LG2502
Head of Legal
(Part 1 – Job Description)

Job Title	**Head of Legal (Deputy Monitoring Officer)**
Grade	**SCP L**
Job Reference	**MDC001898**

Reporting to	**Director Legal and Governance**

Team Purpose

To work collaboratively with colleagues and stakeholders to support the Council's governance, decision-making, and service delivery.

To manage a varied caseload of legal work and to deliver professional services with high standards of advice and support, resolving cases of varying complexity as they arise. Ensuring compliance with statutory regulations, legislation, professional codes of practice and adherence to Council policy.

Role Purpose

To lead and manage the legal team, providing timely and accurate legal advice to officers, elected members, and committees on a range of matters including (but not limited to) Contracts, Property, Planning, Housing, Enforcement and Regulatory services

To work collaboratively with colleagues and stakeholders to support the Council's governance, decision-making, and service delivery. As Deputy Monitoring Officer, you will support the Monitoring Officer in ensuring the Council operates within the law and maintains high standards of ethical governance.

Key Accountabilities

- Manage and be accountable for all matters relating to the activities under the control of this role in line with the Council's policies & procedures

- Manage the Council's legal services to provide timely and accurate legal advice to officers, elected members, and committees on a range of matters including (but not limited to:

- Planning law (development control, appeals, Section 106 agreements)
- Enforcement (planning breaches, environmental enforcement, injunctions)
- Contract law (procurement, service agreements, commercial arrangements)
- Land law (property transactions, leases, easements, land ownership)
- Data protection and information governance (GDPR compliance, FOI, subject access requests)

- Act as Deputy Monitoring Officer or support the Monitoring Officer ensuring good governance and compliance with the Council's constitution and legal obligations.
- Draft, review, and negotiate legal documents including contracts, agreements, leases, and statutory notices.
- Represent the Council in legal proceedings, tribunals, and inquiries as required.
- Assist in the preparation and delivery of training and briefings for officers and members.
- Maintain up-to-date knowledge of relevant legislation, case law, and best practice.
- Contribute to the development and improvement of legal services, including systems, processes, and policies.
- Work collaboratively with external legal providers and partner organisations where appropriate.
- Be a role model for the service, demonstrating authenticity, integrity, resilience and compassion and focussing on communication, personal development and wellbeing

From time to time, the areas under the responsibility of this post may vary on a temporary or permanent basis. When this occurs, the relative job size will remain within the parameters of the grade for the role as evaluated under the Council's job evaluation scheme

(Part 2 – Person Specification)

Knowledge, Skills, Ability, Experience and Qualifications/Training

Knowledge

- Qualified Solicitor, barrister of legal executive with a current practicing certificate.
- In-depth knowledge of local government law and governance frameworks.
- Strong understanding of statutory responsibilities including Monitoring Officer duties.
- Knowledge of legal areas relevant to district councils: Planning Law, Enforcement, Contract Law, Land Law, Data Protection and Information Governance.
- Awareness of political sensitivities and the legal-political interface in local government.
- Understanding of corporate decision-making processes and the role of legal services in supporting them.
- Familiarity with risk management, audit, and performance improvement methodologies.

Experience

- Proven track record of delivering high-quality legal advice in a local government or public sector setting.
- Experience of managing staff.
- Demonstrable experience of acting as or supporting the Monitoring Officer.
- Experience of representing an organisation in legal proceedings, tribunals, or inquiries.
- Experience of drafting, negotiating, and reviewing complex legal documents.
- Evidence of working collaboratively with senior officers, elected members, and external stakeholders.
- Experience of managing budgets and resources effectively.

Skills and ability

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to present complex legal information clearly to non-specialists.
- Strong leadership and people management skills, with the ability to inspire and motivate teams.
- Ability to manage competing priorities and deliver under pressure.
- High level of political awareness and ability to operate effectively in a political environment
- Strong analytical and problem-solving skills.
- Proficiency in using Microsoft Office applications.
- Ability to maintain confidentiality and demonstrate integrity in all aspects of work.
- Ability to understand emerging legislation and provide guidance to members and officers accordingly
- Demonstrate excellent timekeeping and management of Outlook 365 emails and calendar appointments
- Sound organisational skills to ensure effective management of electronic and other information including diary management to ensure openness, setting an appropriate standard for the team
- Ability to identify risks and manage competing priorities

Qualifications and Training

- Qualified Solicitor, Barrister or Legal Executive with a current practicing certificate and/or extensive work experience in specialist field relevant to the post
- Evidence of continuing professional development

Special Requirements	
Emergency Planning / Business Continuity	A requirement of this role will be to attend emergency planning training. The role holder may be required to participate on the emergency response rota and support the Council's emergency planning response.
Election Duties	This post will, on occasion and with reasonable notice, be expected to assist with election duties as required and this will include working unsociable hours.
Working arrangements	The role holder may be expected to attend the office two/ three days per week or as the role requires to foster collaboration, enhance engagement and provide meaningful support to members and partners. In-person attendance at Council meetings may be required, as appropriate.
Political Restrictions	Under the provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 ("the 1989 Act") this role is classed as a politically restricted post as a 'sensitive post'. *See Politically Restricted Procedure note for more detail*.
Disclosure Barring Scheme	This role does require a DBS.
Standard Terms	1. Comply with appropriate legislation, service and council policies. 2. All employees have responsibility under the Health and Safety at Work, etc. Act 1974. These responsibilities are laid out in the council's health and safety policy and procedures. 3. Support and be committed to the council's policy on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable groups including, young children and adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. 4. Support the council's equalities and diversity policies. 5. Operate within the council's IT policies and data protection rules and regulations. 6. Operate within the council's financial regulations. 7. Where managing budgets and resources, ensure they are deployed effectively with robust internal controls and compliance with relevant regulations, policies and guidelines. 8. Participate in internal committees and departmental working parties to ensure continuous improvement as required. 9. Employees must remain flexible, undertaking duties aligned with their role and responsibilities and may be required to undertake any other reasonable duties as may be required from time to time

10. All employees are required to be flexible to undertake out of hours work as required, meetings outside office hours will be routine and officers will be expected to attend
11. Annual objectives will supplement this job description and be developed jointly with the postholder.
12. The council reserves the right to regularly review and amend this job description as needed.

See Appendix A for the Council's Competency Framework which forms part of this document.

Signature of job holder:

Date:

Appendix A

Competency Framework

Central to the delivery of the role are the council's values and behaviours and all employees are expected to work within the council's Competency Framework. These are shared by all employees and applied to everything we do. The points for each competency are shown below:

Maldon behaviours [competencies]:	
Core Competencies - All Workforce	
Communicating	Expressing information in the best way and timescales that ensure clarity and understanding and responding in the most appropriate manner.
Managing and Leading People	Providing direction and support to those we work with to ensure service excellence.
Customer Focus	Taking into account customer needs, striving to meet them and providing the best service to our customers and colleagues.
Planning and Managing Work	Planning and managing work to meet individual, team and service objectives whilst achieving quality and value for money.
Analysis and Problem Solving	Assessing and interpreting information in order to support work activities, identify issues and aid problem solving.
Initiative and Decision Making	Taking the right action, based on what we know and being responsible for what happens.
Developing Self	Committed to developing own skills, knowledge and abilities to enhance capability.

Leadership Competencies	
Providing Direction	Shaping a vision and environment that enables, inspires and influences others, providing them with a clear sense of direction and purpose.
Collaborative Working	Developing alliances and engaging effectively with partners and stakeholders for the benefit of the Council.
Change Management	Embracing change and continuous improvement for a more effective Council.
Achieving Success	Providing excellent leadership to help others perform at their best and create effective and efficient service delivery.