JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title	Senior Lawyer		
Service	Legal		
Reporting to			
Grade	8		
Evaluation ref:	RP291	**Job Family ref:**	

Role Purpose

The Senior Lawyer provides high-quality legal advice, representation, and support to Somerset Council, ensuring the Council's activities are legally compliant and aligned with its strategic objectives.

The postholder acts as a senior member of the Legal Services team, leading on complex cases and projects, and supporting the development of junior colleagues. The role involves managing a varied caseload, contributing to service improvement, and building effective relationships with clients and stakeholders. The Senior Lawyer will play a key role in maintaining high professional standards and supporting the continuous improvement of the Legal Services function.

Accountabilities

Provide timely and accurate legal advice to officers, elected members, and committees.

Lead on complex or high-profile cases, projects, or areas of law as allocated.

Draft, review, and negotiate legal documents, contracts, and agreements.

Represent the Council in legal proceedings, tribunals, and hearings.

Supervise, mentor, and support junior legal staff as required.

Contribute to the development and delivery of training for clients and colleagues.

Maintain up-to-date knowledge of relevant law and practice.

Foster effective working relationships with internal and external stakeholders.

Promote a culture of continuous improvement and customer focus.

Ensure compliance with professional standards and statutory obligations.

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Knowledge / Experience / Skills		
	Essential	Desirable
Knowledge		
Strong knowledge of local government law and practice.	X	
Understanding of the public sector context.	X	
Demonstrable knowledge of researching complex areas of law and presenting them in clear and understandable terms to clients.	X	
Knowledge of a specialist area of law relevant to the Council's functions.		X
Experience		
Significant post-qualification experience as a solicitor, barrister, or legal executive.	X	
Experience of handling complex legal matters.	X	
Experience of supporting or supervising colleagues.	X	
Experience of working in local government or the public sector.		X
Experience of delivering training or service improvement projects.		X
Qualifications / Registrations / Certifications		
Solicitor, Barrister (Supreme Court of England and Wales/English Bar) or Fellow of the Institute of Legal Executives or equivalent relevant qualification with relevant experience.	X	
Skills		
Excellent analytical, drafting, and advocacy skills.	X	
Strong communication and interpersonal skills.	X	
Ability to manage a varied workload and meet deadlines.	X	
Demonstrable ability to draft all necessary legal, transactional, and other formal documentation.	X	
Proven ability to work under pressure, to meet agreed work objectives and targets in accordance with local frameworks, guidelines, and budgetary requirements.	X	

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Proven ability to negotiate complex matters of high value or risk, translating those matters into actions that best represents and protects the interests and good governance of the Council.	X	
Delivering information clearly and succinctly to others in the Council, partnerships, external organisations and to clients, and employing suitable interpersonal skills.	X	
Ability to manage other team members where allocated, including organising the distribution of work, monitoring progress and quality and measuring against agreed standards.	X	
Identifying and evaluating risks systematically, communicating information to enable appropriate and timely action; recognising situations where risk may be justifiable.	X	
Responding positively to change within your work area and taking responsibility for putting into practice changes which are being implemented.	X	

Working Conditions

Office-based with flexible and remote working in line with Somerset Council's Dynamic Working Strategy.

May be required to attend meetings or hearings at various locations.

Dimensions of the role

May supervise or mentor junior lawyers and legal officers.

Responsible for leading on complex or high-risk matters.

Key point of contact for specific service areas or projects.

Working Arrangements

Somerset Council's Dynamic Working Strategy will be applied to this position.

Corporate Accountabilities

- Provide clear leadership to deliver the Council's strategic priorities and meet the Council's financial targets, as a member of the Directorates Senior Leadership Team.
- Update and advise Elected Members in respect of operational and policy issues in relation to the Legal Services teams.
- Lead Legal teams with a clear identity in terms of flexible and responsive ways of working, inclusive and diverse culture, and high level of employee engagement and wellbeing.
- Undertake representational and communication duties on behalf of the Council to promote and protect the Council's interests in matters concerning their specialist areas.

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- Create, monitor, and review frameworks of performance measures and quality standards to be applied in the delivery of services.
- Function as an ambassador for the Council promoting, both internally and externally, the Council's vision, strategic aims, and values.
- Value the diversity of Somerset's communities ensuring equality of access and treatment in service delivery and employment.
- Function as a role model for Somerset's vision and values. Promotes a culture of continuous improvement that encourages creativity and innovation to ensure services are efficient and develop the potential and flexibility across the Council and its workforce including the motivation and development of employees within the Legal service teams.
- Ensure that Legal services place a high value on customer responsiveness by demonstrating a commitment to meeting and involving the broadest range of direct and indirect service users, citizens, customers, communities, and businesses.
- Support the delivery of the Councils' key strategic aims and objectives ensuring understanding and commitment from staff from across the Legal service.
- Support Corporate and Directorate and service specific transformational change programmes with the aim of maximising efficiency, modernising services, and achieving better outcomes and opportunities for service users and customers.
- Ensure flexibility in reacting to the needs of the Council, its' customers and partners supporting a culture of continuous improvement.
- Ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, the Council's standards of conduct, organisational policy, and professional codes of conduct to uphold standards of best practise.
- Accountable for compliance with all relevant health and safety legislation and Somerset Council H&S policies.

Date: 23/01/2026