

**Manchester City Council  
Role Profile  
Principal Lawyer, Grade 11  
Legal Services, Chief Executive Directorate  
Reports to: Group Manager  
Job Family: Corporate Organisational Support**

**Key Role Descriptors:**

This role is based within a support service in Manchester City Council which provides specialist support to the wider organisation and to Salford City Council, Rochdale Borough Council, GMCA and other public sector bodies.

Working within a support service or Centre of Excellence, the role holder will ensure the co-ordination and provision of high-quality legal support to enable the delivery of service and organisational objectives, delivering, managing or commissioning specific projects as required.

As a subject matter specialist, the role holder will oversee the collaborative design, development and implementation of strategies and frameworks which enable the operation of effective services and support their contribution to the achievement of strategic and operational objectives.

The role holder will manage key relationships, acting as a commissioner for the delivery of support and services, and work in partnership across Manchester City Council, Salford City Council and, where appropriate Rochdale Borough Council, GMCA and other public sector bodies to deliver effective and efficient legal support to policy initiatives and decision making.

The role holder will oversee the design, development and implementation of frameworks/systems which enable the operation of effective legal services and support their contribution to the achievement of strategic and operational objectives. In doing so they will support the achievement of strategic and operational objectives through a focus on quality, value for money and innovation whilst providing organisational assurance.

The role holder will work in partnership with services across Manchester City Council, Salford City Council and where appropriate Rochdale Borough Council, GMCA and other public sector bodies to ensure appropriate and effective governance and compliance is in place and supports organisational objectives and embraces the principles of collaborative working.

The role holder will ensure the effective and prioritised deployment of resources to provide reliable information and support to managers and decision makers.

Provide specialist legal advice and guidance to colleagues across the organisations, accounting for factors and elements beyond their direct control and area of specialism to support a whole council approach to decision making.

**Key Role Accountabilities:**

Develop, lead and support strategic responses through the provision of specialist advice and guidance to colleagues across Manchester City Council, Salford City Council and where appropriate, Rochdale Borough Council, GMCA and other public sector bodies, accounting for factors and elements beyond direct control and area of specialism to support a whole council approach to decision making.

Ensure that the organisational direction of travel and agreed policies / procedures are embedded within strategy development, including Public Service Reform principles.

Using initiative and creativity to find effective and positive solutions to complex legal matters and research law and procedure to a high professional standard to provide accurate, focussed and relevant legal and professional advice to clients including elected members

Manage the development of robust business processes, policies and strategies for improvement, adopting appropriate nationwide standards and policies and complying with quality assurance, legislative and professional requirements. Work with other service areas to provide advice, expertise and guidance to support business objectives.

Effectively commission work packages both within the assigned service area and from other service areas / organisations in order to provide a holistic approach to advice and ensure that all factors are accounted for in the decision making processes of the organisation.

A strong and clear advocate for the organisation's *m people* approach.

A strong and clear advocate for the organisation's Our Manchester Strategy

Roles at this level may be required to manage a range of assigned resources, which may be human, financial or other, to ensure continuous improvement in service delivery. Staff management duties may be either through direct line management of a team (including appraisals, performance management and other duties) or through matrix management of a virtual team of officers.

Demonstrate personal commitment to continuous self development and service improvement.

Through personal example, open commitment and clear action, ensure diversity is positively valued, resulting in equal access and treatment in employment, service delivery and communications.

**Where the roleholder is disabled, every effort will be made to supply all the necessary aids, adaptations or equipment to allow them to carry out all the duties of the job. If however, a certain task proves to be unachievable, job redesign will be pursued.**

**Role Portfolio:**

Legal Services comprises 4 Groups:

The Children and Families Legal Group provides legal advice and representation on all legal issues relating to the safeguarding and protection of children. The Group combines its role providing legal advice on multi agency safeguarding arrangements with a strategic lead for children's services. It also provides specialist legal advice on any third-party disclosure of social care (children's and adults) and education records

The People Place and Regulation Group provides legal advice and representation on Adult Social Care and Education issues; Employment law; Housing (including anti-social behaviour, housing disrepair and homelessness issues); general litigation including claims and civil recovery; and the wide spectrum of local authority licensing, prosecution and regulatory law.

The Regeneration Group is made up of four teams; Property, Planning, Commercial and Construction who provide legal advice in relation to major regeneration and strategic projects, commercial, corporate, procurement, subsidy matters, a wide variety of transactional and complex property related matters and advice on all aspects of planning, highways and compulsory purchase law.

The Governance Group's Democratic Services Legal Team provides legal advice in relation to local government law, constitutional matters and decision making, and information governance including data protection, freedom of information, the Environmental Information Regulations and RIPA. It also advises on elections law, as well as on Members' Standards matters including complaints alleging breaches of the Council's Code of Conduct for Members.

**Main duties and responsibilities include:**

- Develop, support and implement initiatives as part of the service's extended management team to deliver priorities within the Service Plan and support the Legal Management Team to drive service improvements
- Maintaining high standards of personal performance by demonstrating strategic vision, proactive leadership and leading by example.
- Proactively contributing to strategic, developmental and client related issues arising from management of the team and the wider Group.
- Deputising for senior management within the Group
- Management responsibility for a team of staff , including legally qualified staff.  
This will include: -

- All aspects of people management
  - Allocation and supervision of technical, specialist and sometimes complex legal work
  - Coaching, mentoring and development of staff
  - Resource planning to ensure effective delivery of legal advice, balancing demands across 4 local authorities (Manchester City Council; Salford City Council; Rochdale Borough Council (Children's and Adults); and GMCA as well as other external clients
  - Leading on relevant professional development activity, including the delivery of training, ensuring staff within the group have the knowledge and understanding of legislation, case law and best practice
- Take direct responsibility for and professionally and effectively undertake a personal caseload of key strategic and major, complex, high value and politically sensitive matters achieving timely and successful delivery and outcomes.
  - Use initiative and creativity to find effective and positive solutions to major, strategic complex legal matters and research law and procedure to a high professional standard to provide:
  - Accurate, focussed and relevant legal and professional advice to clients, members and other stakeholders, and,
  - Effective support, coaching, mentoring and professional development for staff in the team.
  - Identifying and implementing areas for improvement in practice and service delivery such as creating and maintaining precedents, templates, good practice guides and key "know how"
  - To build and maintain excellent client relationships at service level both within Manchester City Council, Salford City Council and where appropriate Rochdale Borough Council and GMCA and with external clients and (as required) to support the generation and maintenance of external income and ensure regular client meetings and reports and advice are provided as necessary. This will include agreeing and maintaining performance and contributing legal comment to formal and other reports.
  - Motivate and constantly improve service delivery and maintain high standards of performance through personal example, open commitment and clear action.
  - Actively contribute to the strategic objectives and professional development of the service and have a proactive and positive manner.
  - Demonstrate political sensitivity at all times
  - Be able to work as part of a team to ensure efficient and effective delivery of the service and be flexible in being able to adapt to the changing needs of our clients and the service and to support the councils and partners core business priorities.

- Represent the service on strategic groups and boards as and when required.
- Conduct of advocacy where required by a role in a particular team.

## **Key Behaviours, Skills and Technical Requirements**

### **Our Manchester Behaviours**

- We are proud and passionate about Manchester
- We take time to listen and understand
- We 'own it' and we're not afraid to try new things
- We work together and trust each other
- We show that we value our differences and treat people fairly

### **Generic Skills**

**Communication Skills** - Negotiates more complex agreements with Council wide impact. Is able to influence and persuade key Council decision makers. Utilises enhanced advocacy skills.

**Analytical Skills** - Application of strong analytical reasoning skills and intellectual focus, taking in the wider external and internal environments. proactively think through problems rather than reactively following a procedure-driven approach

**Planning and Organising** - Ability to maintain focus and objectivity under various conditions and skill in managing and maintaining a multi-priority workload, progressing various ideas and plans concurrently.

**Problem Solving and Decision Making - Ability** to react to immediate problems of a highly complex nature with associated risk factors and deliver pragmatic solutions sometimes under extreme pressure.

**Creative skills** - Uses creative ability to find solutions and whilst considering policy and procedure is also confident in adopting (and justifying) novel or non standard approaches.

**Strategic Thinking** - Excellent planning skills and ability to link strategy to policy which meets both internal and external requirements.

**Policy Skills** - Ability to demonstrate how policy options deliver or align with wider political objectives at a national, regional and sub-regional level

**People Management** - Has ability to secure and direct resources for a wide area with diverse staff with clear risks attached to decisions. Ability to define and articulate a strong sense of purpose and engender commitment across individuals and groups to a set of shared objectives.

### **Technical Requirements (Role Specific)**

Qualified solicitor, barrister, Chartered Lawyer or Fellow of the Institute of Legal Executives holding a current practising certificate.

Within Groups, Chartered Lawyers or Fellows may need to hold such regulatory practice rights in accordance with the business needs of the Group

Relevant experience and expertise of dealing with a broad range of complex, highly value and sensitive cases relating to the group's specific area of law

Managerial experience via direct management of people or project delivery related management