Senior Lawyer (Procurement Contracts & Governance)

JE Code: JE2340

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| **Values – We are dedicated, respectful, collaborative, we are Milton Keynes Council** |
| **Service** | Legal & Democratic |
| **Reports to:** | Principal Lawyer, Procurement, Contracts & Governance |
| **Job Family** | Professional & Technical |
| **Grade:** | J |
| **Political restricted** | Y |
| **Date:** | January 2022 |

**Key Deliverables**

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| **1.** | To manage a caseload of medium and high-level matters ensuring that all work is both of a high quality and delivered in a timely manner. All work should be undertaken with the purpose of assisting the Council to achieve its business objectives and operates within the wider policy context. |
| **2.** | Ensure the delivery of value for money services to high practice standards within a culture of continuous improvement. |
| **3.** | Ensure through compliance with robust performance standards the delivery of services to best practice standards. |
| **4.** | Through high quality service, advocacy, advice and casework to support the Council in achieving its outcomes successfully. To ensure that you have the current skills and competencies to advise on all relevant matters and that you ensure that these skills and competencies develop and adapt over time to meet future business developments. |
| **5.** | To provide training and guidance to the client department and legal team in their core area of work. |
| **6.** | To establish and maintain a deep understanding of the client’s business needs and objectives as these evolve over time through building professional relationships, ensuring those objectives are understood and shared by colleagues. |
| **7.** | As a Senior Lawyer to assist in supervising the advice, advocacy and casework of more junior lawyers as arranged with the Principal Lawyer through supervision or other arrangements. |
| **8.** | Accountable, with the Principal Lawyer, for the delivery of key performance targets for the team. |
| **9.** | Demonstrate a personal commitment to the Council’s Values and encouraging and holding to account those values throughout their team. |
| **10.** | Provide legal advice and guidance to all departments in relation to legal issues particularly in relation to complex commercial, procurement and contract law matters to assist the Council to deliver its objectives. |

*Within reason these key deliverables may evolve to meet service need and it is expected that you will be flexible and adaptable in your delivery to meet both service and council wide needs*

**Essential Requirements (key skills & qualifications)**

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| **1.** | Qualified Solicitor or Barrister (Supreme Court of England and Wales/English Bar) or Fellow of the Institute of Legal Executives or equivalent relevant qualification with relevant experience. |
| **2.** | Significant experience of providing advice in complex and novel situations and conduct of advocacy (if applicable to work area). |
| **3.** | Knowledge of local government law. |
| **4.** | Knowledge of procurement law and contracts law with particular strength in construction contracts and regeneration matters generally. |
| **5.** | Knowledge of governance process in local government. |
| **6.** | Ability to draft and negotiate a variety of complex legal, transactional and other formal documentation including NEC and JCT contracts. |
| **7.** | Ability to provide legal procurement, commercial and governance advice (including advice on information governance such as GDPR and requests under FOI) on a range of projects from start to finish. |
| **8.** | Demonstrable ability to handle cases involving medium to high risk to the Council’s reputation or finances. |
| **9.** | Ability to work under pressure, on own initiative, independently and handle complex workloads. |
| **10.** | Ability to devise the strategy for complex or novel matters which covers key legal principles and timescales, key officers involved, appropriate levels of senior management involvement, any communication issues, risks for the organisation, identify appropriate cost- effective, internal and external resources. Ability to ensure such strategy is executed successfully and within appropriate deadlines. |

Job Family

Professional/Technical

Grade J

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| **Colleagues Expectations*** Be professional at all times
* Work together for the good of the team, council and local people
* Promote a supportive culture
* Challenge assumptions
* Take ownership
* Be willing to change and do things differently
* Always work in a safe manner
 | **Managers expectations*** Be a role model by displaying positive behaviours at all times
* Make well-considered decisions
* Support, coach and communicate with my team
* Be accountable for my team’s performance
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Professional/Technical job holders rely upon their deep knowledge of the specialism or discipline in which they work to carry out vital tasks and provide authoritative advice to others. Often developing within recognised career paths, their evolving expertise sees them bear increasing responsibility for managing Council assets, the development of policies and procedures and the strategic direction of the functions they support.

### Role Characteristics

At this level job holders usually report to a Head of Service and are responsible for the development and implementation of strategy relating to a whole function within that Service. Posts carry significant responsibilities for finance and a range of other non-financial assets and job holders will make autonomous decisions and lead the management of change throughout their functional area.

### The Knowledge and skills required

The advanced theoretical knowledge required to make appropriate judgements and decisions at this level is augmented by ongoing professional development and awareness of external legislative and societal change. Also, by a deeper understanding of the Council operational structures which both support and depend upon the job holder’s actions and advice. Roles will be professional experts, providing guidance to those in earlier career stages.

### Thinking, Planning and Communication

Job holders will use their professional expertise to deal with complex, pressing issues on a day to day basis, but will also look well ahead and take a more strategic view of their project and service delivery objectives, shaping their teams’ composition, approach and operating procedures in accordance with wider service goals mandated by Service management.

The information exchanged at this level will be routinely complex and even contentious in nature. Job holders will, however, have additional demands placed upon them by the need to persuade others to adopt courses of action they may not otherwise wish to take, based on evidence-based and reasoned argument. This will occur in written interactions, but can also be the case in face to face verbal exchanges where job holders will advocate a position in response to opposing opinion in a formal or informal setting.

**Decision Making and Innovation**

The limitations to job holders’ decision making will be only the broad policy and practice guidelines that exist at both a corporate and even national/professional level. At this level of autonomy, job holders will be the final arbiter of many escalated technical and professional disputes and problems. They will probably report to a Head of Service and will devise and implement strategic plans in relation to their specific functional area.

### Areas of responsibility

With a diverse range of jobs being represented at this level, the precise blend of responsibilities for which the job holder is accountable will depend upon the service in which they operate.

External facing roles will focus on the needs of people, whether external service users or partners and will be responsible for critical day to day decisions with legal and reputational dimensions. Job holders will make a major contribution to the development of policy and functional procedures. Job holders will also lead the implementation of appropriate programmes on behalf of large groups of people.

Such roles are likely to have at least two other elevated levels of responsibility for such elements as finance (substantial budget management), information assets (statutory corporate databases and council-wide applications) or premises (of very high value and operational importance).

Internal facing roles are likely to have this pattern reversed, with the weightiest responsibility for very high value or significant financial and non-financial assets including policy development, but somewhat less accountability for the assessment of group needs. Roles will have full line management responsibility over a number of teams with differing functional specialties and employee profiles.

### Impacts and Demands

Tasks and duties will be generally carried out in a sedentary position but there will always be a requirement for standing and walking from time to time, and the occasional need to lift or carry items.

The combination of both tactical and strategic matters that job holders deal with means that roles are inherently very complex, demanding of particularly lengthy periods of concentrated mental attention while also managing very high levels of work.

Duties of jobs at this level will not require job holders to develop and maintain working relationships with people who, through their circumstances or behaviour, place particular emotional demands on the job holder.

Many Professional / Technical job holders find themselves exposed to some disagreeable, unpleasant or hazardous working conditions. Particularly when the needs of their specialism require them to work on external sites exposed to the weather, in or around refuse and waste plant, close to particularly noisy machinery and in similar environments.

Other jobs, such as enforcement roles, may also see job holders exposed to verbal abuse and threatening environments. In all cases, job holders will minimise risk and conform to health and safety regulations to mitigate any negative effects of such exposure.