

# Job Description

Post title: Deputy Director of Legal Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer  
Service area: Law and Governance  
Grade: CO3  
Reports to: Director of Law and Governance  
Your team: Legal Services  
Number of supervisees: 7 Direct Reports, leading around 80 members of staff

## Our ambition

We're determined to make Islington more equal. To create a place where everyone, whatever their background, has the opportunity to reach their potential and enjoy a good quality of life.

We also have an ambitious goal – to be the best council in the country – with every employee clear about the part they play and inspired, focused and supported to give their very best.

We want to build an organisation where employees feel valued, inspired and empowered to help us achieve our goals and provide the best services possible to our residents.

## Our values and behaviours

'Be Islington' is about setting a clear challenge about what it means to be an Islington employee and sets the standard for every new recruit.

We ask our employees to 'Be Islington' – playing their part in working together for a more equal borough and to always be collaborative, be ambitious, be resourceful, and be empowering ('CARE').

## Our commitment to challenging inequality

We are committed to tackling inequality, racism and injustice and creating a more equal borough for all. In order to do this, we need to set the example by being a fair employer and creating a workplace environment which is free from discrimination, racism and inequality. Our approach needs to be proactive, consistently learning to create a more equal workplace and foster a culture which empowers all staff to challenge inequality.

Equality is at the heart of what we do. We want to celebrate and embrace our differences by:

- Ensuring our workforce is representative of the people we work on behalf of, our residents
- Creating equitable working environments and diverse teams
- Understanding our residents in order to design and deliver services that help tackle inequality and improve life chances for our residents
- Getting to know people and their differences
- Interpreting issues and concerns from a cultural perspective and address situations or problems from the points-of-view of multiple cultures

# Primary Purpose

The primary purposes of the Deputy Director of Legal Services are:

- **To lead the delivery of Legal Services within the Council**
  - Ensuring that the service is effective, fit for purpose and in line with the Council's requirements
  - Through proactively leading, managing, planning and organising the workflows of the service
  - Becoming a core member of the Law and Governance Management Team
  - Providing operational and strategic vision, strong leadership and support as the key management role in the service
  - Ensuring that the service is run in the most cost effective and efficient way
  - Raising the profile of Islington Council Legal Services internally, regionally and nationally through collaborative working, professional networking and innovation in solutions.
- **To act as the Deputy Monitoring Officer for the Council**

# Key Responsibilities

- Be accountable for the provision and development of Legal Services
- Deputise for the Director of Law and Governance as required, including the role of Deputy Monitoring Officer
- Be responsible for the Legal Services budget including monitoring and reporting with a view to deliver savings and a cost effective service
- Personally provide high quality and timely legal advice and professional work to Directors and their directorates within the Council
- Ensure that the Council receives timely, effective and customer focussed legal advice that appropriately meets the needs of all stakeholders and customers
- Develop, implement and review the Legal Service improvement plan
- Develop an effective and resilient team including reviewing effectiveness of existing working methods and devise creative approaches to service development in collaboration with relevant staff
- Support the discharge of the statutory duties and responsibility of the Monitoring Officer, promoting high standards of conduct across the Council
- Procure and act as the contract manager for external legal services and advice
- Act as the 'intelligent client' enabling better decision making and ensuring value for money through being responsible for the management of external legal expenditure
- Lead on a broad range of legal functions within Legal Services and be accountable for the wide range of advice on critical, sensitive and strategic statutory services such as Adult and Children's social care, planning and regulatory services
- Undertake other duties and responsibilities of a similar nature as may be required from time to time.
- Resolve the most complex and high-profile legal issues, identifying effective solutions and establishing precedents.

- Institute and defend civil and criminal proceedings on behalf of the Council ensuring pre-court preparations are of the highest quality.
- Issue and receive legal notices on behalf of the Council (except where another officer of the Council is so authorised).
- Review and advise on new legislation, case law and other developments.
- Represent the services at relevant Committees. Also represent the Council on relevant outside bodies, government bodies and other agencies as is appropriate to the services.
- Be an integral member of the Law and Governance Management Team providing advice and leadership to all colleagues and advice and support to Councillors
- Be accountable for the scale, management and organisation of resources and assets within the Legal service to meet corporate standards of performance
- Identify and promote new and innovative opportunities to develop the Legal service for the future including alternative methods of service delivery.
- Advise the Director of Law and Governance of all legal risks resulting from service client decision making, escalating concerns or issues in a timely manner whilst seeking to find resolutions for service managers and managing and resolving conflict which may arise.
- Manage own professional development, keep up to date with relevant statutory legislation, regulations, standards, service developments and initiatives and the Council's policies and procedures to provide high-level legal advice to service clients and legal staff.
- Be responsible for the promotion and implementation of all the Council's policies and procedures including equalities and diversity, health and safety, security and the use of personal data.

## Leadership

As a member of the council's management team, to contribute proactively to the collective leadership for the council, working collaboratively with Members, services across the council, partners and stakeholders to deliver the council's objectives and priorities.

To drive positive cultural change, embodying and promoting the values and behaviours of the council and empowering staff to reach their full potential. Ensure that the performance and development framework is effective for all staff.

To lead on and ensure the effective implementation of corporate initiatives and transformation programmes that cut across the whole or part of the council's activities.

## Resources and Financial Management

Ensure effective Financial Management, cost controls and income maximisation in an ever changing environment, fluctuating demands and priorities. Ensure resources are well managed and effectively deployed to the best possible effects assuring value for money in all activities.

## Compliance

Ensure legal, regulatory and policy compliance under GDPR, Health and Safety and in area of your specialism identifying opportunities and risks and escalating where appropriate.

## Budget responsibilities

The post holder will have overall responsibility for a budget of £4.8m, with £4.5m relating to staffing costs.

## Work style

Flexible/Office-Based

# Person specification

You should demonstrate on your application form how you meet the essential criteria. Please ensure you address each of the criteria as this will be assessed to determine your suitability for the post.

## Assessment Guide

A = Application

I = Interview

T = Test

## Essential Criteria

### Qualifications

Essential criteria	Criteria description	Assessed by
1	A qualified solicitor or barrister and member of a specified legal body, and substantial post qualification experience at senior level in a large organisation.	A/I

### Experience

Essential criteria	Criteria description	Assessed by
2	A substantial track record of success at senior management level as a solicitor or barrister, within a large, complex organisation	A/I
3	Evidence of a clear understanding of the legal, financial and political framework of local government, and a record of successful application of relevant legislation and appropriate business management to achieve corporate and service objectives.	A/I
4	Experience of leadership within large and diverse organisation, which demonstrates achievement at a senior, strategic & corporate management level	A/I
5	Strategic management experience, including translating organisational drivers into strategic objectives, longer term plans, new ways of working and specific outcomes, for a service in a large public sector organisation (preferably local government)	A/I
6	Experience of leading staff across multiple practice areas	A/I

## Skills

Essential criteria	Criteria description	Assessed by
7	Ability to apply relevant laws, including law relating to local government and local authority administration, local government finance, property, social services, data protection and freedom of information, discrimination and harassment, employment and industrial relations, environment, education and civil litigation.	A/I
8	Exceptional political nous with the ability to apply diplomacy, tact and discretion in challenging situations.	A/I
9	Ability to communicate clearly and concisely in writing and orally and present arguments in a confident, articulate and persuasive manner at a senior level	A/I
10	Resilience, not easily deterred in the face of challenges	A/I
11	Ability to think critically, apply innovative and creative thinking to address complex service challenges	A/I
12	Strong interpersonal and communication and presentation skills, with proven ability to communicate effectively to a wide range of audiences both horizontally and vertically, financial and non-financial	A/I
13	Able to lead, inspire and motivate employees and generate a positive working environment	A/I
14	Ability to adhere to the Council's Dignity for All policy – and a commitment to championing the Council's equality policies and practices across all aspects of the role.	A/I

## Special requirements of the post

Essential criteria	Criteria description	Assessed by
15	This post is subject to the council's policy on pecuniary and personal interest	A/I
16	This post is designated as politically restricted	A/I

## Our accreditations

Our accreditations include: the Healthy Workplace award, Timewise, London Living Wage Employer, Disability Confident Committed, The Mayor's Good Work Standard, Stonewall Diversity Champion, and Time to Change.

