

CROYDON COUNCIL

ROLE PROFILE AND PERSON SPECIFICATION

DEPARTMENT: Resources

DIVISION: Legal and Democratic Services

JOB TITLE: Principal Lawyer - Commercial, Property & Planning

N.B: If you have any issues printing this document please contact HR

ROLE PROFILE

Job Title:	Principal Lawyer - Commercial, Property and Planning
Department:	Resources
Division:	Legal and Democratic Services
Grade:	Grade 17
Hours (per week):	36 hours
Reports to:	Head of Commercial, Housing and Litigation
Responsible for:	Senior Lawyers, Lawyers, and Paralegals in the Commercial (Contracts, Property & Planning) Team and through direct line management and supervision .
Role Purpose and Role Dimensions:	<p>To contribute to the provision of a comprehensive and specialist legal advice service on procurements and contracts, property and planning matters to the Council and its officers.</p> <p>To lead and manage a team and be responsible for compliance with Legislations, Statutory Guidance, Court Procedure Rules, Court Directions, Practice Directions and Guidance in the preparation, conduct and supervision of cases and to give advice accordingly, and to meet the needs of the clients in a cost effective manner. To help support, develop and maintain internal processes.</p> <p>Deputising for members of the Divisional Management Team as required, providing legal advice as required to officers across the Council.</p> <p>Representing the Division on Corporate or other initiatives across the Council.</p>
Commitment to Diversity:	To take individual and collective professional responsibility for championing the council's diversity agenda, proactively implementing initiatives which secure equality of access and outcomes. Commit to continual development of personal understanding of diversity.

Key External Contacts: Courts, other local authorities, central government departments, professional bodies, third party solicitors, government legal services

Key Internal Contacts: Staff at all levels across the organisation, especially Housing Directorate staff and elected Members

Financial Dimensions: N/A

Key Areas for Decision Making: Providing clear and impartial advice to officers of the Council on behalf of the Council's Director of Law and Monitoring Officer.

Issuing, defending and settling court proceedings and executing documents on behalf of the Council's Director of Law and Monitoring Officer.

Other Considerations: Occasional out of hours duty advice maybe required

Is a satisfactory disclosure and barring check required?
[\(click here for guidance on DBS\)](#)

No

What level of check is required?

Is the post politically restricted
[\(Click here for guidance on political restriction\)](#)

Yes

Is the post exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (ROA) 1974
[\(Click here for guidance on ROA\)](#)

select from drop down

Key Accountabilities and Result Areas:

Key Elements:

To help support the development of Commercial

This will involve:

Team as well as the Division.

To help support the development of Commercial Team (Contracts, Property & Planning) and the Division. Specifically this will include:

To advise and have conduct of complex legal files on behalf of the clients and to provide advice and undertake research as requested in relation to procurements and contracts, property and/or planning matters;

Proactively identify legal issues at the earliest opportunity and develop and implement strategies to address them;

Use a range of persuasion and influencing skills to secure strategic outcomes that are compliant with the law;

Use high level legal competencies to develop and implement innovative solutions to legal problems;

To attend meetings and court which may take place outside of normal office hours and off site as required;

To provide day to day supervision of lawyers in the team with the execution of their responsibilities as well as in-house advocates and paralegals. This will also include conducting 1-1's and Appraisals with the support of Head of Commercial, Housing and Litigation;

To deputise for Head of Commercial, Housing and Litigation as and when required. This will include taking the lead on projects as requested;

Contribute to the ongoing overall development and procedures of the team and the Division;

Helping to support the delivery of the corporate and service plans; and

Taking a proactive approach to risk management, ensuring risks and issues are identified, addressed and reported and, where appropriate, escalated to the Head of Commercial, Housing and Litigation.

**Advising the Client
Department on all areas of
Procurement and Contract,
Property and/or Planning.**

This will involve:

- Attending all types of meetings involving the Client Directorate including Committee and Sub-Committee meetings.
- The provision of expert advice and guidance on Procurement and Contracts, Property and Planning matters.
- Competent completion of Procurement and Contracts, Property and/or Planning matters with a high degree of initiative and assurance.

- Complying with statutory provisions and guidance, case law and best practice guidance in the conduct of matters relating to the Team's responsibilities.
- Developing effective professional working relationships with client officers and colleagues.

To participate in training for Client Officers, as arranged

This will involve:

- Preparing and presenting legal briefings and training for clients, colleagues, elected Members and external bodies.

At all times to observe the recognised standard of professional conduct for a solicitor or barrister

This will involve:

- Maintaining a current practising certificate
- Obtaining required CPD hours each year end to maintain a training record.
- Co-operating with and assisting other team members when required, ensuring that a comprehensive and responsive service is available to the client department.

Ensure that the Head of Commercial, Housing and Litigation is at all times adequately informed of matters being dealt with by the post holder and to assist as required with arrangements for monitoring progress of work

This will involve:

- Regular attendance at one to one meetings, team meetings and diary meetings.
- Provision of 'holiday notes'/'handover notes' on allocated matters.
- Ensuring compliance with use of case and file management and diary systems and other agreed office procedures.

Green Commitment

- Ensuring both individual and teamwork meets the Council's Green Commitment Policy goals in reducing energy consumption and waste, increasing renewable energy use and recycling, contributing to a reduction in traffic congestion and using sustainable materials.

Data Protection

- Being aware of the council's responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 1998 for the security, accuracy and relevance of personal data held, ensuring that all administrative and financial processes also comply.
- Maintaining customer records and archive systems in accordance with departmental procedures and policies as well as statutory requirements.

Confidentiality

- Treating all information acquired through employment, both formally and informally, in confidence. There are strict rules and protocols defining employee access to and use of the council's databases. Any breach of these rules and protocols will be subject to disciplinary investigation. There are internal procedures in place for employees to raise matters of concern regarding such issues as bad practice or mismanagement.

Equalities and Diversity

- The council has a strong commitment to achieving equality of opportunity in its services to the community and in the employment of people. It expects all employees to understand, comply with and promote its policies in their own work, undertake any appropriate training to help them to challenge prejudice or discrimination.

Health and Safety

- Being responsible for own Health & Safety, as well as that of colleagues, service users and the public. Employees should co-operate with management, follow established systems of work, use protective equipment and report defects and hazards to management. Managers should carry out, monitor and review risk assessments, providing robust induction and training packages for new and transferring staff, to ensure they receive relevant H&S training, including refresher training, report all accidents in a timely manner on council accident forms, ensure H&S is a standing item in team meetings, liaise with trade union safety representatives about local safety matters and induct and monitor any visiting contractors etc, as appropriate.

Contribute as an effective and collaborative team member

This will involve:

- Participating in training to demonstrate competence.
- Undertaking training as required for the role.
- Participating in the development, implementation and monitoring of service plans.
- Championing the professional integrity of the service.

Person Specification

Job Title:	Principal Lawyer - Commercial (Contracts, Property & Planning)
Essential knowledge:	<p>A qualified solicitor/barrister with a current practising certificate in England and Wales and with a proven PQE track record of managing complex caseload and team of lawyers in Contracts, Property or Planning Law.</p> <p>Comprehensive and detailed knowledge of Procurement and Contracts, Property or Planning Law and Practice.</p> <p>Understanding and working knowledge of the law relating to Local Government procedures and processes.</p>
Essential skills and abilities:	<p>Ability to work constructively with client departments and to understand and react to service delivery needs and reflect their aspirations in business plans and performance management activities.</p> <p>Ability to demonstrate excellent verbal and written communication skills.</p> <p>Ability to give advice in a confident and persuasive manner.</p> <p>Ability to organise own work priorities, others and meet deadlines.</p> <p>Ability to work under pressure and deal with unforeseen and urgent demands.</p> <p>Ability to demonstrate good time management and personal organisation skills.</p> <p>Ability to demonstrate awareness and understanding of the Council's Equalities Policy and how it applies to the role.</p> <p>Ability to work effectively within a team and demonstrate an adaptable and flexible attitude.</p> <p>Ability to manage and supervise others.</p> <p>The ability to use judgment to make successful decisions in a complex, changing and high impact organisation, and to use initiative in identifying creative solutions.</p>

Essential experience:

A minimum of 6 years PQE or a minimum of 5 years PQE and hold the Law Society Diploma in Local Government Law or similar relevant qualification.

Experience of managing and supervising a team, preferably within a public sector setting.

Experience of delivering complex, commercially aware and sensitive guidance in a political environment, while building and sustaining credible and effective relationships at the highest level.

Experience of success in designing and leading sustainable change and innovation in the provision of legal services resulting in improved service delivery.

The ability to motivate and support legal colleagues to deliver actions for their team to meet service needs and deliver strategic outcomes.

Experience of working at a strategic level and beyond service boundaries.

Evidence of effective provision of expert legal advice in corporate and complex issues.

Experience of leading corporate projects and of project management methodology including planning and problem-solving

Experience of successful supervision, workforce development and capacity building using innovation and delivering success through others

Experience in contributing to the design and implementation of business plans.

Competent use of ICT and case management system.

Special conditions:

Required if necessary to attend meetings outside of office hours.

DBS required only on admission to the profession as a new solicitor/barrister/legal executive.