**Job Profile: Housing Lawyer**

This supplementary information is for the Housing Lawyer role and is for guidance and must be used in conjunction with the Job Capsule for the Legal Job Family at Level 4, Zone 2. It is for use during recruitment, setting objectives as part of the performance management process and other people management purposes. It does not form part of an employee’s contract of employment.

**Role Purpose:**

To provide a high quality and comprehensive legal service on all aspects of law relating to the area of housing including: tenancy possession, housing disrepair, access and nuisance injunctions, injunction beach proceedings, housing fraud, and homelessness cases in the Civil Courts, and providing advice to housing clients. In particular making use of the Prevention of Social Housing Fraud Act 2013, Housing Act 1985 and related legislation such as the Data Protection Act and Freedom of Information Act, both for the Council and on occasion also for RSL’s. And, to appear in open court or in chambers on litigious matters as appropriate.

**Example outcomes or objectives that this role will deliver:**

* The post-holder will be responsible for the provision of legal advice, undertake casework and deliver a client focussed service within a specialist team including: preparing and processing all matters relevant to the work of the team such as conducting a large volume of housing management cases, drafting all necessary documents including pleadings, the evaluation of evidence, instructing counsel, interviewing witnesses, preparing proofs of evidence, instructing counsel, interviewing witnesses, preparing proofs of evidence and witness statements.
* To undertake advocacy as appropriate where the post holder has a right of audience on all matters relating to the work of the council and its service directorate.
* To prepare (and check client department) reports for and attend committees, working parties and other meetings where legal advice is required; to undertake legal research where necessary and in particular in respect of new legislation.
* Focus on the delivery of outcomes and the priorities of the Council as set out in the Camden Plan.
* To assist in the implementation of any new case management and information technology systems.
* To work effectively and in partnership with colleagues and team members in the delivery of the service and in respect of complex work or projects. Keep abreast of all relevant legislation, court practice and procedures and report and advise the Council of the impact of these on client groups and the management of cases. Make recommendations on any changes in policy or practice. Promote and provide advice, information and training as requested by the Senior Lawyer as appropriate to the needs of internal clients. Produce information and literature appropriate to the needs of officers and client groups.
* All Camden employees are expected to be flexible in undertaking the duties and responsibilities attached to their post and may be asked to perform other duties which reasonably correspond to the general character of their post and their level of responsibility.

**Relationships:**

The post-holder will be required to liaise primarily with officers in the District Housing offices, Repairs team, Rent teams, and the Housing Investigations Team in the Housing Support Group, but also with various teams and services across the organisation where necessary, to provide high level, technical advice. Key client contacts are likely to include:

* Head of Housing Support Group
* Housing Investigations Manager and Housing Investigations Officers
* Housing Officers and Housing Ward Managers
* Officers in other local authorities, Social Housing Landlords (RSL’s) and the Civil and Courts.

These relationships will involve advice on case progression, investigations and evidence gathering, including advice on any complex and contentious legal matters that arise during course of any case or investigation.

Within the legal department and the broader environment of the council the post-holder will be required to maintain key relationships and contact with some or all of the following:

* Head of Legal Services, Principal and Senior Lawyers
* Chief and Senior Officers within the council and other public authorities in Camden
* Elected members
* Chief and Senior Officers of other Local Authorities
* Professional and technical bodies
* Counsel and private solicitors
* Court officials.

**Work Environment:**

This post will report to the Senior Housing Lawyer.

* The post-holder will be required to be innovative and adopt a proactive approach ensuring high standards of service against performance targets.
* The post-holder will be required to work in an ‘agile’ way in line with Camden’s move to a paperless and flexible work environment.
* The post-holder should be prepared to work out of normal office hours as required.
* Travel between premises may be required to attend meetings.
* As the specialist team deals with contentious issues, there may on occasions be contact with distressed, agitated or aggressive individuals in the course of taking statements or in the court environment.

**Technical Knowledge and Experience:**

* To be a qualified solicitor or Barrister, or Fellowship member of the Institute of Legal Executives.
* Detailed knowledge of UK laws related to all aspects of secure tenancies (including rent arrears, disrepair, fraud and illegal subletting), homelessness and anti-social behaviour including: Housing Act 1985, Housing Act 1996, Prevention of Social Housing Fraud Act 2013, Anti-Social Behaviour Crime & Policing Act 2014, and Housing and Planning Act 2016; and, the Civil Procedure Rules.
* Experience of conducting housing litigation and advising on housing law specifically in relation to local authorities.
* Advocacy skills are an essential requirement for this role, in the County Courts to represent the Council on all housing matters.
* Excellent interpersonal and communication skills (written and oral) including literacy, tact and diplomacy and ability to advise competently on relevant legal matters.
* Experience of advising clients, meeting deadlines and time recording.
* Excellent organisational skills able to manage a complex and varied workload with a flexible and innovative approach to work.
* Ability to work on own initiative and with minimal supervision and able to make accurate, considered judgements and decisions.

**Camden Way Five Ways of Working**

*In order to continue delivering for the people of Camden in the face of ever increasing financial pressure, we need to transform the way we do things. We call this the Camden Way. The Camden Way is a key part of our transformation strategy often referred to as the transformation triangle which links the Camden Plan, the Camden Way and the Financial Strategy together.*

The Camden Way illustrates the approach that should underpin everything we do through five ways of working:

•Deliver for the people of Camden

•Work as one team

•Take pride in getting it right

•Find better ways

•Take personal responsibility

For further information on the Camden Way please visit:

<https://camdengov.referrals.selectminds.com/togetherwearecamden/info/page1>