# EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL JOB DESCRIPTION

# Job Title: Solicitor

# Department: Governance Services

# Grade: [Local Managerial Grade 3](https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/jobs/benefits/local-managerial-grades)

# Responsible to: Senior Solicitor

# Purpose of the Role:

Legal Services is a dynamic team which provides advice and representation to East Sussex County Council and to wider public sector partners. The Team advises on a range of matters, including safeguarding vulnerable adults and children, employment, information, criminal and civil litigation, contracts and procurement and planning and highways. The Service is supported by a team of around 50 qualified and unqualified staff.

The purpose of the role is to provide a high-quality legal service to instructing departments acting on behalf the Council clientand to contracted public bodies, to enable them to make and implement decisions within the law and to protect the Council and contracted public bodies against prosecution and challenge.

# Key tasks:

1. Act upon instructions to carry out the objectives of client departments, utilising the post-holders skills, expertise and knowledge.
2. Advise client departments of legal and other consequences of proposed courses of action, so as to enable them to give or modify instructions effectively.
3. Notify the Senior Solicitor of any instructions or events that would result in a breach of any legislation, common law, standing order or rule of propriety or would constitute a course of action amounting to maladministration.
4. Review the general activities of the Council in the areas of law and practice that may be assigned to the post and to consider and propose alternative or different courses of action to ensure effective implementation of client proposals or achievement of objectives or resolve client problems and/or to ensure best practice within the Legal Services Team, particularly in the light of changes of developments in the law.
5. Undertake casework across a range of legal services provided by the Department as required; particular areas of law may be assigned to the post, but it is essential that post holder should be able and willing to carry our a variety of legal work in support of an effective legal services team. The post-holder may be required to give advice to Members/ Committees.
6. Ensure all work is carried out to the standards required by arrangement with the client and by any policy or practice management standards adopted.
7. Be aware of the cost to the client of individual activities. To make reasonable estimates of likely costs to instructing officers/clients for the effective implementation of instructions and to advise the Senior Solicitor in the event that such estimates are agreed where fixed costs are likely to be exceeded.
8. Participate in the appraisal process currently in place and to participate in training and development activities identified as a result of that process.
9. Lead meetings/team discussions to solve problems and implement solutions.
10. Advise, guide and train less experienced staff/instructing departments/county councillors effectively.
11. Undertake a complex caseload with minimum supervision.
12. Undertake advocacy on on a regular basis, if the particular post demands it, and where required present complex legal arguments before Courts and Tribunals.
13. Explain complex legal documentation and points of law to instructing departments and clients, including to non-specialists.
14. Creative and robust interpretation and application of the law, procedure and other requirements applicable to local authorities and public bodies.
15. Professional evaluation of all legal aspects and to deal with complicated and multifaceted issues with minimal supervision and guidance and provide robust solutions to a variety of complex legal issues.
16. Ensure that all legal arrangements are in place for the effective management of risk across the Council.
17. Undertake all work with an awareness of public and political sensitivities
18. Undertake broader management responsibility, as required, including, but not exclusively, participating in meetings, forums, boards and committees, both internal and external to the Council.

Recognising that ESCC is a large organisation with a number of over-arching priorities extending to all areas of our work,  you should be aware of these Council priorities and align strategic decisions with them, proactively seeking appropriate opportunities in your work/service area, and that of others, to contribute, in consultation with your line manager; in particular, but not limited to:

* Net zero emissions targets – reduce the environmental impact of your work, and that of the services you are responsible for.
* Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – proactively contributing to an inclusive and supportive working environment.
* Making the best of our resources - always being aware of what you can do to maximise the use of public monies in the services we both commission and provide, and proactively identifying areas to improve value for money wherever possible.

# PERSON SPECIFICATION

# Essential education and qualifications

1. Practising Solicitor or Barrister

# Essential key skills, abilities, knowledge, experience, values and behaviours

1. Ability to provide prompt and accurate legal advice
2. Ability to communicate effectively with a range of people in a clear, concise and accurate manner, changing messages to suit different audiences, including the ability to use negotiating and drafting skills
3. Ability to analyse factual situations, research the relevant law and apply it
4. Ability to work effectively with elected members
5. Significant knowledge/specialism and experience of the law and practice within the designated field as specified in the advert text
6. Experience of conducting own caseload within the designated field specified in the advert text
7. If required by the post good advocacy skills and experience, including to present complex legal arguments before courts and tribunals and ability to undertake advocacy regularly
8. Aptitude to embrace new areas of law and concepts so as to develop specialist skills further
9. Ability to draft complex and unusual documentation and to deal with complicated and multifaced issues, including carrying a complex caseload with minimal supervision and guidance
10. Ability to explain complex legal documentation and points of law to instructing officers and clients, including non-specialists and to creatively and robustly interpret and apply the law, procedure and other requirements applicable to local authorities and public bodies
11. Ability to provide robust solutions to a variety of complex legal issues
12. Political sensitivity and diplomacy and effective management of risk
13. Experience in undertake broader management responsibility, including, as required, guiding and mentor more junior staff, training and participating in meetings, forums, boards and committees, both internal and external to the Council
14. Committed to equal opportunities
15. Ability to meet the travelling requirements of the role

# Desirable key skills, abilities, knowledge, experience, values and behaviours

1. Good understanding of Local Government practice and procedure
2. Knowledge of democratic and political aspects of Local Government
3. Recent Local Government experience
4. Ability to adapt to changing work practices and changes in Local Government

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Health & Safety Functions

This section is to make you aware of any health & safety related functions you may be expected to either perform or to which may be exposed in relation to the post you are applying for. This information will help you if successful in your application identify any health-related condition which may impact on your ability to perform the job role, enabling us to support you in your employment by way of reasonable adjustments or workplace support.

| **Function** | **Applicable to role**  |
| --- | --- |
| Using display screen equipment  | Yes |
| Working with children/vulnerable adults | No |
| Moving & handling operations | No |
| Occupational Driving | No |
| Lone Working | No |
| Working at height | No |
| Shift / night work | No |
| Working with hazardous substances | No |
| Using power tools | No |
| Exposure to noise and /or vibration | No |
| Food handling | No |
| Exposure to blood /body fluids | No |