

Role Profile

Job Title:	Director of Legal and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer)	Grade:	CB1
Department:	Legal and Democratic Services	Post no:	P012737
Directorate:	Resources	Location:	Perceval House (Hybrid)

Role reports to:	Strategic Director, Resources
Direct Reports:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of Legal (Litigation) • Head of Legal (Commercial) • Head of Democratic Services • Head of Electoral Services
Indirect Reports:	All staff in Legal and Democratic Services department c70 FTE
<p><i>This role profile is non-contractual and provided for guidance. It will be updated and amended from time to time in accordance with the changing needs of the council and the requirements of the job.</i></p>	

JOB DESCRIPTION

PURPOSE OF ROLE:

To work proactively and in partnership with the council's political and officer leadership and other stakeholders, to lead, promote and deliver the council's vision and priorities efficiently and effectively, delivering value for money within available resources.

To carry out all functions and responsibilities of the council's statutory Monitoring Officer (Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989) including preventing or identifying and reporting unlawful actions, maladministration and breaches of the constitution and ensuring that the council acts lawfully at all times and complies with relevant legislation.

To lead and develop proactive, customer-focussed, valued and enabling professional legal, democratic and electoral services which respond to the changes and challenges within local government legal requirements and context and seek continuous improvement in service delivery.

To act as the council's principal professional legal and governance lead to:

- advise the Chief Executive, Leader of the Council, the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT), Cabinet Portfolio Holders, and elected members on all matters relating to governance,

decision making, legal compliance, ethical conduct and standards

- provide corporate strategic leadership and direction on governance, law and democracy issues, attending SLT to provide professional legal and technical advice on implications of strategic decisions, significant developments and transformation and change
- maintain and update the council's constitution, wider governance framework (including the Code of Conduct) and ensure these meet legal requirements and promote principles of good governance and effective decision making
- work with, advise and support officers and members to ensure that the requirements of the constitution are fully understood and adhered to
- act as the principal contact for advice and support for elected members
- work closely with the council's other statutory officers (Chief Executive as Head of Paid Service and Strategic Director, Resources as Chief Finance Officer) to ensure good administrative, financial, and ethical governance of the council in the exercise of its functions.

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES:

- Lead the promotion of good governance, high standards of conduct and ethical behaviour throughout the council among members and officers and with partners
- Provide professional advice to the Chief Executive, SLT, and elected members on governance, legality probity, and decision-making, seeking to find pragmatic solutions and managing conflict which may arise
- Attend SLT and Ealing Leadership (ELT) meetings to advise and support on governance and legal risks and implications of strategic decisions and developments
- Lead on the development of the council's constitution and wider governance and decision-making framework reflecting best practice, current laws, regulations and statutory guidance – ensure it reflects changing operational needs and provides sound and enabling principles and procedures to respond to emerging risks and opportunities
- Lead, develop and maintain robust and customer focussed legal services, democratic services and electoral services teams to support departments in delivering their objectives, balanced with appropriate challenge to practices to ensure good governance
- Lead on standards issues, act as the principal adviser to the Standards Committee and oversee member conduct investigations
- Support the development and delivery of new initiatives, ensuring opportunities and risks are identified and evaluated through robust legal analysis
- Support effective and evidence-based decision making through provision of professional legal advice on all decision reports
- Develop and improve the culture of compliance and good governance through provision of timely instructions, advice, support and challenge
- Act as a key member of the Resources Directorate Management Team (DMT)

- Deputise for and represent the Strategic Director, Resources as necessary.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

- (Internal) customer satisfaction of legal support
- Effective resource and budget management as budget manager
- Standards complaints received and resolved, and resolution times
- Breaches of the constitution

KEY RELATIONSHIPS (INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL):

Internal

- Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service)
- Strategic Director, Resources (Section 151 Officer)
- Leader of the Council
- Chief Whip
- SLT (Strategic Directors) and Directorate Management Teams
- Opposition Leaders and Whips
- Cabinet Member for Inclusive Economy
- Cabinet Portfolio Holders
- Elected Members
- Resources Directorate Management Team
- Ealing Leadership Team

External

- Partner organisations including NHS organisations, other local authorities and Voluntary and Community Sector where relevant
- Representatives of the government departments, external auditors, national bodies and peer network groups
- Other key advisers particularly external legal advisers and counsel and consultants

AUTHORITY LEVEL (PEOPLE, POLICY, FINANCIAL):

- Statutory functions of the Monitoring Officer
- As set out in the Constitution and Scheme of Delegated Powers or delegated by Council or Cabinet decision
- For all aspects of people management including effective recruitment, induction, employee relations, performance management, disciplinary and grievance matters
- For policy development and implementation subject to Strategic Director, Resources, SLT and Member approval as appropriate
- To oversee/monitor and challenge service budgets (c£4m net budget) and the legal services trading account

Person Specification

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & ABILITIES

- 1) Expert knowledge and understanding and experience of local government law and practice
- 2) Expert understanding and experience of current challenges and opportunities and best practice in Local Government and legal and governance implications
- 3) Experience of providing strategic professional legal and governance advice to senior management and members
- 4) Exemplifies pragmatic and visible leadership that builds high levels of trust, motivation and performance
- 5) A creative thinker and innovator who is also pragmatic, practical, professional, and straightforward in delivering solutions and robust advice
- 6) A persuasive and effective influencer who can build and maintain strong working relationships across the council to develop a corporate understanding of legal and governance risks and opportunities
- 7) An assertive and considered communicator, with excellent written and oral presentation skills enabling complex/ technical information to be understood by officers and members
- 8) Proven ability to prioritise, make balanced judgments and decisions and communicate these clearly
- 9) Strong analytical skills to support evidence-based decision-making
- 10) Ability to constructively challenge service leads and provide robust advice and achieve a balance between understanding and supporting services and delivering on corporate priorities and managing corporate risks
- 11) Experience of leading and developing high-performing teams delivering high-quality support services and delivering continuous improvement
- 12) Ability to act impartially and, where required, confidentially in the council's best interests
- 13) Ability to demonstrate political awareness, work closely with and influence members and manage sensitivities

ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATION(S), EXPERIENCE AND REGISTRATION

- 1) Legal qualification: solicitor, barrister or legal executive
- 2) Evidence of continuous professional development

- 3) Significant experience of working within or with the local government and influencing at a senior level
- 4) Extensive experience in local government law, governance, and ethical standards and interpreting and applying these
- 5) Experience advising on constitutional matters, decision-making processes, and governance frameworks
- 6) Experience of working with local government councillors
- 7) Significant experience at leading, inspiring, and developing a professional team which is customer focused driven by excellence, and continuous improvement
- 8) Significant experience of working effectively in a complex political environment, and exercising balanced political judgment

Values & Behaviours

Improving Lives for Residents	Trustworthy	Collaborative	Innovative	Accountable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is passionate about making Ealing a better place Can see and appreciate things from a resident point of view Understands what people want and need Encourages change to tackle underlying causes or issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does what they say they'll do on time Is open and honest Treats all people fairly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ambitious and confident in leading partnerships Offers to share knowledge and ideas Challenges constructively and respectfully listens to feedback Overcomes barriers to develop our outcomes for residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tries out ways to do things better, faster and for less cost Brings in ideas from outside to improve performance Takes calculated risks to improve outcomes Learns from mistakes and failures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourages all stakeholders to participate in decision making Makes things happen Acts on feedback to improve performance Works to high standards