

Operational Manager – Legal Services



At the Vale of Glamorgan Council, we are committed to creating a workplace that embodies our core values: Openness, Togetherness, Pride, and Ambition. We are on a journey to enhance our services for the diverse community we serve. We invite visionary leaders with a passion for legal excellence and a commitment to driving positive change to join us as the Operational Manager – Legal Services.

Role Overview:

Are you prepared to take on a leadership role where your expertise can significantly impact our organisation? As the Operational Manager for Legal Services at the Vale of Glamorgan Council, you will have the opportunity to lead a dynamic team that provides essential legal support across the Council. This role is critical as the Council embarks on a large-scale transformation programme, requiring a leader who not only possesses a robust background in legal management but also excels in innovation and inspiring high performance.

In this role, you will be responsible for ensuring that the Council's operations are legally sound, transparent, and aligned with strategic objectives. You will play a pivotal role in supporting the Council's transformation programme, leading on complex legal matters, and fostering a culture of excellence within the Legal Services team.

- **Leadership:** Provide strategic direction to the Legal Services team, fostering a culture of innovation, excellence, and continuous improvement. Lead the development and implementation of legal policies that support the Council's transformation agenda.
- **Legal Advice and Support:** Ensure the Council operates within a robust legal framework. Provide expert legal advice on a wide range of issues, integrating legal considerations into all aspects of the Council's operations and strategies.
- **Operational Excellence:** Oversee the governance framework, ensuring compliance with data protection laws and other regulatory requirements. Manage the budget for the Legal Services team, identifying opportunities for cost savings and efficiencies time at our scenic offices in one of the UK's most desirable regions.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Build and maintain effective relationships with internal and external stakeholders, representing the Council in various forums, and ensuring that legal frameworks support organisational change.

At the Vale of Glamorgan Council, we understand the importance of a flexible and supportive working environment. We offer a range of benefits and working practices designed to help you balance your professional and personal life:



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- **Hybrid Working:** We embrace a hybrid working model, allowing you to work both remotely and from our Civic Offices in Barry. This flexible approach enables you to manage your time effectively while maintaining a strong connection with your team.
- **Local Government Pension Scheme:** As an employee, you will have access to the Local Government Pension Scheme, providing you with a secure and generous pension plan.
- **Annual Leave:** Enjoy a competitive annual leave entitlement, with the option to purchase additional leave to suit your personal needs and preferences.
- **Well-being Support:** We are committed to the well-being of our employees, offering a range of support services including an Employee Assistance Programme, mental health resources, and well-being initiatives.
- **Professional Development:** We believe in investing in our people. You will have access to a variety of learning and development opportunities to support your career progression.
- **Inclusive Culture:** Our culture is built on mutual respect, collaboration, and a shared commitment to excellence. We celebrate diversity and are dedicated to creating an inclusive environment where everyone can thrive.
- **Team Environment:** Join a supportive and dynamic team where your contributions are valued. We foster a collaborative atmosphere that encourages innovation and shared success.

As the Operational Manager for Legal Services, you will have the opportunity to play a key role in this exciting journey of transformation and innovation. You will be part of a team that is passionate about delivering high-quality legal services that enable the Council to achieve its strategic objectives and make a positive impact on the community.

The Vale of Glamorgan is a place where you can make a meaningful contribution, enjoy a rewarding career, and be part of a community that values and celebrates its people. We invite you to join us and be part of our mission to create a brighter, more prosperous future for everyone in the Vale.

Interviews will take place on
28/10/24



About the Vale of Glamorgan Council



Welcome to the Vale of Glamorgan, a place where community spirit, stunning landscapes, and cultural heritage come together to create an exceptional environment for living and working. As one of Wales's most desirable areas, the Vale offers a unique blend of picturesque countryside, bustling town centres, and vibrant communities, making it a remarkable place to build a fulfilling career and enjoy a high quality of life.

Nestled along the stunning coastline of South Wales, the Vale of Glamorgan is renowned for its breathtaking scenery, including miles of pristine beaches, rolling hills, and expansive green spaces. Whether you're drawn to the dramatic cliffs of the Glamorgan Heritage Coast, the tranquil countryside of the Vale, or the vibrant communities of towns like Barry and Penarth, there's something for everyone here.

The Vale of Glamorgan is more than just a beautiful place—it's a community with a strong sense of belonging and pride. The Council is deeply committed to enhancing the lives of all residents by providing high-quality services that meet the diverse needs of our community.

Our success as one of Wales's top-performing local authorities is underpinned by our dedication to innovation, transformation, and excellence in service delivery. We work collaboratively with residents, businesses, and partners to ensure that the Vale remains a place where everyone can enjoy a safe, clean, and prosperous environment.

At the Vale of Glamorgan Council, we are on a mission to evolve and enhance our services to better serve our community. We embrace resourcefulness, collaboration, and innovation as we address the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. Our vision is to create a sustainable future for all, and we are committed to making decisions that positively impact the long-term well-being of our residents. As part of our forward-thinking approach, we are currently undergoing a large-scale transformation programme aimed at improving the efficiency, effectiveness, and quality of our services. This transformation is guided by our core values of being Open, Together, Ambitious, and Proud, and is designed to meet the evolving needs of our community in a rapidly changing world.

Working at the Vale of Glamorgan Council means being part of a team that is dedicated to making a real difference in people's lives. We cultivate a work environment that fosters trust, collaboration, and a sense of belonging. Our commitment to inclusivity and diversity means that everyone's voice is heard and valued, and we work together to create a positive and supportive workplace culture.



Our Values

We seek to embrace the core values of being open, together, ambitious and proud in everything we do.

At the Vale of Glamorgan Council, our values of being Open, Together, Ambitious, and Proud guide everything we do. As the Operational Manager for Legal Services, you will be expected to embody these values, driving forward our Legal Services to support the Council's strategic objectives and transformation agenda.

AMBITIOUS: - *Forward-thinking, embracing new ways of working, and investing in our future.*

You will:

- Lead the Legal Services team in developing and implementing innovative strategies to enhance service delivery.
- Set high standards for legal advice and support, fostering a culture of excellence and continuous improvement.
- Drive the Legal Services team to explore new approaches that align with and support the Council's transformation goals.

To be successful you should be:

- Proactive and innovative, constantly seeking out ways to improve and evolve legal services.
- A visionary leader with a strong drive to achieve excellence and push boundaries
- Open to change and capable of inspiring your team to embrace new challenges and opportunities.

OPEN: - *Open to different ideas and being accountable for the decisions we take.*

You will:

- Promote transparency and accountability within the Legal Services team and across the Council.
- Foster an environment where open dialogue and diverse perspectives are encouraged and valued.
- Ensure that legal advice is clear, accessible, and integrated into the Council's decision-making processes.

Our Values

To be successful you should be:

- A strong communicator who values openness and transparency in all interactions.
- Receptive to new ideas and feedback, with the ability to consider and incorporate different viewpoints.
- Accountable for your decisions and those of your team, ensuring that legal advice supports the Council's objectives

TOGETHER: - *Working together as a team that engages with our customers and partners, respects diversity, and is committed to quality services.*

You will:

- Build and maintain strong collaborative relationships within the Legal Services team and with other Council departments and stakeholders.
- Encourage teamwork and shared decision-making to support the Council's strategic goals.
- Guide your team in a way that promotes inclusivity and a commitment to delivering excellent public services.

To be successful you should be:

- A collaborative leader who values teamwork and understands the importance of working together to achieve shared goals.
- Skilled at building relationships and fostering partnerships both within and outside the organisation.
- Committed to inclusivity and diversity, ensuring that all voices are heard and respected within your team.

PROUD: - *Proud to serve our communities and to be part of the Vale of Glamorgan Council.*

You will:

- Uphold the highest standards of professional ethics and legal integrity in all your work.
- Serve as a role model for ethical behaviour, ensuring that all legal actions align with statutory requirements and the Council's vision.
- Demonstrate pride in your work and the work of your team, contributing positively to the lives of residents and the effectiveness of the Council.

Our Values



To be successful you should be:

- An ethical leader with a strong commitment to public service and legal integrity.
- Proud of your role and the impact it has on the community, setting an example for your team and the broader organisation.
- Dedicated to maintaining high standards and a positive reputation for the Legal Services team.

Our Future Plans

We are a dynamic team of solution-focused lawyers, well-versed in collaborating across both local government and private sector networks. Our strong, established relationships empower us to deliver high-quality legal services to in-house teams, local government partners, and the third sector. This commitment drives us to embrace new challenges and exciting projects, all aligned with supporting our Directorates and advancing the Council's ambitious transformation agenda.

Our broad experience across various directorates, particularly within the Corporate Resources directorate, highlights the value we bring to the organisation. Our work not only reinforces our purpose but also brings a deep sense of fulfilment as we see the tangible impact of our efforts on the communities we serve.

As a forward-thinking team, we are eager to adopt innovative approaches and digital solutions to optimise resources, improve service delivery, and expand our reach. By managing increasing workloads—especially within complex, long-term projects—we ensure that we meet the growing demands for our services. We prioritise sharing best practices and maximising our collaborative networks to provide robust support to Members and Officers, aiding informed decision-making and ensuring effective representation in legal proceedings.

We are proud holders of the Law Society's Lexcel accreditation, recognising our excellence in legal practice management and client care. Our rigorous management framework ensures operational efficiency, exceptional client service, and effective risk management, which in turn helps reduce costs and increase profitability. With annual inspections by the Solicitors Regulation Authority, we maintain the highest standards of legal services.

The Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services plays a pivotal role in shaping the future of our legal services, ensuring we are proactive in safeguarding the Council's legal interests while driving corporate policy development. The Operational Managers of Legal and Democratic Services provide essential support to the Chief Officer and statutory roles.

A key focus of the statutory role includes, amongst other responsibilities:

- Providing guidance and training to elected Members on the Members' Code of Conduct and the Council's Constitution, extending this support to the 26 Town and Community Councils within the Vale of Glamorgan.
- Supporting the Standards Committee in fulfilling its statutory responsibilities.
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Looking ahead, we remain committed to delivering high-quality legal advice, safeguarding the Council's legal position, and fostering collaborative relationships across the authority. As new legislation emerges, we are excited by the opportunities to enhance our services and contribute to the Council's strategic objectives.

Our Future Plans (continued)

Our Teams:

Property, Contract, Planning, and Highways Team:

This team manages the legal complexities of large-scale developments and high-value contracts. They handle conveyancing, landlord-tenant issues, and contract negotiations, playing a vital role in the Council's transformation projects. Their expertise spans local government law, compulsory purchase, housing, and judicial reviews, making them a key player in initiatives like the Cardiff Capital Region. As legislation evolves, they continue to provide critical support to deliver the Council's goals.

Community Services Team:

Our Community Services team offers comprehensive legal support across adult and children's services. They represent adult services in the Court of Protection and advise on complex matters like mental health, DoLS, and deputyships. In children's services, they provide vital support in safeguarding and child protection cases, often taking on High Court advocacy. This team also collaborates with other local authorities, generating income through external work when resources allow.

Litigation and Business Support Team:

This team handles complex litigation for the Council, spanning both civil and criminal jurisdictions. They prosecute regulatory cases, defend legal challenges, and provide employment law advice. Working closely with HR, they represent the Council in employment disputes and tackle housing issues, including homelessness and property disrepair. The team is also embracing digital solutions like e-billing and document automation to drive efficiency and improve service delivery.

As we move forward, these teams are well-positioned to support the Council's ambitious transformation projects, contributing to innovative service delivery while reinforcing our commitment to legal excellence.

We are excited about the future and the key role the Operational Manager for Legal Services will play in shaping our progress. If you're interested in being part of this journey, we would love to hear from you. We look forward to receiving your application and welcoming you to our team.

Victoria Davidson

Head of Legal & Democratic Services
vdavidson@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk
07891 449715

Operational Manager – Legal Services

Chief Officer Role Profile



Job Title Operational Manager – Legal Services

Post Reference X-LG-LG101

Grade Operational Manager

Directorate Corporate Resources

Location Civic Offices, Barry & Remote Working

Responsible to Head of Legal & Democratic Services

Responsible for Legal Services Team

Role Overview

At the Vale of Glamorgan Council, we are dedicated to creating a culture that embodies our fundamental principles of Openness, Togetherness, Pride, and Ambition. We are on a mission to evolve and enhance the way we serve our diverse community, ensuring an equitable and prosperous environment for all our residents.

The Service Areas mission is to provide top-tier legal support that ensures the Council's operations are legally sound, transparent, and aligned with strategic objectives. We seek an experienced and visionary leader to take on the role of Operational Manager for Legal Services.

As the Council embarks on a large-scale transformation programme, the ideal candidate will not only possess a strong background in legal management but will also be a catalyst for innovation, inspiring a high-performing team to support and enable transformation across the organisation.

Our Values **AMBITIOUS**

Behaviour

Forward thinking, embracing new ways of working and investing in our future

What it means to us

- Demonstrate proactive and innovative approaches to enhance legal services delivery.
- Set high standards for legal advice and support, fostering a culture of excellence and continuous improvement.
- Lead the Legal Services team in exploring new ways to support the Council's transformation programme.



Operational Manager – Legal Services

Chief Officer Role Profile

	Behaviour	What it means to us
OPEN	Open to different ideas and being accountable for the decisions we take	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promote transparency and accountability within the Legal Services team and the broader Council.• Encourage open dialogue, valuing diverse perspectives, and fostering an environment where innovative ideas are freely exchanged.• Ensure clear and accessible legal advice is provided to all stakeholders to support transformative change.
TOGETHER	Working together as a team that engages with our customers and partners, respects diversity and is committed to quality services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build strong, collaborative relationships within the Legal Services team and across the Council.• Work closely with other departments, elected members, and external stakeholders to achieve the Council's strategic transformation objectives.• Promote teamwork and shared decision-making processes that align with the Council's transformation goals.
PROUD	Proud to serve our communities and to be part of the Vale of Glamorgan Council.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Uphold the highest standards of professional ethics and legal integrity.• Serve as a role model for ethical behaviour, ensuring all legal advice and actions are aligned with statutory requirements and the Council's transformative vision.• Maintain a strong commitment to public service and the principles of law while supporting innovative change.



Operational Manager – Legal Services

Chief Officer Role Profile



JOB DESCRIPTION

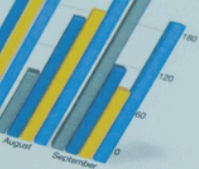
As the Operational Manager for Legal Services, you will:

Leadership:

- Provide strategic direction to the Legal Services team, fostering a culture of innovation, excellence, and continuous improvement, aligned with the Council's Corporate Plan and strategic objectives.
- Oversee the development and implementation of legal policies, ensuring compliance and alignment with the Council's transformation and strategic agenda.
- Manage the team's workload, ensuring the timely and effective delivery of high-quality legal services essential to the Council's strategic initiatives.
- Encourage professional development, maintaining high standards of legal knowledge and practice.
- Model leadership behaviours that promote the Council's values and embed these competencies throughout the organisation.
- Embrace innovative thinking, challenge the status quo, and foster a culture of creativity and problem-solving within the team.

Legal Advice and Support:

- Ensure the Council operates within a robust legal framework, mitigating risks while enabling innovative solutions.
- Provide expert legal advice to elected members, senior management, and departments on a wide range of issues, integrating legal considerations into all aspects of the Council's operations and strategies.
- Lead on complex legal matters, particularly those that support transformation initiatives, providing guidance on high-profile cases and representing the Council as necessary.
- Oversee all Council litigation, coordinating external legal representation to protect the Council's interests.
- Lead dispute resolution processes, prioritising efficient, cost-effective solutions aligned with the Council's objectives.
- Offer ongoing legal training and updates, ensuring all staff understand legal matters and their relevance to the Council's goals.



Operational Manager – Legal Services Chief Officer Role Profile

Operational Excellence:

- Support the Council's governance framework, including the preparation and review of constitutional documents, policies, and procedures, with a focus on enabling transformation.
- Ensure compliance with data protection laws, freedom of information requests, and other regulatory requirements, while promoting forward thinking approaches to governance and compliance.
- Manage the budget for the Legal Services team, ensuring effective use of resources and adherence to financial regulations, with a focus on supporting the Council's transformation goals.
- Identify opportunities for cost savings, efficiencies, and income generation within legal services, particularly to support transformation.

Stakeholder Engagement:

- Build and maintain effective relationships with internal and external stakeholders, including council members, government agencies, and external legal providers, to support the Council's operations and strategic initiatives.
- Act as a key legal advisor in the Council's transformation programme, ensuring that legal frameworks support and facilitate organisational change.
- Represent the Council in various forums, advocating for legal practices that support innovation, transformation, and the Council's broader strategic goals.

General Duties:

- Explore opportunities to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of services through collaboration and partnership working.
- Facilitate and participate in the introduction of policies, procedures, and practice to support the achievement of the objectives of the Council.
- Ensure that the principles of equality of opportunity are integrated and actively pursued both within the Directorate and in all areas of service provision.
- Ensure continuing compliance with Council policy, procedure and legislation including those related to the management of employees, health and safety, customer relations, safeguarding, information, equalities, the environment, and those specifically set out in Financial and Contract Procedure Rules.

In addition to the duties set out above, the postholder will be required to undertake such additional duties which may result from changing circumstances, but which may not of necessity change the general character or level of responsibility accorded to the post.

Operational Manager – Legal Services

Person Specification

	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE	ASCERTAINED BY
1. Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant experience in a senior legal role, preferably within local government or the public sector, with a track record of supporting organisational transformation. Proven ability to lead a legal team through periods of change, delivering high-quality legal services that align with strategic goals. Experience in providing legal advice on a wide range of issues, with an emphasis on areas that support transformation, including planning, property, employment, and contracts. Demonstrable experience in managing litigation and dispute resolution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience in budget management and resource allocation. Experience in providing training and development to legal professionals and other staff. Experience in handling high-profile or complex legal cases. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CV and Cover Letter Assessment Day
2. Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-depth knowledge of local government law, governance, and regulatory frameworks. Comprehensive understanding of data protection laws, freedom of information requests, and other relevant legislation. Awareness of current issues and challenges facing local government in Wales. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of Welsh legislation and specific legal issues affecting local authorities in Wales. Understanding of the political and social context in which local authorities operate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CV and Cover Letter Assessment Day
3. Skills & Aptitudes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to be a role model for the leadership behaviours and promote the Council's values. A strategic thinker, with the ability to develop and implement strategies that support the achievement of Council's objectives. Excellent leadership skills, able to provide clarity to your team on the vision and purpose of their work. Strong track record of building and nurturing productive working relationships, able to advocate for excellence, equity, and inclusivity. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CV and Cover Letter Assessment Day

Operational Manager – Legal Services

Person Specification

3. Skills & Aptitudes (Continued)	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE	ASCERTAINED BY
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highly effective communication skills, able to influence others with impact and professional credibility, with the ability to communicate to a diverse community. Dedicated to professional development and keeping abreast of relevant regulation and education trends. Ability to manage resources effectively, including budgets, staffing, and facilities. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CV and Cover Letter Assessment Day
4. Qualifications & training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualified solicitor or barrister with a current practicing certificate in England and Wales. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Postgraduate qualifications in a relevant field (e.g., LL.M in Local Government Law). Membership of relevant professional bodies (e.g., the Law Society, the Bar Council). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CV
5. Attitude & Motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highly motivated senior leader, able to act as a role model to team members and peers. Adaptable and flexible to meet a variety of challenges. An inspiring leader, able to engage team members to deliver exceptional performance in a challenging environment. Innovative, change champion, who is happy to challenge the status quo to deliver on strategic objectives and solve problems. A passionate role model of the values of the Council. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CV and Cover Letter Assessment Day

Operational Manager – Legal Services

Person Specification

6. Other

ESSENTIAL

- Personal and professional credibility
- Drive, energy, and enthusiasm to sustain an extensive agenda.
- Capacity to work outside of normal office hours and attend evening meetings as and when required.
- Ability to drive/travel throughout the Vale or between locations as appropriate.

DESIRABLE

- Ability to speak or learn Welsh.

ASCERTAINED BY

- CV and Cover Letter
- Assessment Day