

# Post Specification

## Post Specification - Key Information

- **Post Title: Deputy Chief and Legal Monitoring Officer**
- **Date: February 2025**
- **Post Group Number: 8181**
- **Job Family: Organisational Support**
- **Job Family Role Profile: OS19**
- **Final Grade: Grade 19**

To be read in conjunction with the job family role profile.

## Service Area Description

As a key enabler service, this post is high profile within the Council and will work with all internal Council services and many external partners and contractors to ensure delivery of high quality, value for money outcomes.

The Deputy Chief Legal (Governance) and Deputy Monitoring Officer is part of the Corporate Management Team, reporting to the Chief Legal and Monitoring Officer. The role holder will deputise for the Chief Legal and Monitoring Officer and attend the Statutory Officer Group and Extended Leadership Team, ensuring the council is fit for the future and enable the organisation to deliver excellent and inclusive services that empower the residents and communities of Westmorland and Furness to thrive and flourish.

As a senior leader, the post holder will need to thrive in an environment of constant change and some ambiguity. They will be a need to be both resilient, reliable, and efficient to keep delivering safe and effective services and agile, nimble, and adaptive to transform and continually learn and develop.

Leading the Governance, Democratic and Elections Service functions of the Council, the post holder will work with and advise the Council, Committees and Members of the Council on all matters within the post holder's area of responsibility, providing leadership, direction and insight to shape, develop and prioritise work programmes to help ensure the Council is legally compliant, high performing, efficient and fair.

The role will provide legal and democratic leadership and expertise to ensure Council-wide governance arrangements are in place and to help translate the Council Plan and Operating Model into specific service plans and programmes of work prioritised to make best use the resources available.

## Purpose of this Post

- To be the Deputy Chief Legal and Deputy Monitoring Officer to the Chief Legal and Monitoring Officer in respect of all legal and governance matters on behalf of Westmorland and Furness Council.
- To regularly provide cover for the Chief Legal and Monitoring Officer as required including carrying out the full role of the Deputy Monitoring Officer.

- To promote ethical governance and high standards of conduct across the Council and with responsibility for all conduct and ethical matters on behalf of the Chief Legal and Monitoring Officer
- To personally provide legal and governance advice to the Council's executive, members bodies, political groups and members on all matters
- To personally provide legal and governance advice to the Council's Chief Executive, Corporate Management Team and Senior Leadership Team.
- To ensure the delivery of council priorities, statutory duties and value for money in all services within the directorate, including leading and managing services reporting to the Chief Legal and Monitoring Officer.
- To be responsible for the Democratic, Governance, Elections and Information Governance Teams and ensure the teams are aligned to the operating model.
- Ensure a holistic approach to legal and democratic service solution development reviewing processes end to end across relevant programmes of work, working closely with other enabling functions to ensure staff engagement, buy in and skills development.
- Lead the Democratic Service and Member Development work programme to support Elected Members. Provide strategic and operational information and guidance required to support Members in their roles.
- Acts as an Information Asset Owner for the service to ensure that appropriate information assurance mechanisms and inventories are in place to support appropriate information governance requirements.
- To lead all the Information Governance work streams ensuring that the Council upholds high standards of practice including the Councils compliance with retention and destruction policies.

### **Key Job Specific Accountabilities**

- To be accountable for the provision of Corporate Governance legal advice across all Council areas of law
- The embedding and development of high standards of Good Governance across Westmorland and Furness Council.
- To advise at Council meetings, Executive, Boards and any other meetings as requested by the Chief Legal and Monitoring Officer
- To lead on maintaining an up to date Constitution, to support all Directorates in Governance matters including adherence to the Constitution.
- To work collaboratively with all statutory officers and specifically with the Chief Executive as Head of Paid Service, Section 151 officer and all of the Senior Leadership Team in all matters relating to corporate governance.
- Lead and manage the following services and any other services allocated to this role, ensuring they deliver council priorities, statutory duties and value for money:
  - Democratic services
  - Information Governance and Data Protection
  - Executive and members support services
  - Member Development
  - Ombudsman matters
  - Political Assistants
  - Elections
- To work with the Chief Legal and Monitoring Officer collaboratively in the delivery of efficient high quality and cost-effective legal services to the Council, its members and officers. Delivering a centre of excellence.
- To personally advise the Councils executive, members and officers in respect of all matters falling within the remit of the directorate.
- Monitors progress towards KPIs; acts as an enabler to achievement, not a blocker.
- Knows what to do and when to do it, delivering at pace.
- Responsibility for the budget for the teams the post holder oversees.

### **Improvement Oriented**

- Leads and drives initiatives to identify and deliver efficiencies across the council and through partnership working.
- Challenges self and other to think outside of the box; enables the council to continuously improve and innovate in the long term

### **Customer First**

- Focused on the customer — recognises the focus of making lives better for the people of Westmorland and Furness as citizens and partners.
- Engages with customers to ensure development and delivery of services in line with customer needs.
- Is committed to customer excellence and accountable for the effective resolution of complaints and uses customer feedback for organisational learning and continuous improvement.

### **Valuing Difference**

- Ensures equality of access to services across the organisation and community.
- Respects and values difference, understanding that not one size fits all.
- Listens to staff and involves them in decisions.
- To work with the Chief Legal and Monitoring Officer (and the Council's Returning Officer) including appointment as Deputy Returning Officer where appropriate to administer elections in Westmorland and Furness and to have oversight of the Council's responsibilities in respect of electoral registration.
- To work collaboratively with all partners and stakeholders to deliver Council priorities and the responsibilities of the Directorate and the role of Monitoring Officer

### **Broad Responsibilities**

- Provide financial, technical and professional advice to the Leader, Elected Members particularly the Cabinet and the relevant Cabinet Members and Officers.
- Work in a corporate and co-operative way with all senior management, members and staff aligned with the organisational values and behavior's ensuring open, honest and transparent communication.
- Horizon scanning and identifying "world class" evidence-based research supporting transformation and improvement.
- Develop the Council's commitment to equal opportunities and promote non-discriminatory practices in all aspects of work undertaken.
- Monitors financial performance, delivers within budget and seek savings and efficiencies exploring opportunities to draw funding where appropriate.
- Ensure that work complies with all statutory and governance requirements, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations of the Council and ensure that all work functions are undertaken in accordance with health and safety legislation, codes of practice, and the Council Safety Plan.
- Observe and fulfill the seven principles of public life (also known as the Nolan Principles) and our organisational values.
- Commitment to customer excellence by dealing with customer feedback, including complaints, and learning from feedback in the drive for continuous improvement.

### **Leadership Capabilities and Strategic Awareness**

- Strategically innovative in your approach to co-design and delivery, building a shared sense of purpose and joint enterprise across Westmorland and Furness
- Takes a 'One Council' approach to deliver more effective outcomes and avoids silo's, single division or a service area approach
- Develops a positive and compelling vision of the council's future potential and sets organisational priorities by identifying where time and investment is most needed.
- Translates strategic priorities for staff, enabling teams to focus on delivery.
- Understands roles and responsibilities across the Council, how the authority works, functions and governance.
- Understands the complexities of political dynamics and uses this to build credibility and manage relationships with elected members by successfully advising and supporting them.

### **Inspirational Leadership**

- Provides authentic, honest and respectful leadership to inspire individuals and teams.

- Uses empathy, mentoring and coaching to motivate and engage, developing talent and making people feel respected, brings out the best in them.
- Uses emotional intelligence to consider the impact of their own actions.
- Challenges poor performance constructively and holds difficult conversations to bring about change in behaviour; takes action to make courageous decisions when required
- Communicates with credibility and conviction to convey key messages and influence people

### **Collaboration**

- Consults and communicates with stakeholders, including elected members where appropriate, early in critical organisation and system wide decisions. Encourages an environment of openness and transparency.
- Listens; builds relationships openly, gathering ideas and adapts objectives based on the context behind staff and stakeholder needs and requests.

### **Outcome and Delivery Focused**

- Takes accountability for outcomes and responsibility for delivery in own area
- Sets clear organisational objectives linked to priorities, cascading challenging yet achievable deliverables to directorates

*Please note: Annual targets will be discussed during the appraisal process.*

### **Key Facts and Figures of the Post**

- **Budget Responsibilities:** Circa £6 million
- **Staff Management Responsibilities:** Responsible for the line management of:
  - Governance Support Officer
  - Senior Information Governance and Data Protection Officer
  - Interim Lead Officer Democratic Services
  - Interim Lead Officer for Elections,
  - Interim Lead Project Manager Elections
  - Interim Lead Elections Manager Barrow
  - Interim Lead Member Development and Member Support
  - LSO
  - Political Assistant (Labour Group)
  - Political Assistant (Liberal Group)
  - Case Manager Democratic Services
  - Other: The Revenues and Benefit Service has anchor buildings and teams are located in Barrow, Kendal and Penrith. The Benefits Team Leader will be based at Kendal, although there will be a requirement for travel to other sites
- **Other:** N/A

### **Essential Criteria**

- Relevant degree or equivalent qualification.
- Qualified Solicitor or Barrister.
- Evidence of continuous professional development in local government law and governance and strategic and operational management.
- Senior membership of a relevant professional body.
- Required to have a valid practising certificate for England and Wales
- Strong organisational and political acumen with significant experience of successfully working with Elected or Board Members on complex issues with an ability to work productively and closely with Members to provide clear advice on policy options and build consensus and resolve differences of opinion
- Substantial senior management experience of leading a legal, democratic and/or governance services.
- An understanding of the challenges of working in a demanding large local authority.
- Significant experience of delivering high quality and cost effective legal and governance services.
- A track record of improving services and delivering value for money

- Significant experience of advising at a senior level on complex legal and governance matters.
- Experience of successfully working in a political environment or advising politicians
- Experience of leading and motivating significant numbers of staff in a demanding environment.
- Demonstrable record of successfully managing large, complex budgets involving a range of funding streams.
- Experience of successfully working with strong accountability systems, either through elected boards, strategic boards, shareholders or political governance systems.

### **Traits, motives and competencies**

- An ability to advise the Council and its members on complex legal and governance issues and identify and deliver options and solutions.
- To be able to make complex and sensitive decisions as the Council's Deputy Monitoring Officer.
- Ability to think, plan and act strategically.
- Ability to maintain numerous work streams and delegate effectively and to undertake directorate operational responsibilities.
- Ability to maximise the use of technology in personal work and in service provision.
- The highest personal integrity and loyalty, supportive to colleagues, with a drive to deliver corporately on the Westmorland and Furness vision and values
- An understanding of and a personal commitment to the vision, aims, values and priorities of Westmorland and Furness Council
- Monitors progress towards KPIs; acts as an enabler to achievement, not a blocker.
- Knows what to do and when to do it, delivering at pace.

### **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks**

- This post does not require a DBS check.

### **Job Working Circumstances**

- **Emotional Demands:** Working with minimal emotional demands
- **Physical Demands:** Minimal
- **Working Conditions:** Minimal
- **Other Factors:** Agile with instances of being office and Directorate based locations in Westmorland & Furness