

Job Description

Head of Legal and Democracy

Date: June 2019

JOB EVALUATION REFERENCE LGA 141

POST: Head of Legal and Democracy

DIRECTORATE: Corporate Services

SERVICE: Legal and Democratic Services

BAND: SE3

REPORTS TO: Assistant Director, Corporate Services

RESPONSIBLE FOR: Team Leaders x 2 Solicitors, Legal Services- Litigation, Property, Regeneration, Contracts and Procurement
Team Leader Committee Services
Team Leader Electoral Services

TYPE: Hot desking or Agile/Mobile Working

All Council posts are subject to National Joint Council (NJC) conditions of service.

Basildon Borough Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults, and expects all employees, contractors and volunteers to share its commitment to prevent abuse, harm or exploitation.

Please note that the Council applies a robust recruitment vetting process.

This position is classified as a politically restricted post.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The UK Government created Basildon as one of the first generation of post-war New Towns in 1949. The ambition was that, "Basildon will become a city which people from all over the world will want to visit." Fast forward to today and Basildon is the largest economy in Essex and an established centre of excellence for engineering and manufacturing. Basildon boasts some of the most advanced technical facilities in the UK and is home to a number of innovative companies, large and small as well as a population of more than 180,000.

We have three promises to the people who live, work and learn in the borough. We will concentrate our resources to work together to shape a borough that is:

- a place where people are happy, healthy and active
- a place that encourages businesses to grow and residents to succeed
- an attractive and welcoming place that people are proud to call home.

MAIN PURPOSE

- To provide leadership and management of Legal and Democratic Services, including Legal, Committee Services and Electoral Services.

- To provide legal, electoral and democratic expertise to the Council's leadership team, senior officers and elected councillors.
- To act as the Council's designated Solicitor and Deputy Monitoring Officer, and to fulfil the statutory requirements of the Monitoring Officer in their absence.

JOB DUTIES

1. To support the Assistant Director Corporate Services and Monitoring Officer, in developing and delivering the corporate vision, value and priorities of the council and the projects for which the post holder is responsible.
2. To ensure the delivery of the council's legal, democratic and electoral services, with a specific focus on service delivery and customer satisfaction.
3. To focus on service improvement issues working under the direction of the Assistant Director – Corporate Services, and in partnership with the council's chosen support partners on the service improvement journey and to lead on special projects to deliver service improvements and redesign, both on their own and within a team to enhance efficiency and to meet key performance indicators.
4. To manage organisational talent by leading and inspiring individuals, ensuring that effective succession planning exists and building robust, resilient and measurable capacity and capability throughout the Legal, Democratic and Electoral Services and across the organisation.
5. To ensure that the council's democratic and decision making arrangements operate effectively in accordance with relevant legislation and the Council's Constitution.
6. To provide effective management of electoral services and supporting the Returning Officer in the effective delivery of elections and referenda held within the borough
7. To ensure effective support to Elected Members and ensuring positive Member/Officer Relations, including support to the Mayor ensuring an effective civic office.
8. To lead and be accountable on all actions involving litigation both against and for the Council (excluding insurance claims against the Council as well as Council Tax and Debt Recovery by the Council).
9. To ensure the provision of timely, quality legal advice and support to a range of major corporate projects, including the gypsy/traveller issues as well as supporting the Chief Executive and the Monitoring Officer to deliver and enforce the council's ethical and governance frameworks.
10. To carry out efficient and effective performance and financial management ensuring that appropriate corrective action is taken promptly when necessary and that budgets (Circa £2.5 Million) are adhered to.
11. To carry out regular reviews of service performance and ensure that opportunities are taken to improve customer experience and efficiency to meet the needs of the Corporate Plan.

12. To be responsible for providing advice arising from the assessment of the implications for the Council of new legislation and government changes and directing the development of policies and procedures to meet the changes as necessary.
13. To attend and provide professional guidance and advice to any relevant Committee, sub-committees and working parties and to be responsible for authoring, reviewing and editing committee and overview and scrutiny reports, interpreting policies and preparing appraisals and recommendations as required.
14. Deputise for the Assistant Director – Corporate Services, as required.
15. Any other duties appropriate to the post: These other duties must be equivalent to or below the salary and status of the role and, where appropriate, under the Equality Act 2010, due consideration must be given to any employees with a “protected characteristic”.
16. You must ensure that you comply at all times with the General Data Protection Act, relating to personal information held by the Council. Any employee who mis-uses, accesses or discloses personal data relating to a living individual without checking that it is to be used for an authorised purpose relevant to the Authority, may be prosecuted in a Criminal Court, as well as facing disciplinary action.
17. Cooperation in all matters relating to Health and Safety and implementation of all procedures for your job role. Identification of Health and Safety related risks within the working environment brought to the attention of the Assistant Director – Corporate Services.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Position Title:	Head of Legal and Democracy	Date Prepared:	June 2019
Service:	Legal and Democratic Services	Band:	SE3

AF= Application Form I = Interview T = Test
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	REQUIREMENTS	Essential	Desirable	Assessed
1.	EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE			
1.1	Demonstrable experience of providing effective high quality legal advice and guidance in a complex environment.	✓		AF/ I
1.2	Experience of local authority committee decision-making arrangements and of providing guidance and advice to the council and Elected Members	✓		AF/ I
1.3	Proven experience of dealing with elected Councillors at all levels within a democratic environment ideally in a local government context	✓		AF/ I
1.4	Experience of elections, referenda and of supporting the Returning Officer	✓		AF/ I
1.5	Demonstrable experience of negotiating at a high level with a range of stakeholders including within complex political environments	✓		AF/ I
1.6	Experience of making successful improvements to processes and the service.	✓		AF/ I
1.7	Flexibility and ability to work under pressure including meeting deadlines and managing a complex work load simultaneously.	✓		AF/ I/P
1.8	Experience of document and case management systems e.g. Modern.gov.	✓		AF/ I/P
1.9	Experience in Local Government standards and constitution.	✓		AF/ I/P

	REQUIREMENTS	Essential	Desirable	Assessed
2.	COMPETENCIES			
1	LEADING AND DECIDING Takes control and exercises leadership. Initiates action, gives direction and takes responsibility.	✓		AF/ I/ T
2	SUPPORTING AND CO-OPERATING Supports others and shows respect and positive regard for them in social situations. Puts people first, working effectively with individuals and teams, clients and staff. Behaves consistently with clear personal values that complement those of the organisation.	✓		AF/ I/ T
3	INTERACTING AND PRESENTING Communicates and networks effectively. Successfully persuades and influences others. Relates to others in a confident and relaxed manner.	✓		AF/ I/ T
4	ANALYSING AND INTERPRETING Shows evidence of clear analytical thinking. Gets to the heart of complex problems and issues. Applies own expertise effectively. Quickly learns new technology. Communicate well in writing.	✓		AF/ I/ T
5	CREATING AND CONCEPTUALISING Open to new ideas and experiences. Seeks out learning opportunities. Handles situations and problems with innovation and creativity. Thinks broadly and strategically. Support and drives organisational change.	✓		AF/ I/ T
6	ORGANISING AND EXECUTING Plans ahead and works in a systematic and organised way. Follows directions and procedures. Focuses on customer satisfaction and delivers a quality service or product to the agreed standards.	✓		AF/ I/ T
7	ADAPTING AND COPING Adapts and responds well to change. Manages pressure effectively and copes well with setbacks.	✓		AF/ I/ T

	REQUIREMENTS	Essential	Desirable	Assessed
8	<p>ENTERPRISING AND PERFORMING</p> <p>Focuses on results and achieving personal work objectives. Works best when work is related closely to results and the impact of personal efforts is obvious. Shows an understanding of business, commerce and finance. Seeks opportunities for self-development and career advancement.</p>	✓		AF/ I/ T
3	<p>EDUCATION AND TRAINING</p>			
3.1	Fully qualified solicitor (or barrister) with a current practice certificate.	✓		AF
3.2	Membership of a professional body such as Lawyers in Local Government	✓		AF
3.3	Evidence to support commitment towards continuing professional development	✓		AF /I