

LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON
CORPORATE SERVICES DEPARTMENT
JOB DESCRIPTION

POST TITLE: Head of Practice - SLLP

Grade: MG1

DIVISION/SECTION: Corporate Services

Location: Various offices according to the needs of the service.

Responsible to: Managing Director, SLLP

Responsible for: Overall responsibility for Practice Support legal team (15 FTE) and the Land Charges Team (Direct Management of 2 X Practice Managers and the Local Land Charges Manager

Post Number: M3025246

Date: June 2022

MAIN PURPOSE

- To lead and develop the South London Legal Partnership legal practice – being responsible for all physical and digital elements of the practice and the development of it.
- To have day to day responsibility for the overall budget of SLLP (circa £8m) and to work with the Managing Director, SLLP to ensure the effective administration and review of the hard charging model.
- To be the key contact on budgetary and performance managers for the senior clients (monitoring officers, directors and assistant chief executives) in the 5 boroughs served by SLLP.
- To be responsible for all work to develop income for the service – to include but not be limited to being responsible for the delivery of the Digital Courtrooms company and to manage the delivery of the Practice's new Alternative Business Structure (ABS).
- To be responsible for all workflows, processes and procedures that operate in the practice to ensure that they are delivering efficiency savings for the five member Councils and to direct legal team managers in the reforms of their processes
- To be the commercial lead for the practice; leading on the procurement of systems, legal panels, experts and other support with a focus on good value for money. As part of this to establish robust financial processes for charging and recharging clients and recovering income of approximately £6 million.

- To develop and lead the Practice's staff development – being responsible for the recruitment, retention and development schemes for the 120 staff in the practice – including the creation and delivery of legal trainee schemes, apprenticeships and other development schemes.
- To lead on client engagement around practice performance, hard charging and budgeted hours – working for and to the SLLP Board and the key clients from each of the five boroughs
- To lead and manage Merton's Local Land Charges Service, providing support and guidance to the team and acting as the senior point for liaison with assistant directors in other key service areas in the Council.

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- To lead on the development of the SLLP's income plan – ensuring that robust plans are in place to bid for work, to lead bid processes, to expand current income generation schemes and to be responsible for overall delivery of any secured contracts.
- To be the lead representative in the Digital Courtrooms Company, and others, leading on negotiations with the other partners, the courts and local authorities and representing the local authorities interests whilst maximising income through this vehicle.
- To be a member of SLLP Management Team and participate in the overall management of SLLP and within that team to have lead responsibility for the processes and practice of fellow team managers – with an expectation that they would lead their colleagues in making these changes
- To be responsible for the management of both internal and external budgets within the SLLP – managing the contracts with the service's suppliers, the budget for the Practice Support Team and being responsible for the management of income collected by the Practice on behalf of the five boroughs (c. 86m)
- To be responsible for the governance of the SLLP – including being responsible for meeting the regulatory requirements of delivering an ABS and to lead and manage all processes necessary to maintain ISO 9001 accreditation or similar quality management system.
- To deliver an innovative, co-ordinated and value for money IT strategy for SLLP which has regard to the need to keep up to date with future technological developments and the future landscape for Local Authority legal services. In addition, to be responsible for investigating opportunities for sharing or collaboration with other local authorities of private sector firms.
- To ensure the Legal Practice Support team of SLLP provides cost effective, comprehensive and professional legal support services to all authorities and arm's length delivery vehicles.
- To have strategic responsibility for the staffing of the SLLP – leading and devising recruitment strategies for both temporary and permanent members of staff, developing training plans for the practice, developing apprenticeship and traineeship programmes as well as internal talent development schemes.
- To work alongside the SLLP management team in the development, implementation and management of Service Level Agreements with internal and external clients including liaison with clients at a senior level including complaints handling and reporting and the identification and delivery of client needs. To keep abreast of developments in practice management and

seek areas for improvement and develop ideas to deliver legal services innovatively.

- To be the external eyes and ears of the practice – horizon scanning the sector and developing and developing plans and strategies that will help the SLLP stay at the forefront of local government law.
- To manage Merton's Local Land Charges service, ensuring compliance with legal requirements and corporate performance indicators.
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- To act as project lead for the team in preparation for migration of the register to Her Majesty's Land Registry, coordinating inputs from senior officers across the Council and acting as contract manager for external support.
- Deputising for the Managing Director SLLP
- Any other duties as requested by the Managing Director, SLLP

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Qualifications and Experience

Professional and post specific requirements

- To degree standard and/or relevant professional qualification
- A solid track record of developing and embedding best practice, innovation and continuous improvement in the delivery of a large legal practice
- Experience of managing all non-law elements of a legal practice
- Experience of developing new company vehicles and exploiting business opportunities within a legal context.
- Experience of staff management and ability to manage, inspire and motivate staff

Skills and Knowledge

- Ability to lead the development of the Shared Legal Service.
- A thorough understanding of current best practice and issues relating to Legal Services within the public sector.
- Outcome driven, with a strong commitment to the promotion of best practice and the development of a continuous improvement culture
- An understanding of and commitment to effective client and customer engagement.
- Excellent communication skills, both orally and in writing – especially in the area of sales
- Ability to work flexibly and out of usual working hours when required to do so.

Personal Style and Behaviour

Please refer to LB Merton's Model of Leadership Behaviours (attached)