Job Description

Job Title:	Barrister
Team/Service:	Adults and Children Safeguarding
Business Unit:	Legal Services
Commissioning Area	Commercial Services
Responsible To: ***(day to day issues)***	Exec Head – Adults and Children Safeguarding
Accountable To: ***(line manager)***	Exec Head – Adults and Children Safeguarding
Salary Grade: ***(Spinal column points only)***	

1. Key Purpose of Job

1.1. To provide the highest calibre specialist advocacy, in the Magistrates Court, County Court, High Court and Court of Appeal.

1.2. To provide the highest calibre legal advice and opinion in the most serious and complex cases.

1.3. To provide a programme of training to Social Workers and junior legal colleagues.

2. Anticipated Outcomes of Post

2.1. To deal effectively and persuasively with a wide range of people in order to ensure effective determination of cases before the Court.

2.2. Demonstrating tact and diplomacy, to develop and maintain good working relationship with all parties in the Family Justice System.

2.3. To provide expert advice to Children's Services and legal colleagues on all complex cases, in order to maximise evidential opportunities and build strong cases from the outset.

2.4. To demonstrate the highest level of oral and written communication skills in all matters relating to the presentation of cases, in particular the ability to distil and explain legal complexities to a variety of audiences.

2.5. To interpret and apply legislation and precedent; to evaluate and assess evidence; and to exercise the highest level of judgment with regards to the appropriateness of action proposed by Children's Services.

3. List Key Duties and accountabilities of the post

3.1. To consider, prepare and conduct (including advocacy) matters in the Magistrates' Court, Crown Court, County Court and High Court and in all other tribunals or hearings of whatever description, on behalf of the Council.

3.2. To provide detailed verbal and written advice to the Council.

3.3. To provide training as required to client departments.

3.4. To have knowledge of the highest calibre and be up to date on the law, practice and current issues within the specialist areas of law upon which the post holder advises on.

3.5. To be knowledgeable and up to date on the general law relating to local government, including freedom of information and data protection.

4. Give examples of the typical types of problems and decisions the post will be required to make

The post holder will bring their experience and knowledge of legal principles to bear in finding solutions to novel problems within their area of practice. They will routinely exercise creativity and innovation in applying legal solutions to factual problems, of a highly complex nature in high profile, multi disciplinary settings, which may include national issues. The post holder will have the support and supervision of senior colleagues where required, but more often will make autonomous decisions.

The post holder will provide advice and advocacy of the highest calibre in the Court arena, including High Court and Court of Appeal litigation, with potential national media coverage.

5. Budgetary / Financial Responsibilities of the post

5.1. none

6. Supervision / Line Management Responsibilities of the post (Please show / provide organisation structure as an appendices, showing official reporting lines)

6.1. The post holder is required to provide informal support to Officers with Legal Services.

7. Working Environment & Conditions of the post

7.1. The post holder operates in an environment governed by the need to meet deadlines (including those externally imposed) in a context of continually changing priorities and where the work is always of a complex and sensitive nature.

7.2. The post holder is required to be able to routinely travel to Court hearings and meetings.

7.3. The post holder is at risk of exposure to material and situations likely to cause distress.

7.4. The post holder is at risk of experiencing verbal and physical abuse, aggression and intimidation.

8. Physical Demands of the post

8.1. The post holder is required to handle heavy documentation e.g. court bundles which can be large in number and difficult to move safely.

9. Specific Resources used by the post

9.1. The post holder may have access to laptop computers and mobile phones.

9.2. The post holder is required to ensure the security of confidential and sensitive information when transporting and using files and laptops when travelling and working away from the office.

10. Key Contacts and Relationships

10.1. External

Contact with service users, other local authorities, partners and external bodies, Government Departments, other professionals (legal and others), courts and tribunals.

Contact with members of the public.

10.2. Internal

Contact with officers at all levels within the Council. Frequent contacts with Senior Officers. Contact with Members on specific case matters, including giving advice on courses of action and their legal risks and ramifications.

10.3. The post holder will represent the Council and be responsible for influencing and negotiating with others on contentious matters in circumstances where the relationships between contacts and the matters in question will routinely be complex and will involve difficult situations requiring tact and sensitivity. The post holder will be responsible for advocating on behalf of the Council generally routinely including formal advocacy before the Magistrates Court, County Court, High Court and Court of Appeal.

11. Other Duties

To undertake additional duties as required, commensurate with the level of the job.

Other Information

a) All staff must commit to Equal Opportunities and Anti-Discriminatory Practice.

b) The Council operates a Smoke-Free Policy and the post-holder is prohibited from smoking in any of the Council's buildings (including Council owned and Council leased buildings, but excluding designated areas in residential schemes), enclosed spaces within the curtilage of buildings, and Council vehicles. Staff will not be released for a break that is specifically for smoking.

c) The post-holder is expected to familiarise themselves with and adhere to all relevant Council Policies and Procedures.

d) The post-holder must comply with the Council's Health and Safety requirements as outlined in the H&S policy appropriate to the role.

e) This post is based at the town hall but the postholder may be required to move their base to any other location within the Council at a future date. As this post meets the requirements in respect of exempted questions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, all applicants who are offered employment will be subject to a criminal record check (Disclosure) from the Criminal Records Bureau before the appointment is confirmed. This will include details of ALL cautions, reprimands or final warnings as well as convictions, whether "spent" or "unspent". Criminal convictions will only be taken into account when they are relevant to the post.

Note for Candidate

All Candidates

The supporting statement on your application form will be used to assess ability to meet the essential requirements of the role, so you should explain how you meet each of the numbered essential requirements within your supporting statement.

In a competitive situation, the desirable criteria may be taken into consideration, so you are encouraged to show how you also meet each of the desirable criteria.

Candidates who consider that they have a disability

Reasonable adjustments will be made to the job, job requirements or recruitment process for candidates with a disability.

If you consider yourself to have a disability you should indicate this on your application form, providing any information you would like us to take into account with regard to your disability in order to offer a fair selection interview.

Where ever possible and reasonable we will make adjustments and offer alternatives to help you through the application and selection process.

If you have indicated that you have a disability on your application form you will be guaranteed an interview if you clearly demonstrate in your supporting evidence how you broadly meet the essential requirements of the role.

Person Specification

Job Title:	Barrister/Higher Court Advocate	Business Unit:	Commercial Services	Team/ Service:	Legal Services

Essential Skills and Effectiveness:	Desirable Skills and Effectiveness:
1. Communication and interpersonal skills of the highest calibre 2. The ability to give clear and accurate legal advice of the highest calibre 3. The highest calibre analytical and problem solving skills 4. The highest calibre presentation skills 5. Outstanding ability to build and maintain positive working relationships 6. Outstanding ability to influence and persuade others at a high level both inside and outside of the Council. 7. Highest calibre negotiating skills 8. Ability to work as an integrated part of the wider Legal Services team, and be supportive of colleagues and management 9. Ability to command respect and authority with those persons the post holder is required to influence, support and advise.	1. Ability to adapt to new areas of work.

Essential Knowledge:	Desirable Knowledge:
10. An advanced and high level of knowledge of the law and procedure within the discipline of safeguarding children. 11. An advanced and high level of knowledge of the Court processes applicable within the discipline of safeguarding children.	2. A level of knowledge of the law and procedure within the discipline of safeguarding adults. 3. Understanding of the nature of a Local Government in-house legal service

12. A general awareness of the policies, aims and objectives of the Council.	

Essential Experience/Achievements:	Desirable Experience/Achievements:
13. Suitable training as a legal advisor and advocate 14. Considerable advocacy experience in a variety of Courts within the area of safeguarding children 15. Considerable experience of negotiating and influencing within the area of safeguarding children 16. Experience of providing supervision to junior colleagues. 17. Experience in devising, preparing and delivering training within the area of safeguarding children.	4. Experience of working with an in-house legal department.

Essential Qualifications/Professional Memberships:	Desirable Qualifications/Professional Memberships:
18. Admitted and practicing Barrister or Higher Court Solicitor Advocate with at least 10 years post qualification experience.	4. Membership of Family Law Association

Essential – Other requirements of the job role

- Ability to carry out the physical requirements of the role (i.e. manual handling)
- Ability to travel efficiently around the South West in order to carry out duties
- Ability to accommodate unsociable hours
- Ability to accommodate on-call working
- Ability to accommodate home-working