

London Borough of Bexley

JOB DESCRIPTION

Directorate: Finance and Corporate Services

Department/Section: Legal Services

Job Title: Head of Commercial – Contracts, Property, and Planning

Reports to: Deputy Director Legal and Democratic Services

Grade: BexleyLG

Purpose of the job

To manage the Contracts, Property, and Planning teams so as to ensure the effective and efficient provision of Services to the Council;

To provide high level legal advice on strategic and the more complex matters relating to Contracts, Property, and Planning. To make appropriate arrangements for timely legal advice to be provided by the team and/or externally.

To provide legal advice and expertise to the Council. To supervise and manage a team of lawyers and other staff. To contribute to the overall management of the department and to play a significant role in the delivery of the Councils overall corporate and transformation agenda.

To undertake a key senior leadership and management role and add senior fee earner value to the delivery of the Legal Services Service Plan and objectives outlined within the Business Plan.

To be the Deputy Monitoring Officer for the Council; and support the Deputy Director (Monitoring Officer) to provide sound advice to Members, the Chief Executive, CLT and Officers on key administration/governance, legal and ombudsman related issues; and to deal with code of conduct complaints against members.

Key accountabilities

The Head of Commercial:

Shall have responsibility for the Section's share of the Legal Services Budget and ensure that budgetary matters to include expenditure, payments and income is managed on a timely, efficient and appropriate basis.

Shall be required to advise on the most legally or politically complex and sensitive matters within their specialist teams and obtain necessary external input when appropriate.

Strategy

Demonstrate ownership, commitment and leadership in the delivery of the Legal Services Strategic (Business) Plan.

To assist the Deputy Director to support and advise officers in delivering the Council's Corporate Plan, transformation agenda and key priorities.

Develop and implement opportunities for income generation and external trading and meet income targets.

Contribute to London-wide or national debates on legal issues affecting local government (eg through LGA, LBLA and LLG initiatives)

Direction

Commission legal advice from external lawyers and oversee the quality and cost of that work.

Identify and advise on the political, operational and other risk issues in relation to various issues and casework, including issues that have arisen outside of the Legal Service and are not necessarily the subject of instructions.

Identify improvements in legal case management and service delivery.

Ensure that legal costs across the teams do not exceed relevant budgets and implement appropriate mitigation measures to address budget overspend

Liaise with courts and tribunals to identify improvements in court processes (when appropriate).

Implementation

Deputise for the Deputy Director of Legal and Democratic Services, when required.

Identify needs of Services and Officers and shape service delivery accordingly.

Advise on committee reports and reports to the Council and to advise on various public administrative and constitutional issues.

Provide complex specialist legal advice on public administrative and constitutional issues to clients and colleagues, including Seniors Officer and Members.

Draft, comment, negotiate and legal documents.

Issue and defend legal proceedings, if necessary.

Appear in court, tribunals, hearings, panels and Public Inquiries, as required

Instruct counsel, solicitors and experts on complex cases.

Attend committee meetings and provide advice to officers and member if required.

Carry out complex investigations with minimal supervision.

Ensure colleagues and clients are kept abreast of recent developments in the law and provide training to others.

Provide appropriate client care, including regular updates and information on cases and legal costs.

Attend evening and weekend meetings (e.g. committees & events within the borough) and from time to time and to work hours required to meet pressing deadlines that may exceed contracted hours.

Any other task that reasonably fall within the remit of the job.

Organisational Control and Development

To assist the Deputy Director Legal and Democratic Services to keep under review and develop the structures, procedures and working practices for which the post holder is responsible to ensure an integrated, effective and efficient approach to service delivery (taking account of budgetary restrictions). To ensure that working practices and processes are developed that maximise the use of new technology to ensure efficient and effective delivery of services to clients (taking account of budgetary restrictions).

Staff Management and Development

To ensure staff are managed, appraised and developed, and that effective arrangements are made for the training and development of staff with the responsibility of the post holder so as to meet service needs and to provide equality of opportunity for employees.

Recruit and train other staff and to supervise and/or manage the work of others, if required, and ensure that deadlines and other quality standards in the team are met.

Personal Effectiveness

To present timely, cogent and relevant advice and information to Members and client departments and to ensure that Group Leaders, Members, Directors, Deputy Directors, Heads of Services and other officers are briefed on significant strategic, operational and sensitive issues.

To deal with matters requiring the post holder's personal attention as promptly as possible.
To establish and develop effective working relationships.

To be conversant with relevant statutory provisions and the Council's constitution, processes and procedures; to demonstrate sound managerial, professional skills and knowledge to satisfy the requirements of the post.

Undertake research and keep up to date with relevant case law and legislation.

Lead, develop and empower staff to effectively manage service provision; human and financial resources; and provide a seamless service delivery.

Person Specification

Management Group: Finance & Corporate Services

Department/Section: Legal Services

Job Title: Head of Commercial (Contracts, Property, and Planning)

SELECTION CRITERIA	ESSENTIAL/ DESIRABLE (E/D)	METHOD OF ASSESSMENT (see key)
<u>Education & Formal Training</u>		
Qualified Solicitor or Barrister or Fellow of the Institute of Legal Executives.	E	A
Substantial relevant post qualification legal experience, with a minimum of five years PQE.	E	A
<u>Relevant Technical Experience & Knowledge</u>		
Experience of advising Members and senior officers on diverse and complex matters, including attending Committees and Panels as appropriate.	E	A/I
Experience of developing or contributing to the development of strategic plans and or policies.	E	A/I
Experience of managing or monitoring budgets and Resources	E	A/I
Experience of identifying and effectively deploying resources to meet Council objectives.	E	A/I
Experience of attending and advising at Committees and Panels as appropriate	E	A/I
Experience of developing and or implementing appropriate systems and processes to facilitate effective resource planning	E	A/I
Established expertise in a range of practice areas and the ability to take a hands on approach when needed.	E	A/I
Successful track record of achievement in the legal field.	E	A/I
Experience of providing creative legal solutions to support service transformation and change	E	A/I

Experience of supervising, motivating and developing a team of legal officers ensuring deadlines are met.	E	A/I
Experience of managing a diverse and complex caseload with minimal supervision.	E	A/I
Ability to analyse complex legal and managerial issues and deliver successful outcomes.	E	A/I
<u>Other Additional Requirements</u>		
Willing to attend evening and weekend meetings (e.g. committees & events within the borough) and from time to time and to work hours required to meet pressing deadlines that may exceed contracted hours.	E	A/I

KEY:

I = Interview

A = Application Form

AT = Ability Test

PQ = Personality Questionnaire

P = Presentation

PE = Practical Exercise

DBS = Disclosure & Barring Service DL = Driving Licence

Applicants will be assessed against these criteria and the following high performance indicators throughout the recruitment process.

High Performance Indicators

Post Title: Head of Commercial - Contracts, Property, and Planning		
Values	Behaviours for staff	Behaviours for managers
Innovation	<p>I respond flexibly and adapt to changing demands</p> <p>I am prepared to take managed risks to achieve better outcomes</p> <p>I ask 'What if...?' to develop fresh thinking and innovative approaches to generate and implement solutions to improve performance and challenge the status quo</p>	<p>I routinely look for innovative and cost-effective ways to improve performance and customer service</p> <p>I champion change and deal successfully with ambiguity, enabling people to see positive and exciting possibilities for the future</p> <p>I take calculated risks based on available evidence and my professional judgement to learn and try new things</p>
Leadership	<p>I demonstrate a clear sense of purpose and direction, in line with organisational objectives</p> <p>I am willing to take difficult decisions</p> <p>My personal actions promote a positive image of Bexley</p>	<p>I take responsibility for my service and for making things happen to make a difference to my service users</p> <p>I create an environment where staff can thrive and show I value and trust staff, give praise and recognise good work</p> <p>I inspire, lead and encourage staff to move forward</p>
Partnership	<p>I show respect for others and value contributions from internal and external partners and customers</p> <p>I recognise the right solution, regardless of who initiated it</p> <p>I seek out and work with partners who can help me achieve the outcomes and objectives I need to deliver</p>	<p>I encourage the feeling that the team is a collective unit with shared goals</p> <p>I engage with service partners and other areas of the Bexley organisation to understand the demands on others and seek solutions as One Council</p> <p>I network internally and externally</p>
Listening and Responding	<p>I acknowledge other people's viewpoints and work with them to find a win-win solution</p> <p>I prepare and present information anticipating questions and problems</p>	<p>I seek regular service user feedback and review customer data to shape service improvements</p> <p>I ask staff for ideas on how to improve our service and how I can</p>

	<p>I adapt my style to the audience and their needs, using the most appropriate communication channels</p>	<p>improve as a manager, listen to them and act on them</p> <p>I empower staff to make decisions and changes to improve value for money, customer service and productivity</p>
Open and Accessible	<p>I see issues from the customer / user perspective</p> <p>I monitor customer feedback and level of satisfaction with the service they receive, and use this to improve and pre-empt customer needs</p> <p>I seek to build and maintain positive relationships with customers and partners</p>	<p>I am accessible to my service users, customers, staff and Members</p> <p>I communicate and share a clear vision for the bigger picture as well as specific service areas</p> <p>I outline what is expected of individuals and their contribution to the whole, and am consistent in my expectations</p>
Impact	<p>I prioritise my activities and resources to focus on those which have the most impact for residents</p> <p>I take responsibility for making things happen and achieving my objectives</p> <p>I make decisions and clear recommendations based on my professional opinion and experience, informed by a range of information and evidence</p>	<p>I design services that provide value for money and deliver our outcomes, informed by evidence</p> <p>I produce, prioritise and adapt plans to meet changing requirements</p> <p>I set interim goals to achieve notable wins on the way to larger objectives</p> <p>I deal with poor performance</p>