manage the work of the team to ensure that professional guidance is given, that expertise is employed and work is allocated appropriately within the team.
25. To demonstrate awareness and understanding of equal opportunities, other people's behaviour and their physical, social and welfare needs.
26. To ensure that reasonable care is taken for the health and safety of the team, including compliance with health and safety policy and procedure and to maintain good employment relations within your team.
27. Carry out other duties which fall within the broad spirit, scope and purpose of the job description and which are commensurate with the grade of the post.

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			
<b>POSITION:</b>	Principal Lawyer (Planning)	<b>REPORTS TO:</b>	Head of Property Planning and Highways
<b>SERVICE:</b>	LGSS Law, Property and Governance	<b>OFFICE:</b>	Corporate, Legal
<b>GRADE:</b>	MB4	<b>LOCATION:</b>	Shefford/Northampton

The following criteria are appropriate for this post. You must meet the essential criteria in order to be shortlisted for the post and it would be advantageous if you meet the desirable criteria.

QUALIFICATIONS	
<p><u>Essential</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Solicitor of the Supreme Court of England and Wales or member of the Bar who has completed pupillage or a chartered legal executive</li> </ul>	<p><u>Desirable</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leadership/Management Qualification</li> </ul>
KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE	
<p><u>Essential</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowledge of and ability to apply planning and highways related law.</li> <li>Experience of conducting complex transactions involving planning, highways and /or development related matters including evidenced success at dealing with these complex matters.</li> <li>Experience of advising on large scale property development projects.</li> <li>A demonstrated record of managing high volume planning and highways transactions quickly, accurately and efficiently.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Desirable</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least 2 years post qualification experience preferably gained in a Local Authority setting.</li> <li>Experience of working within local government.</li> <li>Experience of property and delivering legal briefings/training courses</li> <li>Knowledge of and ability to apply other areas of law such as contract/commercial and litigation</li> </ul>

- Experience of acting as part of a multi-disciplinary project team.
- Experience and ability to provide advice on governance and constitutional matters.
- Thorough knowledge of relevant courts and tribunals procedure.
- Thorough understanding of major legislation and policy issues affecting local government in the context of the submit areas within the remit of this post.
- Demonstrated success at managing a team’s workload including attracting and developing new clients/areas/pieces of work.
- Experience of leading, managing or supervising people successfully.
- Experience of leading and managing a team of experienced professionals.
- An evidenced commitment to Lexcel.
- A demonstrated commitment to customer care.
- Understanding of what providing legal services for a democratically elected local authority entails.
- Ability to conduct legal research, interpret legislation and summarise the key points of case law.
- Experience of providing advice at meetings, working groups and/or project board.
- Advocacy Skills, Experience and through knowledge of Civil and Criminal Procedure

**SKILLS**

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| <p><u>Essential</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to work under own initiative, and to look ahead, anticipate challenges and deal with them pro-actively.</li> <li>• Ability to communicate effectively both verbally and in writing with a diverse range of persons/organisations.</li> <li>• Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.</li> <li>• Ability to work unsupervised and to provide sound and clear advice on own initiatives.</li> <li>• Ability to work under pressure and meet tight deadlines.</li> <li>• Ability to plan and prioritise work effectively to meet own objectives and those of the team.</li> </ul> | <p><u>Desirable</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An approach to problem solving that demonstrates an awareness of professional clients’ corporate priorities.</li> <li>• A commitment to Lexcel / Quality Management Standards.</li> <li>• Political astuteness.</li> <li>• Budget management skills.</li> </ul> |
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- Ability to adapt to change.
- Team worker with approachable, adaptable and positive attitude to work.
- Team player with an approachable, adaptable and positive attitude towards work.
- Able to lead and motivate others
- Time management skills – must be able to prioritise effectively and deal with conflicting demands.
- Time management skills and the ability to deal effectively with completing priorities.
- Self-starter and able to use initiative.
- Confidence to use own initiative and take difficult decisions when necessary.
- Commitment to continuous service development.
- Customer care skills and a commitment to customer focus and continuing service development.
- Ability to evaluate information in complex situations and the confidence to take sound decisions independently.
- Ability to travel to meetings at client offices and to work in the Northampton/Huntingdon/Cambridge/Shefford offices when necessary.
- Drive, enthusiasm, versatility and self-motivation.
- Ability to demonstrate awareness/understanding of equal opportunities and other people's behaviour, physical, social and welfare needs.
- IT Skills:
  - Microsoft Office
  - Internet Search and Retrieval
  - Bespoke Software Including Performance and Case Management

#### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES & HEALTH & SAFETY**

##### Essential

- Ability to demonstrate awareness and understanding of equal opportunities and other people's behaviour, physical, social and welfare needs
- Ability to demonstrate a clear understanding of, and commitment to, health & safety

