

Job description

Job title: Paralegal

Grade: Dorset Council Grade 9

Job evaluation reference: BA6022

Job family: Legal and Political

Purpose and impact

To contribute to the provision of legal service to the Council and its Directorates and to any other bodies to whom legal services are provided under contract.

Key responsibilities

1. To provide legal support to the Solicitors as appropriate
2. To assist and support Legal Services officers in the provision of legal and advisory work.
3. Provide support and assistance to Legal Services officers in various practice areas, in the provision of advice to and representation of the Council, its Directorates and other bodies to whom legal services are provided under contract.
4. When required, to act as a point of contact to obtain instructions.
5. To undertake the following activities with guidance and as appropriate based on the qualifications and experience of the post holder:
 - a. Research
 - b. Preparation for (and conduct of) litigation work, which may include some advocacy (regarding standard applications and non contentious matters in relevant courts and tribunals).
 - c. Attendance and note taking at court, case conferences and other meetings where appropriate.
 - d. Drafting of documents and correspondence
 - e. Instruction of external legal advisers
 - f. Analysis of evidence to identify key legal issues, apply relevant legislation and provide a detailed summary to the relevant Legal Services officer.
6. Assist with the training provided by Legal Services.
7. To undertake such other duties as required or as from time to time might be allocated by a line manager of Legal Services Officer.
8. Any other lesser or comparable duties as required.

NB: The duties and responsibilities of this post are not restrictive, and the post holder may be required on occasion to undertake other duties. This will not substantially change the nature of the post.

Supervision and management

Reporting to: Senior Solicitor

Responsibility for: The post does not have any direct line management responsibility but there is a requirement to support the provision of training provided by the Service.



Other factors

9. Responsibility for ensuring data quality and as such the integrity of management information through the proper use and safekeeping of data and record systems both manual and computerised.
10. Office based but required to attend court, tribunals and other meetings away from the County Hall complex.
11. Legal Services work in a busy, open plan office and the post holder will be required to meet communication demands through correspondence, phone calls, e-mails and personal visits.
12. Dealing with a range of matters where context and outcome is not straight forward or well established, requiring support, persuasion, advocacy skills and sensitivity.
13. Contact will be with internal officers of the Council and bodies with whom there is a contract for the provision of Legal Services and a range of external contacts from court staff to legal advisers and members of the public.
14. Dealing with difficult members of the public in adversarial situations.
15. Conflicting workload priorities due to urgent matters that arise and need to be dealt with.

Our values

Our values act as guiding principles, defining what we believe is important in the ways we work together. Our values are Respect, Together, Accountability, Openness and Curiosity. You will need to be able to demonstrate these values in action through the way you work, regardless of your role within the organisation. Information about our values can be found on our website.



Person specification

Your application will be assessed based on your demonstration of how you fulfil the following criteria; you should include clear examples of how you meet these criteria within your application form and during the assessment process. We'll also use references to confirm that you meet the criteria for this role.

Essential

Essential criteria are the minimum requirement for the above post and will be assessed through a combination of your application form, assessment, interview and references (as specified below). We will require evidence of the qualifications, training or registrations listed below.

Qualifications, training or registrations Required by law or essential to the performance of the role or both	Assessed through:
1. Law Degree or other degree with conversion C.P.E course	Application form
Experience	
2. Some evidence of previous work in an office environment	Application form
Knowledge	
3. Demonstrate knowledge of an interest in the relevant practice areas	Application form
4. Ability to communicate well with colleagues, clients and, as the need arises, with elected members	Application form
5. Ability to undertake research, draft documents and correspondence	Application form
6. Ability to use relevant IT facilities	Application form
Skills & Abilities	
7. Ability and willingness to work as part of a team	Interview Assessment
8. Understanding of and commitment to the importance of equal opportunities and diversity, both in service delivery and employment practice	Interview Assessment
9. Ability to fulfil the travel requirements of the post	Interview Assessment
10. Ability to manage conflicting workload priorities of the post	Interview Assessment
11. Ability to contribute to practice management issues	Interview Assessment
Our values	
12. Respect	Interview Assessment
13. Together	Interview Assessment
14. Accountability	Interview Assessment
15. Openness	Interview Assessment
16. Curiosity	Interview Assessment

Desirable



Desirable criteria will be used in the event of multiple applicants meeting the minimum essential requirements and if applicable, will be assessed through a combination of your application form, assessment, interview and references (as specified below). If you meet the desirable criteria, we will require evidence of the qualifications, training or registrations listed below.

Qualifications, training or registrations	Assessed through:
17. Legal Practice Course	Application form
18. Qualification in or relating to Local Government Law	Application form
19. Specialist qualification in the relevant practice areas	Application form
Experience	
20. Experience of working in a legal department	Application form
21. Experience of working with a local authority legal department	Application form
22. Experience in the relevant practice areas	Application form
Knowledge, skills and abilities	
23. Knowledge, understanding and experience of legislative and policy framework, within which the Council works	Interview Assessment
24. Demonstrable knowledge of Local Government Law	Interview Assessment

Approval

Manager's job title:

Date: March 2025

