

JOB DESCRIPTION	
<b>Job Title:</b>	Principal Lawyer (Planning & Highways)
<b>Office:</b>	Pathfinder Legal Services Limited
<b>Directorate:</b>	Property, Planning & Highways
<b>Reports to:</b>	Head of Service
<b>Grade:</b>	F
<b>Location:</b>	Huntingdon, Northampton or Shefford (but able to travel to other offices as required)
<b>Hours:</b>	Full Time (37 hours)
OVERALL PURPOSE OF THE JOB	
To lead a team of lawyers providing innovative and pragmatic legal advice to a range of public sector clients predominantly in respect of planning matters generally and other areas of legal practice where necessary.	
MAIN ACCOUNTABILITIES	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide legal advice and services to client organisations in planning, development and highways matters and other corporate or constitution and administrative matters to ensure compliance with statutory duties and obligations and to protect the best interests of the client organisations.</li> <li>2. Provide high quality, innovative, well researched and comprehensive specialist legal advice to clients (including elected members and senior officers), managing a complex caseload and delivering advice within the timescales required by the client.</li> <li>3. Act as a source of legal advice and support to any of the client Councils' Committees and Directorates as directed.</li> <li>4. Attend courts and tribunals undertaking advocacy where required and to represent clients in negotiations and discussions with third parties in matters regarding the areas of legal practice relevant to the post.</li> <li>5. Instruct and manage suppliers of external legal services such as solicitors and barristers in accordance with the requirements of each client.</li> <li>6. Lead, direct, develop and improve the service to client organisations, predominately in the area of planning &amp; highways, to ensure the provision of an excellent standard of client care and value for money.</li> <li>7. Act as a legal advisor to client organisations to ensure awareness of their safeguarding responsibilities and ensure compliance with statutory duties and obligations and to protect the best interest of the client organisations.</li> <li>8. Actively seek out new business development opportunities and to raise the profile of Pathfinder Legal Services with both our existing client base and potential new clients.</li> <li>9. Build highly effective working relationships with clients to ensure that Pathfinder Legal Services delivers a seamless and client focussed service to all its clients.</li> <li>10. Liaise with client managers to ensure that the legal service provided to them meets their needs and is focused on delivering high quality legal services, customer care and service improvements.</li> <li>11. Develop effective partnerships, networks and joint working arrangements to ensure the most effective provision of Legal Services to meet the needs and aspirations of clients.</li> <li>12. Where required, provide training to clients in specialist areas of law.</li> <li>13. Ensure the effective identification and management of risks associated with the relevant areas of legal practice.</li> </ol>	

14. Develop and provide legal input into training courses, briefing notes and legal clinic/surgeries for a range of professional clients including to reduce the directorates need for legal services and to increase their self-sufficiency.
15. Manage the activities of the team to include performance, caseloads and productivity, motivation and development, recruitment and selection and appraisals.
16. Supervise other members of the team in a line management capacity. To provide overall management of the teams complex and politically sensitive case load to ensure the provision of high quality, well researched and comprehensive legal advice within the timescales required by the client.
17. Provide supervision and manage the work of the team to ensure that professional guidance is given, that expertise is employed and work is allocated appropriately within the team.
18. Contribute to the development, training or mentoring of colleagues where required.
19. Demonstrate awareness and understanding of equal opportunities, other people's behaviour and their physical, social and welfare needs.
20. Ensure that reasonable care is taken for the health and safety of the team, including compliance with health and safety policy and procedure and to maintain good employment relations within your team.
21. Provide cover and support, including in times of absence, to other Principal Lawyers based within the wider Property, Planning & Highways team.
22. Deputise for the Head of Property, Planning & Highways where required.
23. Support the Pathfinder Legal Services Leadership Team in building and maintaining effective working relationships with clients to ensure the delivery of a seamless and client focussed service.
24. Support the Pathfinder Legal Services Leadership Team by complying with all Legal Services' practice management requirements including time recording, billing, Lexcel and other accreditation schemes, and compliance with all policies and procedures.
25. Support the Pathfinder Legal Services Leadership team and other colleagues in contributing to the overall management of the team including staff performance, financial and practice management. This includes ensuring the effective use of the ICT systems and working in accordance with the standards set out in the team's Lexcel manual and policies and procedures.
26. Support the Pathfinder Legal Services Leadership Team in developing and maintaining effective partnerships, networks and joint working arrangements to ensure the most effective provision of Legal Services to meet the needs and aspirations of clients.
27. Carry out other duties which fall within the broad spirit, scope and purpose of the job description and which are commensurate with the grade of the post.
28. To act as an authorised signatory for an appropriate shareholder client.
29. To buddy, train and support colleagues.

This job description reflects the key duties to be carried out by the post holder and identifies a level of responsibility at which they will be required to work. In the interests of effective working, the key duties may be reviewed from time to time to reflect changing needs and circumstances. Such reviews and any consequential changes will be carried out in consultation with the post holder.

PERSON SPECIFICATION			
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<b>SERVICE:</b>	Property, Planning & Highways	<b>OFFICE:</b>	Pathfinder Legal Services Limited
<b>GRADE:</b>	F	<b>LOCATION:</b>	Huntingdon, Northampton or Shefford (but able to travel to other offices as required)

The following criteria are appropriate for this post. You must meet the essential criteria in order to be shortlisted for the post and it would be advantageous if you meet the desirable criteria.

QUALIFICATIONS	
<u>Essential</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Solicitor of the Supreme Court of England and Wales / member of the Bar who has completed pupillage / qualified Fellow of the Institute of Legal Executives or Chartered Legal Executive</li> </ul>	<u>Desirable</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leadership/Management Qualification</li> </ul>
KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE	
<u>Essential</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A demonstrated understanding of the local government legal framework including the relevant practice and policy issues in relation to a range of planning and highways related law</li> <li>Knowledge of and ability to apply and interpret law relating to the relevant service area</li> <li>Experience of advising on large scale property development projects</li> </ul>	<u>Desirable</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least two years post qualification experience preferably gained in a Local Authority setting</li> <li>Knowledge and understanding of the legal framework and operation of Local Government</li> <li>Experience of planning and delivering legal briefings/training courses</li> </ul>

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A demonstrated record of managing high volume planning and highways transactions quickly, accurately and efficiently</li> <li>• Experience and ability to provide advice on governance and constitutional matters.</li> <li>• Experience of leading, managing or supervising a team of experienced professionals successfully</li> <li>• Ability to develop client relationships and identify areas for expansion of work.</li> <li>• Ability to conduct legal research, interpret legislation and summarise the key points of case law</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrated success at managing a team's workload including attracting and developing new clients/areas/pieces of work</li> <li>• Thorough knowledge of relevant court and appeal procedure.</li> <li>• Knowledge of and ability to apply other areas of law such as contract/commercial and litigation</li> <li>• Advocacy Skills, Experience and through knowledge of Civil and Criminal Procedure</li> </ul> |
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## SKILLS

### Essential

- Ability to lead and motivate others
- Ability to communicate effectively both verbally and in writing with a diverse range of persons/organisations
- Ability to work under own initiative, and to look ahead, anticipate challenges and deal with them pro-actively
- Ability to work unsupervised and to provide sound and clear advice on own initiative
- Ability to plan and prioritise work effectively to meet own objectives and those of the team
- Ability to evaluate information in complex situations and the confidence to take sound decisions independently
- Ability to work under pressure, meet tight deadlines, adapt to change and to manage competing priorities
- Team player with an approachable, adaptable and positive attitude towards work with a willingness to provide cover in colleagues' absence and to pick up work outside of own specialism if necessary
- Excellent client care skills and a commitment to client focus and continuing service development
- Ability to travel to meetings at client offices and to work in other office locations on a regular basis
- Ability to work to time recording targets

### Desirable

- Flexibility with office hours – working to the demands of the job
- An approach to problem solving that demonstrates an awareness of the Council's corporate priorities
- A commitment to Lexcel / Quality Management Standards
- Political astuteness

- Drive, enthusiasm, versatility and self-motivation
- Computer literate with experience in using Microsoft office, legal research tools and bespoke software including case management systems

#### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES & HEALTH & SAFETY**

##### Essential

- Ability to demonstrate awareness and understanding of equal opportunities and other people's behaviour, physical, social and welfare needs
- Ability to demonstrate a clear understanding of, and commitment to, health & safety