



LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON
CORPORATE SERVICES DEPARTMENT
JOB DESCRIPTION

POST TITLE:	Head of Shared Legal Service
Grade:	MG3
Department:	Corporate Services
Location:	Various offices according to the needs of the service
Responsible to:	Joint Assistant Director (Legal Services)
Responsible for:	Manager Social Care and Education Law Manager Litigation and Planning Law Manager – Business Improvement Law Legal Practice Manager PA to Assistant Director and Head of Shared Legal Service
Post number:	Date: April 2011

MAIN PURPOSE

- To lead and develop the Shared Legal Service between the London Boroughs of Merton and Richmond upon Thames.
- To ensure the Shared Legal Service provides strategic and commercial legal services to both authorities.
- To manage the relationship and develop two way communication with the client departments of both authorities.
- To identify opportunities within the Shared Legal Service to provide ongoing improvements to the productivity of the service and to maximise the reduction in the costs of the service for the benefit of both authorities.
- To be a member of the Divisional Management Team and participate in the overall management of the Division.



MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Professional

- To provide high level legal advice to elected members, including committees and to Chief Officers and senior managers across both authorities and to any other client of the Shared Legal Service.
- To advise on and ensure the delivery of legal advice to both authorities to support business planning and implementation of service changes.
- To champion service transformation, modernisation and improvement
- To lead on proactive work with both authorities to identify the needs for legal services across the authorities including the negotiation of SLAs for provision of legal services and to assure the delivery of support in accordance with these SLAs; to take action in event of any failure or problems arising.
- To lead on the development and implementation of Shared Legal Service.
- To keep abreast of legal developments, both in local government and in other sectors, and implement proposals to ensure that the Shared Legal Service operates in accordance with modern good practice.
- To identify opportunities and develop proposals to expand the client base of the Shared Legal Service.
- To ensure the availability of out of hours legal advice for Children and Adult Social Care for both authorities.
- To act as deputy Monitoring Officer for the council and for the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.

Managerial

- To lead, manage and develop the Shared Legal Services in accordance with both authorities' policies and procedures, legislative and regulatory requirements, covering the provision of quality, cost effective, and customer-focused legal services.
- To assist with the management of a budget in the region of £3m per annum, in conjunction with the AD Corporate Governance, and to ensure that effective financial management processes are maintained within the Shared Legal Service.
- To manage the Shared Legal Service ensuring that recruitment, training, development, appraisal, performance, workload allocation, supervision, quality assurance, risk and other management activities are carried out in accordance with policy.
- To participate in intra- and inter-departmental working parties and to ensure that such groups receive appropriate contributions from the Division for both authorities.



- To represent the Assistant Director, Director or council, as appropriate at external meetings on behalf of both authorities
- To champion Data Quality in the Department, proactively appraising data produced by the Department for robustness, ensuring that Data Quality issues are addressed, and corporate reporting requirements are met, as set out in the council's Data Quality Strategy.
- To undertake such other duties of a comparable nature elsewhere in the organisation as may be required to facilitate management development and service flexibility.
- Any other duties as requested by the Assistant Director or Director.



**LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON
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PERSON SPECIFICATION**

POST TITLE: Head of Shared Legal Services

Grade: MG3

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Qualifications and Experience

Professional and post specific requirements

- Qualified solicitor or barrister with a background in local government
- A proven record of successful participation in management of a legal service and the development of that service's objectives, policies and strategies
- Experience of managing transformational change and effective working with staff, partners and key stakeholders
- Evidence of success in exploiting new opportunities, determining and evaluating service quality and achieving best value
- Evidence of successful resource and financial management, formulating budgets and applying rigorous monitoring and control procedures

Management requirements

- Evidence of demonstrable evidence of leading teams through major change
- Experience of performance management of staff including the ability to motivate staff, including professional staff, to work more productively

Skills and Knowledge

Professional and post specific requirements

- A strategic thinking with a record of effective and efficient service delivery
- Ability to work in partnership and across organisational boundaries with highly developed relationship management skills
- Comfortable with working in fast changing working environments and able to work effectively with ambiguity
- Able to make critical business decisions and exercise judgments based on intelligence



- Highly developed budget, resource management, planning and performance management skills, commercially aware and a strong negotiator and influencer
- An ability to manage risk and take appropriate risk mitigation measures
- Solutions and outcomes focussed
- Personal and professional demeanour, probity, credibility, sensitivity and integrity that command the confidence and trust of members, chief and senior officers, staff, partners and other stakeholders
- A strong and effective leader, who has an empowering and interactive approach
- An effective communicator who is positive and determined
- Willingness to act corporately and collaboratively
- Self motivation, commitment and enthusiasm, not easily discouraged
- A deliverer

Managerial and personal requirements

- Good communication skills, both orally and in writing
- Good numeracy and analytical skills
- Understanding of the role of legal services and how it can contribute to the effectiveness of direct service provision
- Understanding of the principles of value for money and an ability to apply them in the management of support services
- Clear understanding of ways in which the council's policy of equality in employment and service provision can be reflected in all aspects of work of the team
- Understanding of both authorities' vision and mission statement and how they relate to the work of the team
- Ability to be available to attend premises out of hours to attend evening meetings and in the event of emergencies or urgent management issues in relation to both authorities

Personal Style and Behaviour

Please refer to LB Merton's Model of Leadership Behaviours (attached).