

# SLDC Job Description and Person Specification

## Solicitor to the Council

[www.southlakeland.gov.uk](http://www.southlakeland.gov.uk)



## Salary Scale

Grade N SCP 49 to 54 JE Points 711

## Main Purpose of the Role

The post holder is responsible to ensure the provision of an effective and comprehensive legal and conveyance service and to provide high quality support and advice to Members, Officers and other stakeholders.

## Reporting responsibility

The Post holder will report to the Assistant Director (Resources) & Section 151 Officer.

## Main Duties and Responsibilities of the Role

1. Undertake lead professional role in Legal Services and ensuring that all relevant legislative, regulatory and national guidance is adhered to and reported on as appropriate.
2. To ensure the provision of proper legal advice and representation and to attend all Courts, Tribunals and Inquiries as necessary, or to arrange attendance by appropriate counsel.
3. To provide advice on all legal and conveyancing matters, as required by the Assistant Director (Resources), and to attend such meetings as may be allocated, from time to time, by the Assistant Director (Resources).
4. To manage the delivery of a proactive, planned and co-ordinated legal service which meets the demands of internal and external clients and is in compliance with the Council's continuous improvement process.
5. To work towards Lexcel accreditation of Legal Services and to set targets to ensure the Service Plan is delivered within the Council's Corporate Plan and changing needs.
6. To actively pursue and engage in partnership working with other local authorities for the provision of legal services.
7. To act as Training Principal to any trainee solicitor employed by the Council in accordance with Law Society regulations.
8. To monitor corporate standards in the implementation of legal policies and procedures and to recommend remedial action, as appropriate.
9. To ensure that legal advice and publications are up to date and ensure that the environment is scanned for new and upcoming law and legislation which may affect the Council, briefing Officers and Members on the implications for the future operation of the Council, as appropriate.

10. To effectively manage and enable the development of Legal Services team consisting of 2 Solicitors, 1 Legal Assistant and 1 Support Assistant
11. To effectively manage service expenditure within the approved budget (Income budgets of £20,525 & Considerable expenditure budgets £12,761 to £127,615) and plan for future years expenditure levels whilst seeking more efficient methods of working and better value for money being obtained. To ensure compliance with Finance Strategy, Policies and Procedures.
12. To deliver service improvements via the development of technology as a tool.

Any other duties as may reasonably be requested by the Assistant Director (Resources) & Section 151 Officer. The above duties and responsibilities do not include or define all tasks that may be required by the post holder. The duties and responsibilities may vary without changing the general character of the duties or the level of responsibility entailed. These factors are reflected in the grading of the post

In addition to the above, the post holder will exercise the following responsibilities

## Corporate Responsibilities

- Support the Corporate Management Team, Assistant Directors, Leader and Members to develop and deliver the Council's corporate policies and objectives to an excellent standard
- Carry out specific corporate roles and assignments as allocated by the Assistant Director of Resources and the Corporate Director (monitoring officer)
- To ensure that services are planned from the needs of the Community and users (including taking account of minority groups through equality impact assessments) and delivered in a coordinated way in compliance with the Council's Value for Money and continuous improvement processes
- Ensure (in collaboration with others) that continuous improvement, value for money and best value are delivered by challenging existing practices, setting targets for improvement and intervening as necessary ensuring an efficient, high performing, customer focussed service
- Represent the interests of the Council to external parties
- Provide an effective contribution towards the achievement of the vision and objectives of the Council

## Key Accountabilities

- Ensure the effective delivery and operation of the service
- Assist and contribute in the activities to modernise service delivery and management, including the investigation of opportunities to deliver services on a shared basis with other local government and service providers
- Contribute to service planning, establishing service development over the medium term to deliver the outcomes required by the Corporate Plan

- Identification and management of risks to service delivery

## Customer Focus

- Maintain awareness of customer and community needs and how they will impact on service demand over the medium term
- Ensure continuous service development in response to customer needs and that services are accessible through a range of channels
- Assist in the development and maintenance of a market led service
- Deal with contentious and complex complaints

## Performance Management

- Contribute and assist in the management of a range of relevant PIs, NIs and Local indicators
- Make full use of the Council's performance management software (e.g. Covalent)
- Ensure service is benchmarked for both cost and quality

## Financial Resources

- Proactively seek out efficiencies and ensure value for money and contribute towards the requirements relating to outcomes under the Use of Resources framework
- Contribute to the preparation of Capital and Revenue budgets for the medium term, which meet the delivery of the priorities of the Council
- Managing Capital and Revenue income and expenditure within approved budgets
- Actively benchmark the costs of the service as compared to near neighbour authorities and public/private sector organisations and understand the reasons for the differences

## Human Resources

- Ensure the continuous effective management of all employees in the department
- Contribute to the Workforce Development Plan for your service ensuring training and development needs are identified, prioritised and delivered
- Participate with the Job Consultation process as required by the corporate standard

## Person Specification

E = Essential

D = Desirable

AF = Application form

I = Interview

O = Other e.g. assessment

## Education

Criteria	E/D	AF	I	O
An admitted Solicitor who has a current practising certificate.	E	✓	✓	-
A degree in law.	E	✓	✓	-

## Experience

Criteria	E/D	AF	I	O
At least 5 years experience in fulfilling the conditions set out in the job description and extensive experience (3 years) in the management of staff.	E	✓	✓	-
Thorough experience in two or more of the following works areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Government</li> <li>Planning law</li> <li>Contracts and procurement Environmental and regulatory law</li> </ul>	E	✓	✓	-
Previous Local Government Experience with a minimum of five years' post qualification experience with a local authority.	D	✓	✓	-
Up to date advanced knowledge of local government law.	D	✓	✓	-
Up to date advanced knowledge of planning law.	E	✓	✓	-
Up to date and sound knowledge of the Members Code of Conduct.	E	✓	✓	-

## Skills and Attributes

Criteria	E/D	AF	I	O
Sound knowledge and understanding of the local government legislative framework.	E	✓	✓	-
Proven advocacy skills.	E	✓	✓	-
Proven ability to plan and prioritise work, manage time and respond effectively to changing circumstances.	E	✓	✓	-

Criteria	E/D	AF	I	O
Proven ability to manage staff and resources, motivate self/others and to use initiative and work independently to secure service improvement.	E	✓	✓	-
Proven ability to understand and use Information Technology.	E	✓	✓	-
Proven ability to understand complicated issues and translate them into a form which others can understand.	E	✓	✓	-
Proven ability to present complicated information and advice to elected members and senior officers.	E	✓	✓	-
Proven ability to communicate effectively with groups and individuals, both orally and in writing.	E	✓	✓	-
Committed to Council's Equal Opportunities Policies and Practices.	E	✓	✓	-
Willingness to work outside normal office hours.	E	✓	✓	-

## Conditions of service

- The post will carry an essential car user allowance this will be limited to a maximum of the 1000 – 1199cc category
- The post will be subject to the Conditions of Service of the National Joint Council for APT&C staff and to any Local Agreements, which apply now or may from time to time be negotiated and agreed, collectively or individually. The main National and Local Conditions of Service and Locally agreed procedures are incorporated into Terms and Condition of Employment for all staff. Employees are required to adhere to all the Councils Policies, Procedures and Guidelines, which can be found on the Intranet and in the Human Resources Manual in your department
- The post will be subject to the Local Government [Political Restrictions] Regulations
- The Post holder will be expected to comply with the Council's Code of Conduct for Employees
- South Lakeland District Council has clear priorities for safeguarding vulnerable people: including children and young people under the age of 18, the elderly, people with disabilities, people who have physical and mental health conditions. As an organisation we use the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure service to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, this post is not subject to a Standard/Enhanced Criminal Record Bureau's disclosure
- Equal Opportunities - South Lakeland District Council aims to be an Equal Opportunities Employer and has equal opportunities policies with which you are expected to comply at all times. The Council condemns all forms of harassment and is actively seeking to promote a workplace where employees are treated with dignity, respect and without bias, irrespective of disability, race, religion or beliefs, nationality, ethnic origin, age, sexual orientation, gender or marital status

- Community Safety Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act requires local authorities to consider the community safety implications of all their activities. Officers of the Council should have an awareness of community safety and consider any community safety implications within their own area of responsibility
- Comply with the relevant duties and responsibilities under the Health & Safety Work etc. Act 1974. The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (as amended) All relevant Codes of Safe Working Practice, policies and other health and safety information relevant to your Services area of work. The Health and Safety at Work Act stipulates that it is the responsibility of every employee to observe all rules governing health and safety and such safety equipment as provided must be used
- All employees must have due regard to the Council's current Management Arrangements for Data Quality. All employees have a responsibility to ensure that the data they collect, manage and report, including data from third parties is accurate, valid, reliable, relevant, complete and produced in a timely fashion to aid sound decision making and that appropriate procedures, systems and processes are in place to provide quality data
- There is a requirement in exceptional circumstances to participate in the provision of an emergency support service to enable the Council to provide an emergency out-of-hours service. There is also a requirement to respond to and assist with the management of an emergency incident as defined by the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. Responsibility for specific emergency response roles is detailed in South Lakeland District Council's Emergency Plan. These exceptional circumstances could be within or outside of normal working hours and remuneration will be in accordance with the Councils Guidelines.