

Job title: Senior Legal Counsel - Employment

Core information

Location: London head office ▾	Lines of business or shared capability area (SCA): SCA
Reports to: Head of Legal - Employment	
People Management: No ▾	
Assignment Management: No ▾	
Partnership Level: Partnership level 5 ▾	Manager's Partnership level: Partnership level 4 ▾
Number of direct reports: 0	Partnership level(s) of direct reports: None ▾

About the John Lewis Partnership

The Partnership is the UK's largest employee-owned business and home to our two well-loved retail brands – John Lewis and Waitrose, as well as expanding into new areas beyond retail.

We aren't an ordinary business, though. The Partnership is different because everyone who works here isn't just an employee. We are Partners, with a shared responsibility for our success, and we share the rewards when we're successful.

Everything we do is powered by our unique Purpose: **Working in Partnership for a happier world.** Our Purpose inspires our principles, drives our decisions and acts as our guide, so that everything we do contributes to Happier People, Happier Business and a Happier World.

Critical purpose of the role

Reporting into the Head of Legal, Employment, you will be a member of the Legal Team and responsible for the provision of high quality and commercially focused legal support to the Partnership, with a particular focus on Employment Law.

You will work with the other members of the legal team to provide high quality, consistent and commercially focused legal advice within your specialism. You will thrive in a challenging, complex, busy and diverse role with high levels of responsibility. You will ensure that the right legal advice is available to the right people at the right time, expertly assisting other leaders to effectively manage risk in all areas of the business for your specialist area.

This is an exciting opportunity for an experienced Senior Employment Lawyer to join a busy in-house legal team. You will engage with a broad range of stakeholders providing all areas of the Partnership with commercially focused legal advice across all aspects of employment law ranging from large scale restructurings and TUPE transfers to settlement agreements and changes in legislation.

You will need to build strong and effective relationships at all levels of the Partnership and across all areas, with particular focus on the People Team



Primary Outcomes & Accountabilities

Business Partnering

- To work with key stakeholders across all divisions of the Partnership, ensuring that they are an integral part of the decision making processes - understanding and influencing the strategic direction through robust challenge, debate and expertise Business Partners will drive value by bringing advice, insight support and challenge, identifying issues and problems, driving the development of innovative solutions and actively contributing to the shaping of divisional/ Partnership strategy.

Communication and Stakeholder Management

- To take a proactive approach to and responsibility for developing and maintaining senior stakeholder relationships and to actively influence and manage those relationships (teams, functional, Partnership, external) to enable the successful delivery of strategic projects and tactical interventions. Influence can be drawn from a variety of sources including, professional expertise, data and insight, business benefits and through utilising own emotional intelligence and judgment to influence outcomes

Business Acumen

- Applies commercial understanding and strategic insight when providing support. Commercially curious, gaining an in-depth knowledge of the Partnership's business, sector and commercial pressure

Professional Excellence and Expertise

- To provide proactive, solution oriented, strategic advice on a wide range of non-contentious and contentious issues having regard to laws and regulations whilst working within the Partnerships' policies and procedures.
- To judge when to outsource advice and when to escalate matters, drawing on experience and in-depth understanding of the issues at play across the commercial legal field, including being able to flag data protection, competition law and IP issues.
- To ensure the timely provision of legal expertise as required for strategic and operational projects and issues across the Partnership.
- To provide strategic, up to date and pragmatic legal advice to all divisions of the Partnership. To draft, support and advise the Partnership on the

Measures of success

- Employment legal risks managed within appetite
- Effective stakeholder engagement and management at all levels
- Employment legal advice managed within budget



development of strategy, policies and procedures, working closely with the business teams.

- To deliver and facilitate the delivery of legal training to the Partnership. Where appropriate, to prepare submissions to Government and other regulatory bodies or interested parties on legislative proposals, codes of practice or guidance relating to the relevant legal issue
- Intellectually curious / able, coupled with an approach that is not characterised by hypothetical or over intellectual theorising.

Managing Risk and Compliance

- To take a proactive approach in relation to the identification of risk and risk management. To identify proactively, and guide the Partnership in responding to, regulatory and legislative change. Understand the Partnership Risk framework and strategy and play an active role highlighting and considering risk in the Partnership and influence ownership, decisions and actions to be taken to manage legal risk. You will be expected to identify risk factors to safeguard the Partnership's interests and support compliance initiatives across the business.

Continuous improvement

- To develop and implement team processes and procedures to ensure the efficient and consistent delivery of legal advice.
- Foster and maintain a culture of continuous improvement to propositions, processes, controls and/or policies both proactively and based on feedback and insight from stakeholders, colleagues and the business.
- To supervise, mentor and support the development of junior members of the team, including setting relevant objectives and monitoring performance.
- Be able to recognise opportunities to add value to the organisation (whether through strategic innovations and partnerships, key efficiencies, great new policies or processes) and ability to see them through in a commercial & repeatable way. Proactively shares and creates knowledge for the use and benefit of the Legal Function. Recognise the value of and engage enthusiastically in transformational activities, providing output that makes a difference to colleagues.

External Relationships/Resource Management

- Accountable for efficient and effective deployment



and allocation of resources when and where they are needed.

- To manage the efficient outsourcing of business as usual, strategic and complex legal matters to panel law firms and alternative providers, ensuring regular reporting and fee negotiations.
- To work with the Head of Legal Operations to improve ways of working and processes including FAQ's for the business, communications, and Self-help resources.

Delivering change

- To lead on high value, complex or strategic change projects, cases or transactions Accountable for business case support e.g. advising on legal risk, feasibility analysis, business case development. Challenging the business where applicable. Accountable with the business for sound commercial and legal decision making.

Implementation & Execution

- Has a vision and strategy and delivers results with speed, simplicity and trust. Works efficiently and effectively with tools, people and process. Drives change for improvement.

Partner Management and Development

- Accountable for supporting peers and others in their personal and professional development, helping them unlock their potential and make the most of internal and external resources to ensure a personal and positive Partner experience. Make the best use of Partnership tools and resources for stretching, motivating and engaging Partners.
- To support the Heads of Legal in the development, implementation and maintenance of the Legal team strategy, taking ownership of relevant strategic imperatives.

Partnership Mindset

- Accountable for enabling, spotting and driving connections between the function and other areas of the organisation by working in consistent ways and creating a collaborative culture with an aligned purpose and outcomes.
- To undertake such additional tasks as may be required from time to time in the interests of the John Lewis Partnership as directed.

Drive and Resilience

- Pragmatic and solutions-focused demonstrating the



Partnership behaviours in all aspects of legal and professional support.

- Positive, energetic and committed and responds well to change.

Skills

Continuous Improvement	The ability to identify areas for enhancement and implement strategies to increase efficiency and effectiveness in processes and systems.
Critical Thinking	The ability to analyse and evaluate information objectively to form judgements and make decisions based on logic and evidence. Critical thinking aims to move beyond simple recall and memory to a deeper understanding and application of knowledge.
Data fluency	Understanding and knowing how to use/apply technological tools and concepts.
Data Privacy and Security	The knowledge and application of best practices and legal requirements for protecting sensitive employee/Partner and organisational data, ensuring compliance with Partnership and UK data protection regulations such as GDPR.
Emotional Intelligence	Awareness of self and others, empathy and the ability to act on that awareness.
Escalation Management	Skilled in crisis management and handling difficult and complex situations that require a higher level of intervention and a strategic plan to reach resolution in a timely manner.
Operational Excellence	Proficient in overseeing systems, policies, and processes to ensure high-quality, efficient delivery. Strong grasp of governance, compliance, and risk management in an operational context.
Business and Commercial Acumen	Deep understanding of how functional areas contribute to business performance. Ability to manage budgets, interpret data and metrics, and make commercially sound decisions that align with the Partnership's purpose.
Collaboration and Cross-Functional Leadership	Effective in working across functions, breaking down silos, and creating integrated solutions. Champions co-creation and shared ownership of outcomes.
Communication and Engagement	Excellent communicator, both verbally and in writing, with the ability to translate complex concepts into compelling narratives. Skilled in building employee/Partner engagement through transparency, storytelling, and shared purpose.
Influencing and Stakeholder Management	Strong ability to influence at senior levels, including the Executive Team, democratic forums, and wider business stakeholders. Capable of managing complex relationships and building trust across diverse groups.
Risk Management	Demonstrates the ability to proactively identify, assess, and manage organisational risk and implement risk control practices to ensure compliance and inform decision making
Strategic Thinking	Ability to see the big picture, align strategy with business goals, and anticipate future workforce needs. Skilled in navigating complexity, identifying long-term trends, and driving innovation within propositions.

Qualifications & Experience

Essential



- An experienced, UK qualified lawyer with a proven track record of providing appropriate legal advice in a range of situations, preferably with in-house experience.
- Confidence and credibility in working with a wide range of people, internal and external to the business.
- Demonstrated excellent influencing skills
- Organisation change, redundancy, TUPE experience
- Evidence of continuous improvement and change mindset
- Sound understanding of commercial environment, and an ability to provide commercial solutions.
- Good relationship management skills both internally and externally.
- A demonstrable, proactive, commercial and solutions-led approach to compliance.

Preferable

- Experience and knowledge of employment law issues particular to financial services
- Basic understanding of pensions, immigration and industrial relations legal issues

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VI	<i>Eleanor Taylor</i>	<i>10 July 2026</i>