



Job Description

Job title	Principal Lawyer and Deputy Monitoring Officer	Hours	<i>Working hours will be 37 per week. Based at the Council Offices, Grantham the post will be required to work outside of normal office hours to meet the needs of the service. The post holder will also be required to travel to meetings and events on their own, or to accompany Members inside and outside of the Council's district, and inside and outside of normal working hours.</i>
Department	Legal and Governance	Salary	SK21A (£61,689 per annum) (plus DMO Honorarium)
Location	Currently mix of home and office-based working at Council Offices, Grantham.	Contract	Permanent

Main Job Purpose

To provide a high level of proactive legal advice within your area of specialism, personally handling a caseload of complex matters in an autonomous manner. To be the main point of contact for the Council's external legal advisors, providing in-house legal advice whilst also working closely with the Council's shared service arrangement, Legal Services Lincolnshire Partnership. The postholder will work within the wider Legal and Governance team, reporting directly to the Director of Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer) as well as working closely with the Democratic Services Manager on constitutional and governance matters. The postholder is also required to serve as the Council's Deputy Monitoring Officer.

This role is politically restricted.

Main Statement of Responsibilities

- To provide comprehensive expert inhouse legal advice to the Council, it's committees, members and officers appropriate to the post holders qualification.
- To ensure the provision of professional legal advice, both informally and at meetings of the Council and its bodies. To include researching, interpreting law and advising senior officers, elected members and client services officers on the correct application of law and procedure.
- To undertake casework across a wide range of District Council legal activity and play a prominent part in negotiations in complex projects so that the Council acts within the law, creating solutions that are lawful and which achieve its corporate objectives
- Provide advice in relation to the nature and scope of the Council's powers and duties and responsibilities, to include attendance at public meetings where necessary.



- To act as the Council's main point of contact when commissioning legal advice from external advisors, including Legal Services Lincolnshire so as to ensure the best possible outcome for the Council and to maintain the Council's reputation
- To report and update services on any relevant legislation changes, policies, code of conduct and organisational changes and provide training as and when required.
- Advise as required on public law and governance in support of officers and members as part of the decision-making processes.
- Draft, submit and present reports as and when required.
- Assist in the investigation of complaints raised by the Local Government Ombudsman.
- Review and provide comments under the legal and governance implications section of reports to Full Council, Cabinet, Committees and Officer Delegated Decisions.
- Act as the Council's Deputy Monitoring Officer and when so doing to carry out the following roles:
 1. Ensure that the Council acts at all times within the law so as to maintain and enhance its reputation for good governance within the district, county and in the wider sphere;
 2. To be responsible for matters relating to the conduct of Councillors;
 3. Providing advice and training to District, Town and Parish Councillors in relation to the operation of the Code of Conduct and to carry out any investigations of potential breaches either to assist the Monitoring officer or in place of the Monitoring Officer
 4. Acting in place of the Monitoring Officer in the event of their absence.
- Assist the Monitoring Officer in ensuring that all activities and actions taken by the Council are in accordance with the Council's constitution including Standing Orders and Financial Regulations
- Support the Data Protection Officer and Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) and assist in the coordination of the Council's response to Freedom of Information, Environmental Information and Subject Access requests.
- Assist the Monitoring officer and Democratic Services Manager in supporting the Council's various committees, attending formal meetings where required, all agenda meetings, helping to develop the work programme of committees (where applicable), providing support to scrutiny reviews, writing reports as required and reviewing draft minutes
- Maintain an effective working relationship with elected Members adopting the principles set out in the Protocol for relationships between Members and Officers of a Local Authority.

Core values

Our vision is to "be the best district in which to live, work, and visit." To achieve this promise, we are building an organisation with a strong internal culture. Our values determine how we behave and deliver services to our residents and businesses and how we interact with each other, and we believe that our values are just as important as skills.

They focus attention on six areas:



Trust

- We act with credibility, professionalism and integrity in all that we do.
- An important guiding principle in the Council’s operations and decision-making process, Trust is found in all relationships; from colleagues, Members and building our resident’s trust.

Empowerment

- Committed to creating an environment where colleagues are encouraged and supported to take initiative.
- A culture of collaboration and teamwork where everyone is encouraged to share ideas, contribute and work together.

Accountability

- Taking responsibility for our actions and operating in a transparent manner.
- Being responsible for our own performance.

Making a Difference

- Addressing the complex challenges we face with innovative solutions.
- Driven by a purpose to create a positive impact and improve the lives of residents and the community of South Kesteven.

Supportive to All

- Putting residents at the heart of everything we do.
- Being an inclusive Council that values and celebrates diversity.

Kindness

- Empathy and understanding of others.
- Treating everyone with respect.



Person Specification

Relevant Experience, Skills and Knowledge

Essential



- Excellent written and verbal skills
- Experience of working in a politically sensitive environment
- Experience of providing expert legal advice relevant to the work of the Council
- Experience of dealing with confidential and 'exempt' information
- The ability to communicate effectively and confidently to a wide variety of audiences
- Experience of driving service improvements
- Experience of using the full suite of Microsoft software products
- Effective budget and financial management skills
- Ability to demonstrate strong organisational skills
- Ability to advise sensitively on politically sensitive, or high-profile complaints

Relevant Qualifications

Essential

- Qualified solicitor, barrister or legal executive

Desirable

- Any other qualification relevant to the post or an equivalent level of legal experience relevant to the post

Communication and Interpersonal Skills

Essential

- Evidence of continuous development activity
- An enthusiastic and effective ambassador for the Council who can enhance its reputation
- An excellent role model who will promote the highest standards and live the Council's values and behaviours
- Willing to embrace and tackle difficult issues, including under-performance
- Resilient, tenacious and able to handle pressure positively
- Able to work collaboratively while seeking the highest standards for own area of responsibility
- Able to challenge and receive feedback to improve motivation, delivery and performance
- Appetite for change and understanding of how to manage it positively
- Flexible and agile approach to the workplace