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|  | JOB DESCRIPTION | FormJD1 |
| JOB TITLE: Legal Assistant | **POST NUMBER: 1100EKW** |
| **REPORTS TO** (Job Title):  | Practice Manager |
| **DEPARTMENT:** Legal Services | GRADE: 5 |
| **JE REF:** | 32 | PANEL DATE: | 03/05/2022 |
| **1.** | **MAIN PURPOSE OF JOB** To provide support to Legal Services as follows:* Open, close and maintain files on case management system
* Assist with preparation of legal documents including Court Applications, Witness Statements, bundles etc.
* Prepare replies to legal queries, as required by current legislation and council policy when relevant lawyer is away from the office
* Act as a case management system super user
* Prepare engrossment documents
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| **2.** | **CORE RESPONSIBILITIES, TASKS & DUTIES:**Main tasks include:- |
|  | a | Complying to the relevant area of law and court requirements:extract information (from a variety of sources including: Norwel, SX3, PCOL, DMS and client instructions)update systemscomplete documentation * notify relevant parties, sharing documents as required

for the following areas of work:**Property** * Section 115 (Pavement Cafe Licences).
* Licence applications
* Right to Buy (RTB) including completions
* LPE1 (Leasehold Enquiries)
* Tree Preservation Orders (TPO)
* Confirmation of Tree Preservation Orders (TPO)
* Care Fees (Class B and HASSASSA charges)
* Sealing (e.g. contracts, licences, leases, traffic orders)

**Housing*** Anti-social behaviour and nuisance cases.
* Possession claims in compliance with the Housing Act 1985
* Queries for rent arrears
* Defence forms
* Notice of issue applications
* Issue and re-issue warrant applications
* Process stay and adjourned hearings
* Evictions and withdrawn evictions and possession hearings
* Introductory Tenancy and Part 55 applications
* NTQ for deceased tenant - prepare Notice to Quit housing possession once instruction received from HMO
* Permission Applications for warrants

**Litigation*** Add dates to legal calendar from court order
* PNC – request previous convictions to the police via email
* Book hearing dates in the court

**Employment and education*** Administrative support for school appeals and exclusions

**Social Care*** Download court orders from the portal, save on legal case management system and put on bundle
* File and serve documents
* Add dates to legal calendar from court order
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|  | b. | Undertake searches and obtain Land Registry documentation (electronically using the Land Registry portal) or by submitting hard copy requests using forms not available on portal. |
|  | c. | Assist legal staff and clients to prepare for court hearings, including court paperwork, bundles and rent prints  |
|  | d. | Respond to queries from solicitors and client departments. Deal with queries when the Lawyer with conduct of the matter and other members of the team are out of office or unavailable. |
|  | i. | NorwelTrain and advise legal users on the legal case management system, and work out how to use the system to best meet their needsSolve system problems and liaise with software provider on issues System design – develop, test, implement and maintain, including: user defined screens; workflows; templates; reportingAct as a legal case management super user for Legal Services, using the more complex system functions including: bundling; flow files, NRG and Crystal reporting; user defined screens, archive, cash and time functionsBundling – develop new bundle structures and templates. Update and maintain court bundles with correct versions of documents, ensure bundles are sent to court on timeThorough testing of new releasesProduce user documentation |
|  |  | General Administration |
|  | a. | Working as part of a team to provide office and telephone cover. |
|  | d. | Taking documents to court; sending documents to court and parties electronically |
|  | e. | Filing, photocopying, collating and binding documents. |
|  | f. | Pay invoices/purchase items using council purchase card, pay court fees by PBA invoice |
|  | g. | Redacting |
| **3.** | **SUPERVISION / MANAGEMENT OF PEOPLE**No. reporting - Direct: 0 Indirect: 0May be required to supervise temporary staff within the department |
| **4.** | **CREATIVITY & INNOVATION*** Subject to occasional supervision and procedural guidelines, the jobholder is able to use initiative in responding to queries, the management of his/her own workload and in the development of administrative systems to meet the specification of others.
* Uses initiative in proposing changes to working practices and/or processes for own and departmental administrative work area.

Examples1. Developing or improving systems for collecting and recording performance indicators.
2. Developing on-line practices for PCOL.
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| **5.** | CONTACTS & RELATIONSHIPS* **Internal** Regular contact with supervisors, colleagues, estate managers traffic regulation officer, contracts manager and colleagues calling for the exchange of information, sometimes of a complex and sensitive nature, orally, in writing or electronically where some tact may be required. Occasionally dealing with issues where the outcome may not be straightforward, for example possession claims.
* **External** Contact with solicitors, visitors, suppliers and agencies such as bailiffs, police, court officers , the Public Trustee and Personal Representativeon operational matters, which may require tact and discretion. Occasionally dealing with issues where the outcome may not be straightforward, for example RTB completions.
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|  **6.** | **DECISIONS – discretion & consequences****Discretion:-*** Subject to statutory requirement, the Council’s and nationally determined policies, procedures and standards, the jobholder will have some discretion in the conduct of legal proceedings
* The jobholder is required to design, develop and implement modifications/variations to processes and working arrangements e.g. performance indicators.
* The jobholder must maintain strict confidentiality at all times.
* Without close supervision, the jobholder prioritises his/ her workload to meet departmental objectives.
* Judgement is required providing solutions to problems within which there is a need to interpret information and from which a number of alternatives are possible, such as when adapting previous legal precedents to new circumstances and when advising clients on the best course of action for cases
* Use discretion when responding to face to face and telephone queries from colleagues and others outside the Council so as not to commit any breaches of confidentiality/ indiscretions.

Consequences:-* The tasks which the jobholder undertakes have a significant impact on the internal efficiency of the operations of the department and the service it provides to its customers. In particular the jobholder provides significant assistance to the lawyers in the Property & Housing team enabling them to use time efficiently.
* Compliance with legal practices essential when issuing legal documents.
* The financial responsibility which the jobholder has impacts on client department budgets.
* Working with minimum supervision enables the department to work more efficiently and frees up time for senior officers to work on more complex cases.
* The professional support provided by the jobholder will enhance the reputation of the Council and ensure that the Council acts in a lawful manner.
* The court work the post holder undertakes ensures that the client department meets their government targets in relation to letting properties and keeping rent arrears figures low.
* Court work has a material effect on client departments; on the court’s limited resources, and members of the public as tenants.
* Accurate court work ensures income for the Housing Revenue Account, which is used for repairs and maintenance of council houses.
* Accurate court work in many cases will ensure security of tenancy, and therefore prevent homelessness.
* Compliance with Court Orders and the Court Rules is required and non-compliance can have a financial and reputational consequence
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| **7.** | **RESOURCES – financial & equipment***(Not budget, and not including desktop equipment.)* Description Value * Normal office equipment.
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| **8.** | **WORK ENVIRONMENT – work demands, physical demands, working conditions & work context****Work demands*** Works largely unsupervised, organises own workload and reprioritises as more urgent work arises.

Physical demands* Occasional errands to court.

Working conditions* Hybrid working.

Work context* Hybrid working.
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| **9.** | **QUALIFICATIONS, KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS**Ability to undertake work concerning more involved tasks relating to the administration of Property and Housing Law and court processes, which requires a good standard of practical knowledge and skills.Qualifications:-* ECDL, CLAIT, database or equivalent experience
* Computer literate, competent in the use of Council computer packages

Knowledge:-* Sound understanding and experience of a wide range of sometimes complex clerical/administrative work procedures, which may be non-routine, and which require specific training
* Specialised knowledge of the Norwel case management system
* An in-depth understanding of legal processes, terms, documents and deadlines, along with technical IT knowledge and analytical skills is required in the design, development and maintenance of workflows, templates, bundle structures and user defined screens.
* An advanced level of Microsoft Word is needed for the development of Norwel templates, including an understanding of working with Word field codes to automate document production
* Numerate with experience of using Excel, and Access
* Knowledge of budgetary control processes
* Experience of a multi-functional administrative office environment
* Experience of working within an externally audited quality system

Skills:-* Sound oral and written communication skills
* Ability to work unsupervised
* Ability to work using own initiative
* Ability to prioritise own workload
* Ability to communicate complex information
* Flexible approach to workload to assist with court hearings and deadlines
* The ability to work proactively and closely with fee earners, and to have an understanding of client needs/expectations

Legal:-* Experience and knowledge of legal work and legal processes and deadlines is required to provide a high level of service to fee earners, as they rely on jobholder to have relevant knowledge and skills to assist them
* Ability to undertake work concerning more involved tasks relating to the administration of Property Law, which requires a thorough knowledge of the legal practices relating to RTB, TPO, Care Charges and S115 Licences; and Housing Law, which requires a thorough knowledge of the legal practices relating to possession claims and tenancies
* Thorough knowledge of Land Registry services and experience of LR portal, in particular submitting search applications and interpreting the results of such searches and submitting registration applications
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| **10.** | **Position of Job in Organisation Structure**Job reports to Practice ManagerOther jobs at this level; Business Support Assistant (Legal & Enforcement)THIS JOBJobs reporting up to this one: none |