

Oxford City Council

Building a world class city for everyone

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Career Opportunity

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|-----------------------------------|---|
| Job Title | Lawyer Team Leader (Planning, Property and Contracts) |
| Job reference | 001888 |
| Service Area / Directorate | Law and Governance |
| Salary and Grade | G11: £58,453 to £60,481 per annum - (pro rata for part time) |
| Contract | Permanent |
| Hours per week | 37 |
| Location | Work from home/ Oxford - St Aldate's Chambers |

The role

We are looking for a dynamic and experienced lawyer specialising in one or more of the areas of planning, property and contracts to join our well respected in house Legal Team, to lead on all legal aspects of planning, property and contracts work in connection with the Council's Services and (where appropriate) the Council's companies.

As the successful candidate you will be an expert in your field with the ability to handle complex planning, property and / or contracts work and to lead and manage a team of lawyers specialising in planning, property (commercial and residential), contracts and commercial, procurement and regeneration. As well as having the technical ability you will need to show yourself to be confident, professional and enthusiastic and able to give clear and credible advice to senior officers, elected members and stakeholders.

You should also be a proactive and robust leader and team player, be flexible in approach and be willing to get involved in all areas of the Service's work. You should be a creative thinker that can influence and drive progress and want to play a prominent role in helping the Service to develop and improve. If you are a highly organised, enthusiastic and proactive individual, with a commitment to excellent customer service we would like to hear from you.

Oxford is a vibrant and dynamic City with a global reputation and the City Council sits at the centre of it all. We are an evolving organisation that plays an influential role in the success of the City. Working closely with our partners, we are driving a progressive agenda that is building stronger communities, tackling climate change and helping the economy to thrive.

It is a brilliant time to join Oxford City Council and this role will sit at the centre of all that we are trying to achieve in the Law & Governance Service. The Service, which operates at the heart of the Council, is responsible for the democratic and political management arrangements of the Authority, electoral registration and the conduct of elections, information governance across the Authority, corporate and Ombudsmen complaints, emergency planning and the provision of the full range of legal services to one of the most efficient, effective and ambitious councils in the country with high aspirations for the city.

We are seeking a passionate individual who is motivated by working for an inclusive and diverse organisation that is determined in its ambition to build 'a world class city for everyone', ensuring 'excellent public services are at the heart of everything'.

About us

Oxford City Council prides itself on delivering high quality, cost effective public services. Oxford is a world class city and the Council has high aspirations for its services and employees. We are a multi-award winning Council and in May 2017 we were re-accredited at Gold level for Champion IiP status. Our other awards include the Institute of Revenues Rating & Valuation (IRRV) 'Excellence in Innovation (General)' winners 2017, Oxfordshire Environment Partnership (OEP) 'Best Food Waste Reduction and Collection System', and several 'Team of the Year' national and regional awards across our Service Areas. This builds on our previous success in achieving 'Council of the Year' in 2015. We are accredited with the Customer Service Excellence Quality Mark which helps us to ensure that the customer is always placed at the heart of everything we do.

With over 700 staff dedicated to delivering the best service possible to our communities this is an exciting time to be working in Local Government. We focus on improving outcomes for local people and you might be surprised at the range and quality of the services we provide.

We offer a fantastic range of staff benefits that include generous holiday (from 28 days a year plus bank holidays), local government pension scheme, subsidised leisure membership, discounted travel and flexible working in many roles. We offer well-defined opportunities through our learning and development programme. We also have an employee wellbeing programme, an employee assistance programme and support via our dedicated occupational health service.

How to apply

More information is available on the role profile document. Please read this document to ensure that you meet our requirements. More information about working for the Council, our values and vision, is available on our web site.

Applications should be made via our online application system (no CVs please).

For further information and how to apply online, please visit www.oxford.gov.uk

If you are unable to access our website please call **01865 252848**.

Note: For roles that require a DBS Certificate (Enhanced and or Barred List check), candidates are required to supply their complete work history. Please ensure you explain any gaps in your work history. **Coronavirus information: It is intended to conduct interviews via a video conferencing platform such as Zoom; please contact us if this is not an option for you. For most roles the successful applicant will be expected to combine some level of work from home with some office attendance. They should ensure that they have reliable and secure wifi access; a suitable workspace and are prepared to undertake distance learning and training.**

Closing Date: 23 May 2021

Late applications will not be processed

Interview Date(s): 02 June 2021

For an informal discussion about the post please contact Benita Edwards on 01865 335429 / email bedwards@oxford.gov.uk or Susan Sale on 01865 335843 / email ssale@oxford.gov.uk

We are an equal opportunity employer:

We value the diversity of our people and actively seek to have a workforce that represents the rich diversity of the community we support. We have policies in place to ensure that every applicant and employee can flourish and succeed. Currently we are underrepresented in some areas, and would particularly welcome applicants from BAME communities. All applicants will be given fair consideration for work and will not receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of any protected characteristic.



Role Profiles

Role information

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|--------------------------------------|--|----------------------|-------------|
| Job Title | Lawyer Team Leader (Planning, Property & Contracts) | Position No. | HR use only |
| Position type | Permanent | Hours per week | 37 |
| Grade and Salary Range | G11: £58,453 to £60,481 per annum (pro-rata for part time) | | |
| Location | Oxford | | |
| Service Area / Directorate | Law and Governance | | |
| Responsible To | Legal Services Manager | No. of employees | 4 |
| Budget (£) | N/A | Assets | N/A |
| Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 | Not Exempt | Additional Screening | N/A |
| Candidate Screening | Not required | | |
| Political Restriction | This post is politically sensitive | | |

Role purpose

- To lead, develop, manage and deliver [insert team disciplines] legal services to the Council and where appropriate its companies.
- To be the principal legal advisor to the Council and where appropriate its companies for all legal disciplines within the [insert team name].
- To work collaboratively with all members of the Law and Governance Service to deliver excellent quality services across the full range of functions provided by the Service.

Role responsibilities and main duties

Corporate

- Contributing to the achievement of the Council's corporate priorities and objectives by aligning the legal services provided by your team to identified priorities and planning and delivering co-ordinated and focussed legal services.
- Assisting the Legal Services Manager and Head of Service in developing and providing strong and effective legal and corporate governance of the Council through working closely with other Service managers to help create and embed any necessary changes in culture, practice or procedure to meet the needs of the Council and its Companies.
- In consultation with the Legal Services Manager and the Head of Service providing appropriate challenge with instructing Services across the Council to ensure that the

Authority, its companies, officers and councillors are legally compliant and good governance prevails.

- Working with colleagues across the Council to deliver effectively and efficiently joined up programmes, projects, policies and initiatives.
- Establishing and maintaining effective working relationships with elected councillors, internal and external partners and stakeholders.
- Promoting a positive image of the Council.
- Assisting the Legal Services Manager in the strategic management of the Legal Service.
- Providing legal advice to the Council, the Cabinet, committees, sub committees, panels and working groups; including the obtaining of external legal advice and opinion, where appropriate.
- Acting as the principal legal adviser for the range of legal disciplines assigned to your team, advising Officers and Members at the highest level, offering effective legal solutions which protect the Council's position and facilitate the achievement of corporate and service priorities.
- Representing the Council before the courts, tribunals and public enquiries as required.
- Representing the Head of Service by attending, providing legal advice and assistance to and preparing reports for Council, Cabinet, Committees, working parties, public meetings and officer working groups and other meetings.

Service

- Leading and managing the [insert team] and planning, resourcing and delivering the legal services provided by the Team.
- Contributing to strong and robust leadership and management of the Legal Service.
- Keeping the Legal Services Manager informed of matters which are politically sensitive, high profile, critical or otherwise higher risk.
- Attending and actively participating in management team meetings and events as required.
- Leading by example in modelling the conduct, behaviour and values expected of the Council's employees and establishing a working environment within your team in which individuals and the Team can excel.
- Leading and managing the appointment, induction, development and appraisal of members of the Legal Service.
- Assisting the Legal Services Manager to prepare, deliver and maintain the Service Plan, Portfolio Holder report and other key business planning documents ensuring that they align with the Council's corporate strategies, objectives, priorities, policies and procedures.
- Delivering excellence across your team through the development of high performance, effective delegation, communication, corporate working and prioritising customer service and satisfaction.
- Leading the implementation, development and maintenance of the Lexcel Practice Management Standard (including the Quality Manual) in your team and contributing to other quality assurance programmes, including Investors in People and Customer Service Excellence across the Service.

- Overall responsibility for the effective use, by your team, of the Legal Services case management system (including the full suite of modules) the deeds management system and other corporate and local systems and applications.
- Developing new and innovative approaches to service delivery within your team, ensuring continuous improvement in performance, value for money and quality of service for customers.
- Ensuring performance management is embedded into the day-to-day work of your team and effective appraisals, 121's and team meetings are undertaken and recorded as required corporately and locally.
- Identifying training and development needs for your team and encouraging participation in appropriate training and development activities. Training and developing (including coaching and mentoring) your team. Delivering training to the wider Legal Team and to client Services as required.
- Assisting the Legal Services Manager to plan, monitor and manage the legal team's budgets to achieve financial and performance targets.
- Assisting the Legal Services Manager in encouraging collaborative working arrangements and partnerships with and between councils, internal and external service providers and agencies to deliver high quality, cost-effective and customer-focused services.
- Assisting the Legal Services Manager in negotiating service level and other similar agreements with Council Services, the Council's Companies and external clients.
- Maintaining an awareness and understanding of new legislation and/or best practice in your team's specialist areas, interpreting and advising on the implications and developing appropriate policies, procedures and practices to ensure that the Council complies with its statutory obligations.
- Understanding legal professional regulatory requirements and best practice, interpreting and advising on the implications for your team and applying appropriate policies, procedures and practice to ensure that your team members comply with regulatory requirements.
- Supporting HR processes, such as investigations or hearings, where requested or required, for the Law and Governance or other Services.
- Deputising for the Legal Services Manager, the Head of Service (including in the role of Monitoring Officer) in the event that they are unavailable through leave, sickness or conflicting commitments.
- Ensuring the Council's policies and procedures and values and behaviours are embedded in your team.
- Ensuring that consideration is given and appropriate action taken in regard to the welfare and wellbeing of members of your team.
- Avoiding any conflicts in connection with the policies and activities of the Council and its Companies.

The duties and responsibilities set out in this role profile are indicative of the role. They are however, subject to change and you will be required from time to time to undertake other duties commensurate with your grade.

Our commitment to Safeguarding

Oxford City Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk and requires all staff and volunteers to demonstrate this commitment in every aspect of their work.

Who we are looking for

Candidates will be shortlisted on the basis of demonstrating that they fulfil the following criteria in their application form and should include clear examples of how they meet these criteria.

Each of the criteria below will be measured through, the application form (A), interview (I), test/exercise (T) or documentation (D).

| Essential Criteria | A | I | T | D |
|---|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Qualified Solicitor or Barrister or Fellow – Chartered Institute of Legal Executives | ✓ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | ✓ |
| Significant post qualification experience of dealing with legal and governance issue within a local government or equivalent environment | ✓ | ✓ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Specialist in one or more of the following areas of legal expertise [select according to team]: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Commercial, Regeneration and Property ▪ Company ▪ Procurement and Contract ▪ Litigation, Licensing and Regulatory ▪ Governance ▪ Housing and homelessness ▪ Employment ▪ Planning and Highways | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Demonstrates a successful track record of competently performing complex and high profile legal work including drafting complex documents | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The ability to handle competing priorities and a challenging workload | ✓ | ✓ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Proven ability to lead, manage and develop other lawyers across a range of legal disciplines/specialisms ensuring performance targets are met | ✓ | ✓ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Successful track record of gaining and holding the confidence of clients, in particular senior officers and members | ✓ | ✓ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Well - developed communication and networking skills | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Considerable experience of working in partnership and as part of multi-disciplinary project teams with colleagues, external organisations and councillors and to foster good working relationships at all levels | ✓ | ✓ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Considerable experience of providing legal advice at local authority member and officer meetings or equivalent. Ability and willingness to attend Committee meetings and other evening meetings (including outside the area) | ✓ | ✓ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Experience of leading and delivering new ways of working and service development initiatives | ✓ | ✓ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Evidence of extensive continual professional development and implementation of learning | ✓ | ✓ | <input type="checkbox"/> | ✓ |

| Desirable Criteria | A | I | T | D |
|--|----------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Law Society Diploma in Local Government Law and Practice | ✓ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | ✓ |
| Management Qualification | ✓ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | ✓ |
| Experience of acting as Deputy Monitoring Officer | ✓ | ✓ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Experience of using IKEN or other legal case management systems | ✓ | ✓ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Experience of working to Lexcel or a comparable quality standard | ✓ | ✓ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| An up to date knowledge of other areas of local authority legal work | ✓ | ✓ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Notes to candidates

In addition to the above criteria, Oxford City Council has developed and embedded a suite of values and behaviours. Full details of these can be found on our web page, under Working for Us. Please familiarise yourself with these values and behaviours. If you are invited for interview you will be asked questions based on them.