

LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON
CORPORATE SERVICES DEPARTMENT
JOB DESCRIPTION

POST TITLE: Lawyer
Grade: ME15
Department: Corporate Services
Location: Various offices according to the needs of the service
Responsible to: Principal Lawyer or Assistant head of law

Responsible for:
Post number: TBC

1st October 2022

MAIN PURPOSE

- To provide customer focused, high quality and responsive specialist legal advice in relation to more than one of the area of legal expertise covered by a local authority legal team. These areas are as follows:
 - Children's Social Care
 - Adoption
 - Adults Social Care
 - Education
 - Employment
 - Planning
 - Housing
 - Debt recovery
 - Judicial review
 - Highways
 - Property
 - Procurement
 - Administrative Law
 - Constitutional law
 - Finance
 - Elections
 - FOI
 - Licensing
 - Environment
- To be responsible for delivering a variety of types of legal work as expected within that specialism.
- To be responsible, for providing creative legal solutions on a seamless basis to support service transformation and change and to meet client needs and at the more senior levels to be able to deliver advice on a broad range of areas.
- To carry an extensive case load of complex and sensitive matters and
- To be responsible for representing the interests of the service within the wider council organisations in any of the five authorities and with external clients.
- To provide support and supervision to legal and non-legal junior staff

- To deputise for the Principal Lawyer, Assistant Head of Law or Head of Law

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- To provide timely and effective specialist legal advice to elected members, including committees and to Directors senior managers and officers across both authorities as part of a team of lawyers, and to any other clients of the Shared Legal Service.
- To be responsible for providing innovative solutions to deal with complex issues arising in connection with the work within the team and the legal issues presented by clients.
- To manage a large caseload of wide ranging work within two of the above specialisms , including but not limited to; drafting legal letters, legal agreements, deeds, notices, orders, consents by-laws as well as negotiating agreements, settlements and such matters, managing competing demands and meeting deadlines and the requirements of the Shared Legal Service.
- Where relevant, to prepare and process all matters relevant to any proceedings before a court, arbitration, mediation or public inquiry and to attend such as the client's advocate or, if appropriate, select and instruct appropriate external legal representation.
- To work proactively to maintain and improvement the relationship with the clients of the Shared Legal Service.
- To supervise, and be responsible for the work of, junior staff as required and to provide management and leadership to the staff working on their cases.
- To undertake duties on behalf of the Monitoring Officer for all five authorities
- Keep clients informed of new legislation and case law relevant to their operations, including training seminars where appropriate and to ensure that they maintain a sound application of legal requirements.
- Advise upon, draft and approve committee reports in respect of cases and legal issues
- Attend as the sole representative in order to advise and provide legal services to elected members at council Cabinets, Committees and Panels as are required.
- Negotiating, on behalf of any of the five authorities, with solicitors and other professionals and liaising with outside bodies including the court service on matters relating to work of any client.
- Any other duties as maybe commensurate with the grade

**LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON
CORPORATE SERVICES DEPARTMENT
PERSON SPECIFICATION**

POST TITLE: Lawyer
Grade: ME15

Qualifications and Experience

- Qualified legal executive, solicitor or barrister or chartered legal executive with a background in local government
- Good knowledge of relevant legislation to the service area and the decision making processes and procedures
- Good understanding of current issues and best practice on service delivery relevant to the service areas
- Good and demonstrable analytical legal skills

Skills and Knowledge

- Ability to work under pressure and respond efficiently to the changing needs of the clients
- Ability to be able to travel to attend client officers or courts wherever the client's case is being considered
- Commitment to the principles of and development of the Shared Legal Service
- Ability to contribute to the ongoing development of the Shared Legal Service
- Good communication skills, both orally and in writing and good numeracy and analytical skills
- Ability to provide visible support and leadership which empowers, enables and develops staff to achieve results
- Ability to be available to attend premises out of hours to attend evening meetings and in the event of emergencies or urgent management issues in relation to both authorities
- Performance orientated, able to manage and monitor performance effectively set clear objectives for the review of individual and service level performance