

Role Profile and Specification – Property Lawyer

Service Area	Legal Services
Role Title	Property Lawyer
Location	Oxted/Agile
Reports to	Principal Solicitor
Salary/Grade	Grade 5
Duration/Hours	Permanent/37 hours per week.

Service Area Purpose

The Legal Services Department provides a broad range of comprehensive legal support to all the Council's Departments and Members. Roles range from Legal Assistants to Principal Solicitors.

Job Purpose

You will be responsible for providing legal advice and assistance to Council Officers in relation to property matters. You will report to the Principal Property Solicitor and will need to be a team player with excellent oral and written communication and client skills, with an ability and willingness to proactively work with the Asset Management, Housing and Housing Enabling teams to ensure sound and pragmatic legal advice is provided to these service areas.

Support services such as the Legal Department provide professional and efficient support and advice to internal customers across the Council to improve performance and enable them in delivering the Council's ambitions.

Specific Responsibilities

- To advise internal clients on their day-to-day property law needs which typically include:

Commercial property freehold sales and acquisitions;

- The granting of commercial rack rent leases of offices, shops and sports pavilions;
- Dealing with licences, wayleaves and easements;
- General advice on boundaries, ownership structures and rent arrears;
- Leasehold and freehold residential buy-backs;
- Lease extensions under the Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993;
- Residential Right to Buy sales;
- Advice on open space land including commons, allotments and parks; and
- Dealing with Assets of Community Value.

We do not expect the candidate to have experience of all the above areas as we note that they span commercial property, residential property and public sector-specific areas. However, the candidate will need to have residential property knowledge and will be expected to pick up work in all these areas in due course with appropriate supervision and training.

- Eye for detail and good organisational skills to enable you to carry out a substantial workload and be able to work independently and manage your own caseload.
- Client Care: to ensure that work is carried out to the standards required by the Client. Update the client on case progress over the telephone and in writing at regular intervals in accordance with customer care and quality procedures. Deal with telephone enquiries, provide information required or make referrals as necessary. Arrange meetings/appointments and ensure the timely follow up of relevant issues.
- Information Technology: use of office productivity tools such as spreadsheets and case management which support the effective running of the Legal Services Team. To report any faults in software or hardware to the IT Team.
- Communication: dealing with routine correspondence, both internal and external and refer correspondence on where necessary, writing letters on own initiative.
- Legal Research: research of areas of law as required.
- To play a full part in the Legal Services team, attending team meetings, briefings etc and working co-operatively with colleagues.
- Carry out additional duties commensurate to the level of the role including taking responsibility for the management of a Legal Assistant as required.

Person specification

Qualifications / Education

Essential
• Qualified solicitor or qualified legal executive.

Experience

Essential	Desirable
• Strong post qualification legal experience within the field of Property. • Specific experience within the field of Property Law to allow the post holder to be a self-starter but work under supervision. • Some experience within the field of residential property.	• Experience working in a Legal Team within the public sector. • Experience of the residential Housing sector including Lease Extensions under the Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993 and a basic understanding of Right To Buy transactions. • Experience of basic Property Litigation (e.g. dealing with rent

	arrears/contentious 1954 Act renewals).
--	---

Key Skills and Knowledge

Essential	Desirable
• Ability to work independently and as part of a team providing legal support to lawyers and internal clients managing demanding caseloads. • Knowledge of operating case management and filing systems. • Methodical approach to work and an awareness of the need to pay attention to detail. • Ability to work under pressure to tight deadlines and prioritise work according to importance and urgency. • Ability to communicate and cooperate over the telephone and in person. Ability to write clear and concise letters and notes without supervision. Liaise with the land registry, internal departments and professionals in private practice as necessary. • Computer-literate and preferably have experience of using office productivity tools such as word processing databases, spreadsheets, organiser and other database applications such as time recording and case management systems. • Client care skills and experience of providing a customer-focussed, cost-effective service. • Advisory skills appropriate to work at this level. • A commitment to equality and diversity.	• An understanding of the relevance of a Council's Constitution in internal decision making. • An understanding of key public law and the impact on property transactions (e.g. s. 123 Local Government Act 1972). • An understanding of the broad requirements of the data protection principles.