



**MANCHESTER
CITY COUNCIL**

**Manchester City Council
Role Profile**

**Career Graded In House Advocate (Grade 10 to Grade 12)
Children and Families (Legal) Group
Legal Services, Chief Executives Directorate**

Reports to: Head of In House Advocacy Services, Children & Families (Legal) Group

Job Family: Legal Services

Role Portfolio

Legal Services are the largest shared legal service in the country, providing high-quality, value-for-money legal services to all departments of Manchester and Salford City Councils. We also act for several external clients.

The Service provides legal support to council objectives, and valuable input into strategic planning and policy development. The ambitions and aspirations of the councils making up the Shared Legal Service mean that the Service is always busy dealing with high quality, interesting and challenging legal work.

We work closely with clients, strategic partners, stakeholders and councillors/members to deliver a wide range of projects and schemes and the Service provides legal support to council objectives, and valuable input into strategic planning and policy development.

We pride ourselves on growing our own and developing our staff to enable them to grow and help deliver on the wide, varied and interesting work that we encounter daily.

The service structure broadly reflects that of the Council as a whole. There are four Legal Service areas:

- People, Place and Regulation Legal Services;
- Regeneration Legal Services;
- Governance Legal Services;
- Children and Families Legal Services

The Directorate Heads of each Group report to the Deputy City Solicitor.

This role sits within the Children and Families Legal Service. At the heart of everything we do is:-

- (i) Safety and needs of children; and
- (ii) Legal representation of Children's Services

This role will report to the Head of Advocacy Services, Children and Families Legal Service.

The level / complexity of the work undertaken by the role holder will be dependent on the grade to which the role holder is appointed at the relevant time and the following should be construed accordingly.

Key Role Descriptors:

Grade 10

The role holder will provide effective and quality legal advice and representation for Manchester and Salford City Councils, Rochdale Borough Council and external clients in complex sensitive legal matters within a specialist area.

The role holder will provide representation within a variety of proceedings and venues, including contested hearings to achieve the best outcome for the client in a timely and flexible manner

The role holder will work under the supervision of the Head of Advocacy Services and will be able to act upon their own initiative where necessary.

Grade 11

The role holder will professionally and effectively provide comprehensive, proactive and high quality legal advice and representation for Manchester and Salford City Councils, Rochdale Borough Council and external clients in more complex, high value and sensitive legal matters which require specialist technical and legislative expertise.

The role holder will provide representation within a variety of proceedings and venues, including lengthy contested hearings to achieve the best outcome for the client in a timely and flexible manner

The role holder will be a key member of the Group, be confident and able to work with minimal supervision and act upon their own initiative.

Grade 12

The role holder will professionally and effectively provide comprehensive, proactive and high quality legal advice and representation for Manchester and Salford City Councils, Rochdale Borough Council and external clients in more complex, high value, high profile and sensitive legal matters which require specialist technical and legislative expertise.

The role holder will provide representation within a variety of proceedings and venues, including lengthy contested hearings to achieve the best outcome for the client in a timely and flexible manner.

The role holder will contribute to the delivery of the business plan, and support managers in leading the development of excellent practices and procedures across the service, to develop in line with the strategic direction of the Council.

The role holder will be a key member of the Group, be confident and able to work independently and act upon their own initiative.

General for all Grades

The role holder will lead on negotiations in areas of dispute, in order to resolve areas of conflict, whether orally or in writing, whilst having the best interests of the clients at the forefront of their mind, to ensure a quality service is delivered to the client.

The role holder will work collaboratively with professionals and clients in order to establish and maintain excellent working relationships and one which is supportive to the client and meets their aims and objectives.

The role holder will research and be the source of intelligence within the specialist area, ensure continuous improvement and actively contribute to the professional development of the service. The role holder will have a proactive and positive manner.

The role holder will be able, and committed, to working in a flexible manner, including working unsociable hours and weekends, when necessary or required.

Key Role Accountabilities:

Grade 10

Research and analyse information gathered within proceedings, to enable quality legal advice to be provided to the client department in an accurate and timely manner, whilst ensuring that strict deadlines are met.

To effectively influence a range of professionals, the judiciary and stakeholders in order to achieve beneficial outcomes for the Manchester, Salford and Rochdale Shared Legal Service and their clients.

Formulate and present quality legal argument to the Court on behalf of the client, both orally and in writing and within less complex hearings under the supervision of the Head of Advocacy Services and with support from the In House Advocates. Arguments will be devised following consideration of voluminous documents and extrapolation of key facts and issues. Documents will be drafted accurately and will address the salient issues. Oral and written arguments will be presented to a high standard.

Provide quality communication, advice and representation within proceedings through a personal commitment to continuous professional development in an area of complex technical specialism.

Work towards competence within the advocacy specialism, including a good understanding of the legislative framework, Government Guidance and the Council's, and clients, policies to ensure a high standard of service is provided.

Effectively and efficiently discharge the City Council's powers in a cost effective manner in a fast paced and ever changing environment; a reasoned and consistent application of specialist knowledge in a variety of unique, complex and sensitive matters is required.

To assist the Head of Advocacy Service and In House Advocates in knowledge sharing across the Group to ensure that members of the Group are up to date on new legislation, practice and procedures.

Grade 11

Research and analyse information gathered within proceedings, to enable high quality legal advice to be provided to the client department in an accurate and timely manner, whilst ensuring that strict deadlines are met.

To effectively influence a range of professionals, the judiciary and stakeholders in order to achieve beneficial outcomes for the Manchester, Salford and Rochdale Shared Legal Service and their clients.

Formulate and present quality legal argument to the Court on behalf of the client, both orally and in writing, within hearings of varying lengths with minimal supervision. Arguments will be devised following consideration of voluminous documents and extrapolation of key facts and issues. Documents will be drafted accurately and will address the salient issues. Oral and written arguments will be presented to a high standard.

Provide high quality communication, advice and representation within proceedings through a personal commitment to continuous professional development in an area of complex technical specialism.

Achieve competence within the advocacy specialism, which includes a comprehensive understanding of the legislative framework, Government Guidance and the Council's policies, to ensure a high standard of service is provided.

Effectively and efficiently discharge the City Council's powers in a cost effective manner in a fast paced and ever changing environment; a reasoned and consistent application of extensive specialist knowledge in a variety of unique, complex and sensitive matters is required.

To assist the Head of Advocacy Service and In House Advocates in knowledge sharing across the Group to ensure that members of the Group are up to date on new legislation, practice and procedures.

Grade 12

Use initiative and creativity to find effective and/or novel solutions to complex problems. Research law and procedure to a high professional standard to provide accurate, focussed and relevant legal and practical advice to clients, elected members and staff.

Research and analyse information gathered within proceedings to evaluate evidence, applying judgmental skills to assess and identify the consequences of the different options, strengths and weaknesses, to enable high quality legal advice to be provided to the client in an accurate and timely manner, whilst ensuring that strict deadlines are met.

To effectively influence a range of professionals, the judiciary and stakeholders in order to achieve beneficial outcomes for the Manchester, Salford and Rochdale Shared Legal Service and their clients.

Formulate and present quality legal argument to the Court on behalf of the client, both orally and in writing and within hearings of varying lengths. Arguments will be devised following consideration of voluminous documents and extrapolation of key facts and issues. Documents will be drafted

accurately and will address the salient issues. Oral and written arguments will be presented to a high standard.

Provide high quality communication, advice and representation within proceedings through a personal commitment to continuous professional development in an area of complex technical specialism.

Achieve competence within the advocacy specialism, which includes a comprehensive understanding of the legislative framework, Government Guidance and the Council's, and clients, policies to ensure a high standard of service is provided.

Effectively and efficiently discharge the City Council's powers in a cost effective manner in a fast paced and ever changing environment; a reasoned and consistent application of extensive specialist knowledge in a variety of unique, complex and sensitive matters is required.

Involvement in case preparation and strategic planning to achieve the best outcome for the subject child.

To support the managers in Children and Families Legal Services in:

(1) actively monitoring service level agreements and other performance as necessary by the provision of data and performance reports including keeping accurate and reliable time recording records, and:

(2) the development, implementation and maintenance of effective systems to support the delivery of key objectives.

Draft, develop and deliver appropriate training for Group members, clients and relevant stakeholders on the law, practice and legal procedures relevant or relating to the areas of legal practice undertaken by the Children and Families Group.

To advise the client and colleagues on policy, practice and procedure issues in respect of relevant law, Government policy and Family Court practice direction changes.

Working with existing managers, business plans and strategies which clearly reflect the objectives and goals of services both at operational and strategic levels, including analysis of how services contribute to the delivery of the Group's objectives enabling the co-ordination of all resources in a well-planned and controlled manner, ensuring that service requirements and resource levels are fully identified.

To drive knowledge sharing and transfer across the Group to ensure that members of the Group are up to date on new legislation, practice and procedures and to work collaboratively with colleagues and provide professional development support and coaching in order to ensure the team functions effectively in meeting the needs of the client. The role holder will be available to efficiently deal with the queries of the client and colleagues.

General for all Grades

Consider, provide advice on and implement the instructions of the client within the Court arena and at meetings in a client focused and protective manner, using initiative and application of the law and

procedure in forming judgements on issues that have a major impact on the Council, parents and children throughout their lifetime.

To have knowledge of the Council's Constitution, scheme of delegation and corporate aims and objectives and be able to advise upon, and act in accordance with, them.

To have the ability to manage conflicting priorities.

Conduct hearings in a professional and efficient manner. Conduct effective communications with clients, professionals and the judiciary as an effective representative of the Council and its partners.

Work collaboratively with colleagues in order to ensure the team functions effectively in meeting the needs of client. The role holder will be available to efficiently deal with the queries of the client and colleagues.

Personal commitment to continuous self-development and service improvement and take full advantage of training provided.

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 necessary aids, adaptations or equipment to allow them to carry out all the duties of the role. If, however, a certain task proves to be unachievable, job redesign will be given full consideration.

Notes on progression to Grade 11 and 12

Progression from Grade 10 through to Grade12 will depend on the following factors:

1. whether there is a business need / requirement to operate at a higher level, and
2. individual competency / performance against an agreed personal development plan and role profile ("The Criteria")

Progression is not automatic.

- Post holders may be considered for progression where there is evidence that the Criteria has been met. This may be assessed and reviewed as part of the Our Conversation process and/or as may be required for the needs of the business.
- Managers should ensure that all employees affected fully understand how career grades work, how they will be assessed and what criteria and levels of performance are required.
- Managers must assess the performance of all career grade post holders on a regular basis during Our Conversation/one to one meetings or such other supervision/performance meetings. Criteria for assessments must be fair, objective and consistent with the career grades.

Career Graded In House Advocate, Grade 10/11/12, Children & Families (Legal) Group 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 (Grade 10 - 12)

- **Interpersonal and Communication Skills:** Speaks fluently and writes articulately, expresses opinions, information and key points of an argument clearly, undertakes public speaking with skill and confidence; responds quickly to the needs of an audience and to their reactions and feedback; projects credibility.
(Grades 11–12) Negotiates more complex agreements with high risk, Council wide impact. Utilises enhanced advocacy skills. A skilled communicator who exhibits integrity and creates rapport, trust and confidence.
- **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.
(Grades 11–12) Ability to manage a complex range of functions and manage multiple priorities with confidence. Demonstrates the ability to identify and respond to risks to the achievement of operational objectives and strategic priorities.
- **Problem Solving and Decision Making:** Ability to react to immediate problems of a complex nature with associated risk factors and deliver pragmatic solutions sometimes under extreme pressure.
(Grade 11-12) Ability to react to immediate problems of a highly complex nature with associated risk factors and deliver pragmatic solutions sometimes under extreme pressure.
- **Analytical Skills:** Application of strong analytical reasoning skills and intellectual focus, taking in the wider external and internal environments. Proactively thinks through problems rather than reactively following a procedure-driven approach. Makes rational judgements from the available information and analysis demonstrating and understanding of how one issue may be part of a much larger system/issue.
- **Creative Skills:** Ability to think creatively to proactively identify potential future scenarios and to develop a range of creative solutions that meet the needs of the client. Whilst considering policy and procedure is 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
(Grades 11 – 12) Demonstrates a high level of political awareness. Thinks and acts cross-functionally and cross-organisationally, beyond one's own professional areas of specialism, perceiving the wider picture and the implications of short-term decisions for the achievement of long-term strategic goals. The ability to conceptualise new, collaborative ways of achieving shared goals
- **Policy Skills:** Builds collaborative and trusting relationships with decision makers.
- **Financial Management:** Numeracy and accuracy skills to collate information and keep accurate and reliable records to assist with the monitoring and reviewing of financial resources and monitoring procedures

Technical requirements (Role Specific)

- Qualified Solicitor, Barrister or FILEX / FCILEx (with FILEX / FCILEx Advocacy Certificate)
- Relevant recent advocacy experience.
- To demonstrate a willingness and ability to quickly learn and develop
- To demonstrate a willingness and ability to identify, understand and deal with new and emerging areas of law relevant to the work of the Children and Families (Legal) Group
- Willingness to pursue higher rights of audience.
- Must hold a valid, Standard DBS check or be willing to complete an application for clearance prior to commencing the post.