Job outline

Post:	**SOLICITOR - PLANNING**
Base:	**HIGHLAND COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS**
Working arrangements:	**FLEXIBLE AND HYBRID WORKING OPPORTUNITIES**
Hours:	**35 HOURS PER WEEK**
Duration:	**PERMANENT**
Cluster:	**CORPORATE**
Grade:	**HC10 (£51,506- £56,239)**
Contact Name:	**CLAIRE MCARTHUR**
Contact email:	**claire.mcarthur@highland.gov.uk**

Job purpose

Support the delivery of some of the most significant development, infrastructure and environmental projects across the Highlands.

The postholder will:

- Support the provision of the Council's planning legal service by delivering high quality, practical and solution focused legal advice on planning and related regulatory matters

- Assist with the management of complex and high profile planning work, support governance arrangements, and act as deputy to the Principal Solicitor - Planning, ensuring continuity of service and effective legal support to elected members, officers and committees.

Job description – key duties and responsibilities

- Provide high quality legal advice and representation on a broad range of planning and related regulatory matters, supporting officers, elected members and committees in delivering lawful, robust and effective decision-making.
- Manage a substantial caseload of planning matters, including planning obligations, Section 96 agreements, bond agreements, planning appeals, enforcement matters and other complex planning-related legal work.
- Support the Council's involvement in Public Local Inquiries, Hearings, Court proceedings and Judicial Review cases, including preparing legal documentation, instructing counsel where required and representing the Council where appropriate.
- Assist in providing legal and governance support to the Planning Application Committees and Planning Review Body, helping to ensure that decision-making processes are transparent, legally compliant and aligned with best practice.
- Deputise for the Principal Solicitor - Planning in meetings, committees, project groups and stakeholder engagements, providing professional leadership and ensuring continuity of service in their absence.
- Develop productive working relationships with elected members, officers and external stakeholders by providing clear, practical guidance on planning law, governance arrangements, ethical standards and the Councillors' Code of Conduct.
- Monitor developments in planning legislation, case law, policy and best practice, contributing to the continuous improvement of legal services and ensuring advice remains current and relevant.
- Support the supervision, mentoring and development of colleagues within Legal and Corporate Governance Services, sharing knowledge and promoting professional excellence across the team.
- Assist with the management and prioritisation of workloads within the Regulatory Services Team, helping to ensure resources are used effectively and services are delivered to a high professional standard.
- Contribute to service planning, innovation and continuous improvement initiatives, supporting the achievement of strategic objectives and positive outcomes for communities across the Highlands.

- Work collaboratively across Council services and with external partners to support the delivery of major projects, strategic developments and corporate priorities.
- Contribute to the effective use of financial, staffing, ICT and other resources, ensuring services are delivered efficiently, sustainably and in accordance with corporate policies and procedures.
- Promote a positive, inclusive and high-performing working environment that values wellbeing, equality, diversity, professional development and continuous learning.

Other duties

The postholder may be required to undertake any other duties appropriate to the level of the post.

You will be expected to travel efficiently and effectively between various work locations within The Highland Council area to meet the operational requirements of the Service.

Duties and responsibilities will vary from time to time.

Person specification – essential attributes:

1. Scottish LLB law degree or equivalent Scottish qualification, Diploma in Legal Practice and Current Practising Certificate (unrestricted) from the Law Society of Scotland
2. Experience of planning law and practice
3. Able to provide clear, accurate and effective advice on legislation, policy and good practice guidance
4. Able to draft, review and analyse legal documents, including agreements and committee reports
5. Able to provide advice to officers and members with excellent written and verbal communication skills
6. Able to contribute and work effectively as part of a team
7. Good organisational skills with an ability to undertake effective prioritisation of work
8. Strong analytical and research skills

Whether you are already an experienced planning specialist or looking to take the next step in your local government legal career, this is an excellent opportunity to work on high profile matters that directly shape communities across the Highlands.

Health and Safety

Health & Safety is an integral part of any role within the Highland Council. As such we would expect that all employees:

- Become familiar with Violent Incident and Accident reporting procedures and comply with them.
- Undertake a continual program of Risk Assessment in relation to their role within Highland Council.
- Have an understanding of the importance of Health and Safety in the workplace and familiarise themselves with the Highland Council's Health & Safety Procedures.