18. Legal and Governance Service Profile
(2026/27)

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Portfolio Holder(s):	Cllr Dad
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Purpose of Plan

This Business Plan provides an overview of the service, and sets out its key priorities, high level objectives, key deliverables, and key performance measures. It will be supported by individual team plans which contain more detail about how teams work towards meeting priorities and measuring success.

The priorities and actions set out in the Business Plan focus only on key areas of development, improvement, and transformation, and does not cover all detailed aspects of service delivery. The identified priorities will link directly into the Council's contribution towards the Community Plan and achievement of productivity and savings targets.

Progress against the service plan will be reviewed on a regular basis within directorate teams, by the Corporate Strategy Team, and in consultation with Cabinet Portfolio Holders.

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1. Service Overview

Service Description

The primary purpose of the Legal, Capital Delivery and Governance Service is to ensure that there is effective Corporate Governance in place across the Council through the provision of legal, procurement, information governance and constitutional cross organisational advice and support. The service also provides professional technical support services to the Council.

In so doing, the service are required to deliver services that are fit for purpose, represent value for money and are clearly monitored, reviewed and regularly improved. The Building and Design Team also work to a target charging model which is set to cover the costs to the Council of providing these services inhouse. The main aim of the whole service is to ensure that the Council, its Members and Officers are able to achieve better outcomes for the city.

Service Description

A. **Legal Services** divided into three teams, Commercial and Property, Children's Social Care, Community (Adults, Housing, Civil and Criminal Litigation, and Employment)

B. **Procurement Service** divided into three hubs grouping the categories of purchasing activity between:
    - Adults and Childrens Social Care and Public Health;
    - People and Business Services (including ICT); and
    - Major Projects, StreetScene, Highways and Neighbourhoods and Housing.

C. **Capital Delivery Service –** delivering/supporting the commissioning of the delivery of Council's Capital programme, working alongside the Procurement Service and Commercial and Property Legal Team.

D. **The Governance Services, encompassing:**
    - **Committee Services** divided into Executive, Regulatory, Scrutiny, Partnerships, Trusts, Council and Civic and the Independent Schools Admission and Exclusion Appeals Service.
    - **Printing Services:** responsible for print production, commissioning printing services and print device asset management.
    - **Information Governance and member support**, divided into Freedom of Information, and Data Protection/Security, Records Management, Customer Feedback and Member support and development.
    - **Electoral Services**

Strategic Direction/Future Plans

1. Ensure processes are in place which promote public engagement and scrutiny in advance of decisions on policy development and key issues that impact upon the community;

2. Ensure that information about or held by the Council is made accessible to the public in an open and transparent manner via the internet through a well maintained Publication Scheme, save where it is in the public interest that the information not be published.

3. Ensure that public money is committed, and goods, services and works are procured in a transparent, ethical and legally compliant manner while delivering Best Value;

4. Facilitate the delivery of the Council's Construction Projects through the advising, specifying and undertaking the most effective procurement processes, and drafting and negotiating the contractual terms for delivery of key projects;

5. Ensure that decisions in relation to property held by the Council on behalf of the Community are made with regard to the principle of achieving Best Consideration, save where there is an overriding community interest in doing otherwise;

6. Ensure that the Council has the legal advice, advocacy and contractual arrangements to enable it to take legal action in accordance with its statutory duties and organisational priorities;

7. Ensure that the Council is able to effectively review requests for information by third parties and provide assurance that the release of such information is managed in accordance with the law and Best Practice;

8. To implement and maintain current the management of the Council's obligations within General Data Protection Regulation.

9. To provide professional technical support services to the Council's major projects and to support the Council's capital programme.

Overall Service Priorities

Service Priority	**Strategic Driver**
Ensuring robust governance and decision making across the Council	Statutory framework
Embedding the development of effective Area Governance to support the Community Plan	Community Plan
Supporting the Council's role in external bodies including HEYCA	Devolution White Paper/Devolution legislation Community Plan
Ensuring officers and elected members understand and comply with all relevant legislation and promote high ethical standards	Statutory responsibilities Organisational oversight
Integrated support to the Council's capital programme	Capital Programme
Ensuring the Council is supported in dealing with areas of legal challenge and mitigating against the risk of challenge	Statutory framework Organisational requirement

Implementation of new Procurement Regime within the Council within the framework of the Workday System	Procurement Act 2023 Procurement Regulations Workday Programme Council Contract Procedure Rules
Provision of high quality of support to other Council departments and elected members within appropriate timescales	Council Plan Community Plan Statutory requirements
Provision of support to Services in relation to new regulatory regimes to ensure compliance with legal requirements and mitigation of risk to Council, including participation in Service Improvement Boards	New Housing Regulatory regime

2. Service Resources and Assets

Staffing and Financial Resources (including grants)

Budget 2026/27	**£000'**		
Staff Costs	8,092	**Budget Changes**	**£000's**
Other Expenditure	2,182	26/27 Efficiency Savings	
Gross Expenditure	**10,274**		
Fees & Charges	-347	25/26 Savings undelivered	
Grant Income	-427		
Other Income	-1,476		
Gross Income	**-2,251**		
		Investments	426
Net Expenditure	**8,023**	Funding of Base Pressures	