



LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON
CORPORATE SERVICES DEPARTMENT
JOB DESCRIPTION

POST TITLE:	Manager – Litigation and Planning Law
Grade:	MGC
Department:	Corporate Services
Location:	Various offices according to the needs of the service
Responsible to:	Head of Shared Legal Service
Responsible for:	Overall responsibility for Litigation and Employment team
Post number:	

MAIN PURPOSE

- To lead the litigation and planning team of the South London Legal Partnership (SLLp) and deliver excellent legal services to the London Boroughs of Merton, Sutton, Richmond and the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames (and arms length delivery vehicles)..
- To ensure the litigation and planning legal team of the SLLp provides cost effective, comprehensive and professional legal services to the London Boroughs of Merton, Sutton, Richmond and the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames (and arms length delivery vehicles)..
- To contribute at a strategic level in the London Boroughs of Merton, Sutton, Richmond and the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames in the preparation and adoption by the councils' of strategic planning and licensing policies and plans.
- To influence major policy direction both within a single council and as a joined up approach across four local authorities where it is beneficial to do so.
- To impact at a corporate level to deliver council priorities and initiate corporate working across the authorities.
- To devise new and innovative ways of delivering council services in a cross boundary and joint commissioning environment.
- To deliver an effective sustained and high quality legal service in the areas of litigation, planning, and licensing over the medium term and to adapt to the changing needs of the



London Boroughs of Merton, Sutton, Richmond and the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames (and arms length delivery vehicles)

- To be a respected and visible manager, responsible for excellent client care and support to corporate management teams across the London Boroughs of Merton, Sutton, Richmond and the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames (and arms length delivery vehicles).
- To be the joint practice lead for litigation, planning, and licensing across the London Boroughs of Merton, Sutton, Richmond and the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames To operate remotely across the authorities with little or no supervision or guidance.
- To identify opportunities within the litigation and planning legal team to provide ongoing improvements both within the service and across the council's processes to maximise productivity and reduction in costs for the benefit to all authorities
- To be a member of the SLLp management team and to participate in the overall management of SLLp
- To deliver on income targets
- To act as Deputy Monitoring Officer as required for the London Boroughs of Merton, Sutton, Richmond and the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames and to carry out the personal responsibilities required under section 5 Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the constitutions of the councils.



MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Professional

- To provide high level legal advice to elected members, including committees and to Chief Officers and staff across all authorities and to any other client of the Shared Legal Service.
- To lead and manage the Litigation and Employment legal team, allocating work, making arrangements for supervision and monitoring, providing advice, guidance and assistance as required.
- To lead on the client relationship with all authorities in relation to the work in the Litigation and Employment legal team or as directed by the Head of the Shared Legal Service including negotiation of the SLAs and to assure the delivery of support in accordance with those SLAs.
- To build positive working relationships with service managers across four authorities
- To deliver on income targets and to be proactive in bringing in new and existing business to meet these targets
- To pro-actively work with the relevant clients within all authorities to identify effective legal solutions to meet the requirements for legal support that is relevant to the Litigation and Employment legal team.
- To champion transformation, modernisation and improvement within all authorities.
- To keep abreast of legal developments and ensure that the Litigation and Employment legal team operates in accordance with modern good practice.
- To support, and deputise for, the Monitoring Officer (AD Corporate Governance) for all authorities as required.
- To manage scarce resources in a complex environment allocating resource across four authorities.
- To initiate and lead the joining up of working practices between authorities to introduce cost efficiencies.
- To initiate and lead on learning and development of client departments across four authorities.

Managerial

- To lead, manage and develop the Litigation and Employment legal team of the Shared Legal Service in accordance with authority policies and procedures, legislative and regulatory requirements, covering the provision of quality, cost effective, and customer-focussed services as listed above.
- To manage the salaries budget for the team (approximately £600k)



- To deliver high performance through proactive performance management of the team
- To provide legal supervision to all the senior lawyers in the team and also to lawyers and/or legal assistants as appropriate.
- To manage the Litigation and Employment legal team of 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 Shared Legal Service for all authorities.
- To proactively work to ensure continuous improvement to the productivity of the team and to the client relationship.
- To analyse management information and data to identify where efficiencies can be achieved and to produce for client senior managers plans to achieve such efficiencies.
- To represent each council as appropriate at external meetings on behalf of all 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 including deputising for the Head of Shared Legal Service.
- Any other duties as requested by the Head of Shared Legal Service or Assistant Director.



**LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON
CORPORATE SERVICES DEPARTMENT
PERSON SPECIFICATION**

POST TITLE: Manager – Litigation and Planning Law
Grade: MGC

Qualifications and Experience

Professional and post specific requirements

- Qualified solicitor or barrister or chartered legal executive with a background in local government
- A solid track record of providing proactive, expert, timely and authoritative legal advice and support to senior leaders and key decision-makers at the highest levels
- A thorough understanding of the legal environment of local government
- Experience of the procurement/commissioning of external legal advice and associated services and the interpretation of such advice to aid internal decision-making
- A solid track record of developing and embedding best practice, innovation and continuous improvement in the delivery of legal services, including experience of shaping different models of service provision and delivery
- Experience of the successful performance management of a legal team
- Significant experience of corporate working with exposure to partnership development, contract negotiation and effective performance management

Management requirements

- Experience of staff management and ability to manage, inspire and motivate staff

Skills and Knowledge

Professional and post specific requirements

- Significant personal gravitas and charisma with an ability to operate with confidence and credibility at the highest levels of both authorities
- Pragmatic and forward thinking with an ability to think 'outside the box'
- Sound personal judgement with excellent advocacy skills

- The ability to 'command a room', instilling confidence quickly in your audience
- A strong orator with excellent written and oral communication skills
- Intellectually powerful with a good degree of political nous and experience of operating in politically sensitive environments
- An ability to use expert legal opinion to provide practical and innovative solutions to complex legal, contractual or service delivery issues
- A visible operator with high levels of personal integrity and robustness
- Proactive, customer focussed and solutions led
- Outcome driven, with a strong commitment to the promotion of best practice and the development of a continuous improvement culture
- Resilient and committed, remaining composed under pressure
- Ability to motive, inspire and encourage high performance within the team

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 able to travel to attend client offices wherever that service maybe based.
- Ability to be able to travel to attend courts wherever the client's case is being considered
- 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