

Role Title	Junior Childcare Advocate		
Job Family	Governance and Law - Resources Directorate		
Competency Level	Senior Manager		
Pay Scale	PO10		
Date prepared			
Purpose			
<p>To lead, plan, develop and deliver an expert professional service within the relevant service area. To support the development, management and delivery of Council services. Manage staff responsible for service delivery / support within the service area. To ensure the Council maximises service outcomes in relation to cost.</p> <p>Provision of legal representation in the Family Court to the children's social care teams, covering all aspects of child care law.</p> <p>To advise the client local authority on legal and evidential matters pertaining to cases that the Legal Service team have been instructed on.</p> <p>Contribute to the effective operational management of the Legal Services team in order to deliver a high quality and cost-effective legal service.</p> <p>Provide high quality pro-active legal advice, assistance and support to clients and their service areas including cases/projects of high complexity and/or substantial corporate importance in the following areas of law and practice:</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;"> <p>Primary areas of Responsibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child care law and related area </td> <td style="width: 50%;"> <p>Secondary areas of responsibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Governance and Information (shared with other teams) </td> </tr> </table>		<p>Primary areas of Responsibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child care law and related area 	<p>Secondary areas of responsibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Governance and Information (shared with other teams)
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Generic Accountabilities	End Results/ Outcomes		
Plan and ensure service delivery within a complex / diverse service area. Control operational activities within the service area and ensure professional standards are delivered.	The service is delivered to the quality, Council, professional and legislative standards required. Integrated service development and delivery is informed by client, partner and stakeholder views, latest thinking, good practice and legislative requirements. Corporate strategies are effectively implemented within area of responsibility. Service delivers excellent customer service.		
Build constructive relationships with client officers and corporate colleagues to the benefit of Legal Services and the corporate whole.	Client satisfaction and customer outcomes are clearly understood and specified. Enhanced ability to influence sound Council decision making.		
Engage effectively with all clients and customers in order to understand their service requirements and to deliver on them.	Client Satisfaction and customer outcomes are clearly understood and specified. Services are delivered on time, to budget and standards agreed. Delivering Service Plan targets.		

	Achievement of Council plans and priorities.
Ensure the development and delivery of continuous improvements in all aspects of the service.	Improvements are developed and delivered effectively. Opportunities to improve delivery / capacity of provision are proactively identified and actioned. Suppliers and supply chains are resilient and adaptable to meet changing needs. Expected operational efficiencies are realised. Stakeholder requirements are met.
Lead, motivate and develop staff to create and maintain a highly competent and participative workforce where assigned.	The sub team is highly competent, effective, motivated and outcomes focussed. Recruitment, induction, development, performance reviews, employee relations and all HR processes and planning is completed to the required standards and timescales where assigned. Effective team meetings take place to required timescales where assigned.
Ensure the necessary standards relating to safeguarding best practices/protocols are effectively communicated, monitored and maintained.	Safeguarding standards are monitored and maintained in compliance with Council policy. Appropriate safeguarding training is provided.
Ensure that client confidentiality is maintained at all times.	Client Satisfaction. Maintaining professional and practice standards.
Provide effective line management in accordance with the Council's Managing Framework (where appointed at PO6) and any assigned line management responsibilities of lawyer/ Legal Officer and/or Paralegal staff, including work allocation and monitoring where assigned, workflow management, work systems and procedures, coaching, staff appraisal and performance, professional development, training and discipline of such other staff as allocated.	Team member job satisfaction and increased morale and commitment. Improved recruitment and retention of staff. Maximise the efficient use of resources. Client satisfaction. Motivated employees. Development plans achieved.
Provide supervision and training of trainee solicitors where assigned to ensure the best use and professional development of available staff.	Motivated employees. Development plans achieved.
Communicate a clear sense of purpose and direction to assist senior management in motivating and developing staff within the Legal Services team.	Engaged employees. Development plans achieved. Service Plan targets achieved.

Contribute to the planning and management of the effective use of all resources following team systems, processes and policies.	Value for money in services provided. Consistency in service standards achieved. Client Satisfaction.
Assist in developing policies and good practice in relation to the primary and secondary areas of responsibility in the role.	Value for money in services provided. Consistency in service standards achieved. Client Satisfaction.
Participate in the development of team and corporate projects as required.	Projects benefit from individual's skills, knowledge and expertise. Ownership and involvement in change initiatives and programmes.
Deputise for respective line manager (relevant Principal Lawyer, Assistant Director of Law) at team and corporate projects assigned.	Continuity of support to Corporate projects.
Provide legal advice within other areas of local government law as required.	Service resilience and continuity maintained.
Ensure the successful implementation of health and safety legislation, policies and practices.	Risks to staff and others are assessed and managed. Suitable health and safety instruction and training are provided. There is a safe working environment.

Role Specific Accountabilities	End Results/ Outcomes
Responsible for providing timely and accurate legal advice, undertaking advocacy and providing guidance and support to clients.	Efficient use and allocation of resources. Consistency in service standards achieved. Client Satisfaction.
To deal with complex casework and undertake representation in courts in order to ensure the Council's position is represented in the most cost effective and efficient manner.	Expert opinion, advice, support and interpretation is provided on all aspects of the area of responsibility Efficient use and allocation of resources. Council decision making supported by sound legal advice.
Advise and undertake work in all aspects of the primary and secondary responsibilities of the role.	Expert opinion, advice, support and interpretation is provided on all aspects of the area of responsibility. Council decision making supported by sound legal advice. Client Satisfaction.

Keep up to date with all legislation, case law and best practice to assure the quality of legal advice and support to clients.	Keeps area of responsibility up to date of relevant information, new developments, practices, legislative changes, research findings and trends. Clients and team members appropriately trained and briefed.
Ensure compliance with all relevant professional standards including the Solicitors Code of Conduct.	Integrity of service maintained.
Undertake original drafting of complex legal documentation for the areas of responsibility in the role.	Expert opinion, advice, support and interpretation is provided on all aspects of the area of responsibility Council decision making supported by sound legal advice
Represent, promote and defend client interests in courts, public inquiries, tribunals or other forum for the areas of responsibility in the role.	Successful outcomes for the Council achieved.
Prepare reports, minutes and correspondence and provide legal guidance and advice taking in to account the constitutional, risk and corporate governance context.	Council decision making supported by sound legal advice.
Attend such meetings (including committees and cabinet) where applicable as are allocated to give legal and procedural advice and support.	Council decision making supported by sound legal advice.
Ensure that risk and conflict of interest is constantly monitored in respect of all casework and representation undertaken.	Risks to the Council mitigated.
Monitor the progress of work against team standards and timescales and ensure that performance standards and targets are met.	Service plan objectives and targets delivered. Client satisfaction.
Work cost effectively utilising information technology and systems, legal assistant, para legal, trainee solicitor and practice support as appropriate.	Efficient use and allocation of resources Value for money in services provided.
Identify matters which have corporate governance, propriety or probity implications and report them to a senior manager (and the Monitoring Officer where appropriate).	Risks to the Council mitigated. High standards of corporate governance maintained.
Represent the Principal Lawyer and/or Assistant Director of Law as required internally and externally.	Service resilience and continuity maintained.

Nature of Contacts

Members, senior managers, external partners and stakeholder representatives, court/tribunal personnel and the public.

Manage complex situations and relationships influencing senior colleagues internally and externally on complex and important legal matters which require the ability to manage risk, communicate clearly and persuasively and influence outcomes.

Work with colleagues across the Legal Services team to improve and develop services, deliver service plan objectives and targets and provide high levels of client and customer service.

Procedural Context

Reports to: Principal Lawyer or Assistant Director of Law or Senior Advocate

Provides client representation at the Family Court with a range of cases in the team from the relatively routine through to more complex, difficult and sensitive cases where supervision is provided where appropriate. Required to make assessments, judgements and decisions in legal matters and provide timely accurate advice in a variety of situations often characterised by medium - high risk and the potential for challenge. Exercise high levels of professional skill, knowledge and judgement.

Must make decisions and provide advice in situations where the legal and regulatory environment is changing and increasingly operate in the context of partnership working with external organisations in the public, not for profit and private sector.

Contributes to improving the Council's legal service and is required to follow and observe team processes and policies, including the utilisation of IT and information systems, to ensure the efficient use of resources.

Contributes to the development of Legal Service team members through advice, support, supervision, coaching and training.

Where required acts as an advocate in the role undertaken to optimise the use of skills and resources available to the Council.

Key Facts and Figures

Chargeable Hours; 1300

Working conditions; Hybrid working, office based in an open plan hot-desking environment.

Attending Court - 3 /4 days a week for hearings and/or working from home when undertaking court preparatory work for multi - day final hearings.

Working from home - where court preparatory work required with a requirement to be in the office at least 1 day a week when not at court or not undertaking court preparatory work for final hearings.

Decisions will impact across own team, Legal Services, Council Directorates and external partners

Chargeable Hours; 1300

Resourcing

Management Responsibilities: where appointed up to PO6 as required for staff allocated includes line management of Legal Officers and/or Paralegal staff and lawyers where appropriate.

Competency Level: This role will be required to deliver to the Principal Officer's level of competencies as set out in the Council's competency framework.

Knowledge, Skills and Experience

Demonstrates excellent working knowledge of key public child protection legislation, in particular the Children Act 1989, the Adoption and Children Act 2002, the Children & Families Act 2014 and related delegated legislation, statutory and non-statutory guidance and case law.

Relevant post qualification experience in the legal profession commensurate with the seniority of the post.

Experience in conducting advocacy in a wide variety of care and related proceedings in the single Family Court in respect of (but not limit to) the following types of hearing:

- a. Case Management
- b. Contested Interim Care Order
- c. Fact Finding
- d. Issues Resolution
- e. Final
- f. Applications for an Emergency Protection Order
- g. Applications for a Placement Order or Applications under Section 25 Children Act 1989 (Secure Accommodation);
- h. Deprivation of Liberty
- i. Adoption
- j. Discharge of Care Orders
- k. Forced Marriage
- l. Female Genital Mutilation

as well representing the client at advocates meetings;

The ability to take clear instructions from the clients and to identify the clients' objectives and further them in a professional and ethical manner.

The ability to advise the clients in respect of emergency or urgent applications and to provide representation at Court in respect of those cases, including out of hours cover where necessary and to attend meetings and court hearings outside of working hours when required.

The ability to undertake general drafting to include (but not limited to) case summaries, position statements, skeleton arguments, threshold documents, witness templates, Scott schedules and draft case management orders as required.

The ability to communicate, liaise and negotiate with other professionals; the ability to perform effectively and participate fully within a team and to prioritize and organize your own workload.

The ability to design and deliver training to colleagues and client departments.

To be responsible for their continuing professional development.

Some knowledge of local government legislation and an ability to adapt to changes affecting the client local authority.

Experience in operating and maintaining management information and business support systems.

Provision of legal advice and guidance to senior managers and Members (or equivalent).

Experience of working within a legal practice that has met Lexcel accreditations, legal service or equivalent quality assurance standards.

Working in a local authority or other large organisation.

Legal Skills

Ability to handle complex and/or high risk legal matters within area of responsibility through use of high levels of professional skill, knowledge and judgment.

Management and Personal Skills

Understanding of current and anticipated future issues affecting local authorities and their service users.

Ability to work under pressure and meet deadlines whilst helping with a diverse workload.

Ability to use new technology solutions to deliver improved services.

Ability to ensure the efficient and effective use of resources.

Ability to develop and maintain good working relationships with senior managers and Members.

Ability to time record accurately and manage time efficiently.

Personal Skills

Excellent communication skills both orally and in writing.

Pro-active and have the energy, commitment and resolve necessary to get the job done.

Ability to use a computer for word processing, time costing and other similar office/case management systems and processes.

This post is subject to a Basic Disclosure Application to the Disclosure and Barring Service

Indicative Qualifications

Practising Solicitor or Barrister or FILEX with advocacy rights. Higher Rights of Audience (desirable).

The above profile is intended to describe the general nature and level of work performed by employees in this role. It is not intended to be a detailed list of all duties and responsibilities which may be required. This role profile will be supplemented and further defined by annual objectives, which will be developed in conjunction with the post holder. It will be subject to regular review and the Council reserves the right to amend or add to the accountabilities listed.