

• FOR A MORE
• EQUAL FUTURE •

Director of Law and Governance

Candidate Pack



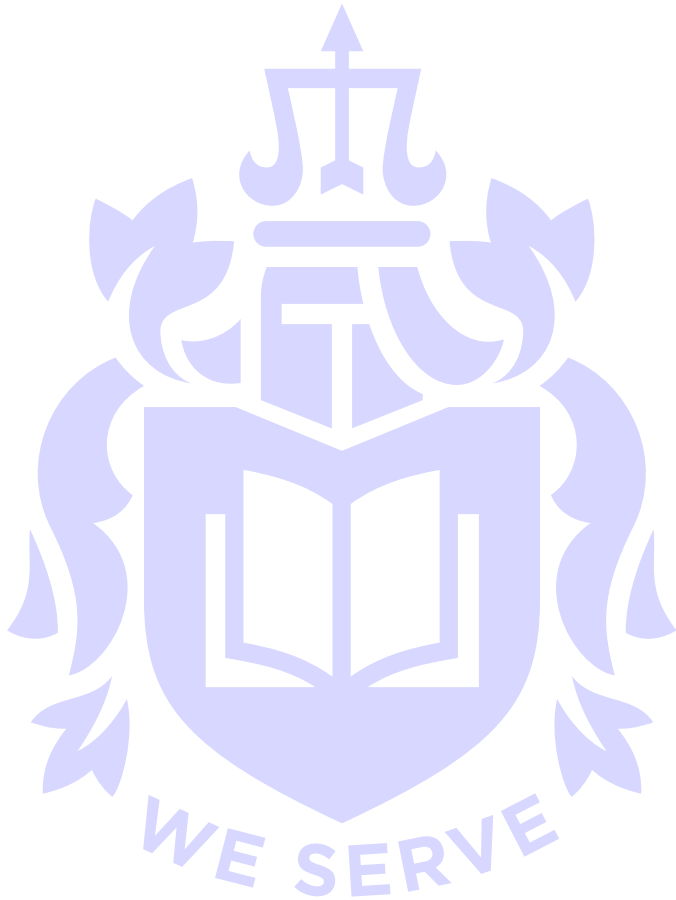
ISLINGTON

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Welcome



Dear Candidate,

Islington is amazing, and we are delighted that you are considering joining us as our Director of Law and Governance.

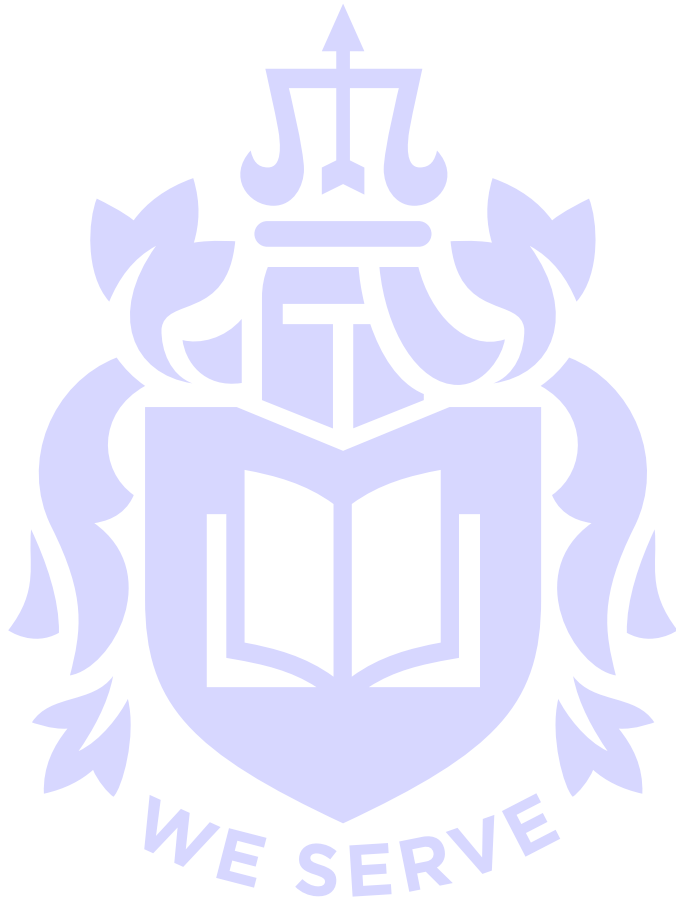
Islington is a vibrant north London borough with a rich history of challenging norms and inspiring progress. But we know that the advantages of our borough aren't yet shared widely enough. Our purpose is simple – to work together for a more equal Islington, because we believe a more equal Islington is better for all of us.

This is a pivotal corporate leadership role at the heart of lawful, open and effective local government. As the Council's Monitoring Officer and Deputy Senior Information Risk Owner, you will provide clear, impartial and

robust advice to the Chief Executive, Leader, Members and officers, ensuring our constitution, decision-making and governance arrangements are fit for purpose.

You will lead Law and Governance, Elections, Democratic Services, Leaders and Member Support and Business Support services, with four direct reports and responsibility for approximately 180 colleagues. You will champion modern legal and governance services that are transparent, customer-focused and rooted in improving outcomes for residents.

Welcome



We need strong, ambitious and personable leadership: someone who can bring judgement, creativity and confidence to complex political and operational issues. You will oversee council decisions, support democratic processes and elections, uphold the Councillors' Code of Conduct, and ensure high-quality legal advice, support and representation across the council.

You will be a visible corporate leader – partnering with Members and colleagues across the council and place – to translate ambition into delivery. You will model our CARE values – Collaborative, Ambitious, Resourceful and Empowering – and help build an inclusive, high-performing culture where talented people can do their best work.

This is your chance to join a collaborative leadership team, focused on improving outcomes for our residents and communities.



Victoria Lawson
Chief Executive,
Islington Council



Cllr Una O'Halloran
Leader of Islington
Council

Our Values

We care about Islington and the people we serve; it's the reason why most of us do what we do and why we're determined to deliver our purpose. To help create the positive change our purpose demands, we need to be open to change ourselves. To changing how we do things and how we work with one another and our community. We're guided to create that positive change by our shared values.



We collaborate

We work together. In everything we do we break down boundaries and siloes, and collaborate across teams, disciplines and service areas. We collaborate with our community too, co-creating hand in hand with residents and partners. We seek out difference, embracing Islington's rich diversity, because we know that better ideas and faster progress come from a mix of perspectives, representative voices and real life, lived experience.



We're ambitious

We have an ambitious purpose that demands change. We pour all our energy and passion into making that change happen. We do what we say we'll do. We commit. We walk the walk, and we follow through. We work hard to create positive impact, tangible outcomes and lasting change. We deliver for our colleagues and our community and make the effort to show how our work makes a difference.



We empower each other

We can't do everything on our own. To deliver our purpose we need to plug into the energy, ideas and experience in Islington, inside the council and our wider community. To get the best out of each other, we're open, straightforward and transparent. We share information. We enable. We pass on power and create space for others to influence and lead. We listen and we're not afraid to ask tough questions, admit when we're learning and let more people into our decision-making processes.

We're resourceful

To create the momentum our purpose demands we need to be creative, agile and fluid in how we work. We harness our energy and enthusiasm to make our resources go further for the people we work with and the people we serve. We use our ingenuity to think ahead connect things up and deliver services that create more positive change.



Join Us



Watch our video

Clicking this link will take you to YouTube,
opening in a web browser.





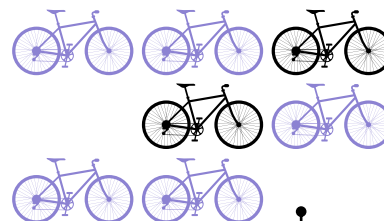
Most residents can reach a public park or green space within a 15-minute walk



2nd
Lowest proportion of green space

in the country, with only 2.83 square meters per resident

Islington adults walking or cycling for travel at least **5 times a week** is consistently higher compared to London



92% feel very/fairly safe



67% feel very/fairly safe

Based on Islington Wellbeing Survey 2025

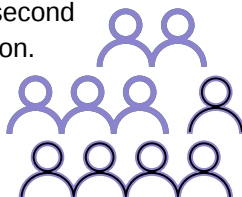
Islington

Key facts

Islington council is the second largest landlord in London. Approximately

40%

of the Islington population lives in a socially rented property.



households in temporary accommodation, significantly lower than London (20 per 1,000).



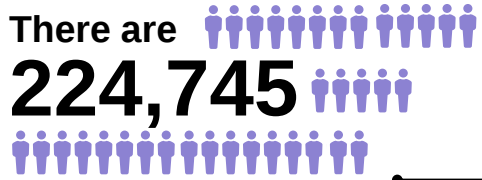
Home to
23,335
businesses

mainly small to medium enterprises, concentrated in the south of the borough. Over the past decade, the number of businesses has been steadily growing

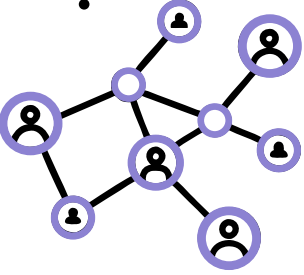


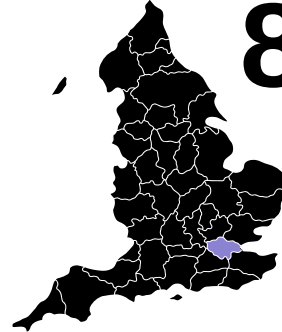
81%

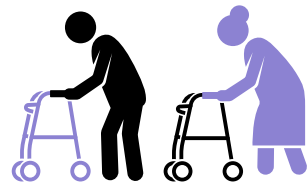
of Islington's population aged 16-64 is economically active

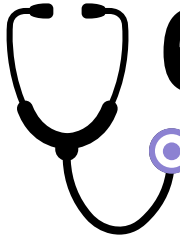
There are 
224,745
people living in
Islington in 2026

Islington's population is young. There are an estimated 35,202 children and young people aged under 18 years (16% of the total population). There is a higher proportion of residents aged 20-35 (38%) compared to London (27%)


60%
of the population identify as non-White British. The largest non-White group is Black African (8% of the population)

Islington is the
8th
most deprived
borough in London

50th
most deprived
across England

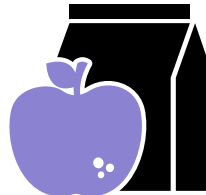

83.7 Female life expectancy at birth
– lower than the London average
78.7 Male life expectancy at birth – lower than London and England averages
Life expectancy gap between the most deprived and least deprived is 9 years for males and 3 years for females.


65%
of children
at 5 years old registered
with an Islington GP have
had all their vaccination.

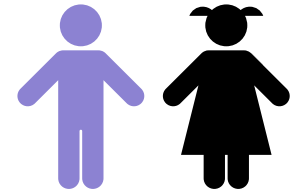

33%
(10,500 children)
live in poverty after housing
costs, placing Islington 9th
highest in London

Islington

Key facts


46%
of Islington pupils

across all school phases were eligible
for free school meals, in 2024/25.
Steady increase since 2019/20 (32%).



As of 2025, the rates of children
looked after in Islington (79 per
10,000) and children in need (521
per 10,000) are both significantly
higher than London and England

The Opportunity

Are you ready to lead with integrity and govern with confidence to deliver for Islington?

Islington is a vibrant, diverse inner London borough, home to over 225,000 residents. We are committed to working together for a more equal future – one where everyone has a chance to thrive. Our ambition for our communities is matched by our commitment to open and effective decision-making.

Reporting to the Chief Executive, this pivotal role leads modern legal services, democratic governance, elections, member support and business support, enabling the council to deliver confidently for residents. There has never been a more important time to join Islington.

As Director of Law and Governance, you will:

- Act as the Council's Monitoring Officer and Deputy SIRO, ensuring statutory compliance, sound advice and an effective constitution.
- Provide strategic leadership for Law and Governance, Elections, Democratic Services, Leader and Member Support and Business Support services,

- Lead modern, transparent decision-making across Council, Executive, committees and other formal meetings. Ensure council decisions are lawful and act as the Council's Solicitor of Record.
- Advise the Chief Executive, Leader, Members and officers on complex legal, governance and electoral requirements.
- Oversee elections as Deputy Acting Returning Officer or in other appointed roles, ensuring smooth and compliant delivery.
- Lead the Councillors' Code of Conduct and support effective complaint decision-making.
- Manage a service budget of approximately £2m, promoting value for money, inclusion and continuous improvement.

What we're looking for

We are looking for a qualified solicitor or barrister with substantial senior-level post-qualification experience in a large, complex organisation.

You will bring experience as a Monitoring or Deputy Monitoring Officer, strong knowledge of local government law, and confidence supporting democratic processes, including elections.

You will be politically astute, impartial and trusted – able to command confidence with Members and colleagues while giving clear, balanced and robust advice on sensitive matters.

We also want inclusive leadership: the ability to lead multidisciplinary teams, build accountability, promote innovation and live our CARE values as we work together for a more equal future.

**Application closing date:
Thursday 3rd September 2026**

Our Purpose

In Islington, we work together for a more equal future, because we believe a more equal Islington is better for all of us.

To achieve this goal, we know that we need to be more together. More together inside the council – across teams, disciplines and service areas. More together with our residents – with open doors and open minds. More together with our partners, and everyone who chooses to call Islington home.

To do this, everyone who works at Islington Council lives by a set of values which guide us in everything that we do: collaborative, ambitious, resourceful, and empowering. They spell out 'CARE', which is what we think public service is all about.

The Role

Director of Law and Governance

Directorate: Chief Executive

Salary: CO2 (up to £140,445) with an additional £12,534 per annum for undertaking the statutory Monitoring Officer role

Reports to: Chief Executive

Direct reports: 4

Responsibility: approximately 180 colleagues

Your team: Law and Governance, Elections, Democratic Services, Leaders Office and Member Support and Business Support services

Work style: Front facing (high presence, 3–4 days/week)

Other information: This post requires a declaration of interest and is designated as politically restricted



Key Responsibilities

- Act as the Council's Monitoring Officer under Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, and as Deputy SIRO.
- Provide strategic leadership for Law and Governance, Elections, Democratic Services, Head of Leaders Support, Member Support and Business Support Services.
- Lead modern, effective and transparent decision-making across the Executive, Council and committees.
- Attend and advise Council, Executive, Audit and Risk Committee, and other formal or informal meetings.
- Ensure council decisions are lawful and act as the Council's Solicitor of Record.
- Ensure statutory compliance and provide sound, timely advice to the Chief Executive, Leader, Members and officers.
- Keep the Council's constitution effective and fit for purpose.
- Track national policy across legal, democratic governance and electoral requirements, representing Islington externally where needed.
- Establish clear outcomes, standards, lines of accountability and delegated authority.
- Ensure high-quality legal advice, support and representation, with effective structures, systems, processes and policies.
- Act as Deputy Acting Returning Officer, or other appointed role, ensuring elections run smoothly and comply with legislation.
- Lead the effective operation of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, including initial complaint decisions.

Key Responsibilities

- Participate in emergency planning and response, including out-of-hours work as required.
- Act as the qualified person for Freedom of Information Act section 36 public affairs exemption decisions.
- Challenge and monitor the departmental budget, controlling spend and securing value for money.
- Promote CARE values, inclusion, learning and workforce planning so colleagues can realise their potential.

Budget responsibilities

- Responsible for a service budget of approx. £2m

Compliance

- Ensure adherence to legal, regulatory and policy requirements under GDPR, Health and Safety and the Employee Code of Conduct by identifying opportunities and risks, and escalating issues as necessary.



Person Specification



Your application needs to demonstrate how you fulfil the role's requirements. It is essential to address the criteria, as this will be used to evaluate your suitability for the position.

Essential and desirable criteria

Essential: the basic requirements that must be met for someone to be considered for a particular job. These criteria are mandatory and cannot be negotiated. Essential criteria directly impact the core qualifications or skills necessary to perform the job effectively.

Desirable: the additional qualities, skills, or qualifications that would be advantageous for a candidate to possess but are not mandatory. Not meeting them does not automatically disqualify someone from consideration for the job. This also allows candidates who do not possess certain desirable criteria the opportunity to explain how their other knowledge, experience and skills relate to these and what they may be in the process of doing or willing to do to achieve these.

Knowledge, experience, and skills

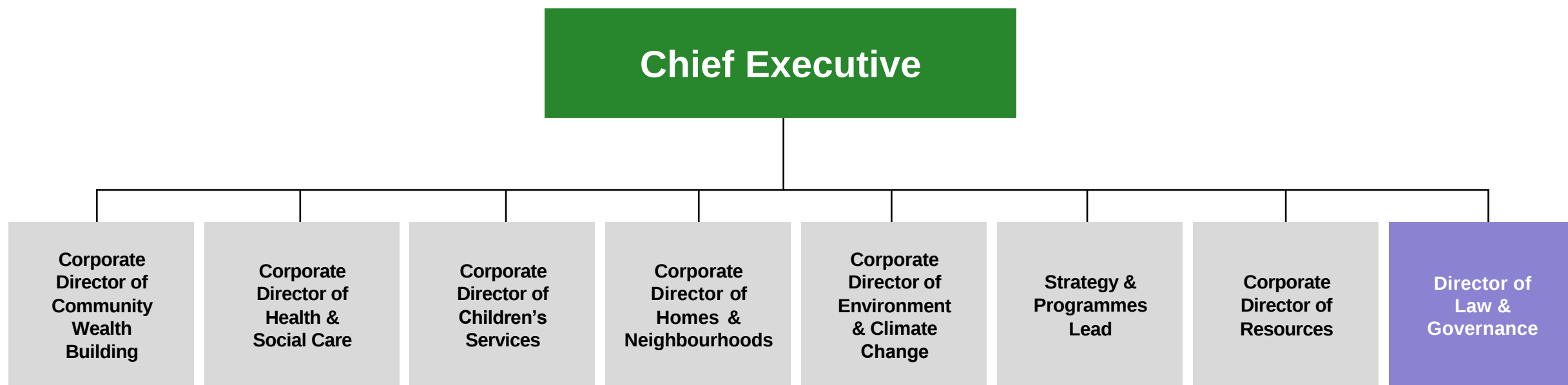
Point	Criteria description	Essential/desirable
1	A qualified solicitor or barrister and member of a specified legal body, and substantial post qualification experience at senior level in a large organisation.	Essential
2	Substantial experience of providing effective inclusive and collaborative leadership at a senior management level within a large, complex organisation.	Essential
3	Demonstrable experience of acting as Monitoring or Deputy Monitoring Officer and strong experience of advising and supporting democratic processes, including elections.	Essential
4	A proven and strong record of working effectively within a political environment, providing clear, impartial, balanced, robust advice and guidance on strategic and operational issues that achieve the corporate and service objectives.	Essential
5	Evidence the ability to be authoritative, influential and persuasive with an ability to inspire and command respect, trust and confidence of colleagues on politically sensitive matters.	Essential
6	Demonstrable success in performance and leadership management of multi-disciplinary teams.	Essential

Point	Criteria description	Essential/desirable
7	Ability to apply relevant laws, including local government and administration, finance, property, social services, data protection and freedom of information, discrimination and harassment, employment and industrial relations, environment, education and civil litigation.	Essential
8	Ability to promote creative and innovative team working and individual development to maximise performance and effective working relationships and achieve a performance and quality culture.	Essential
9	Experience of financial and commercial awareness, monitoring and controlling costs and ensuring services are provided in a cost-effective and competitive manner.	Essential
10	Effective leadership skills demonstrating: taking corporate responsibility; delivering results; flexing style and approach; providing systems leadership; resilience, drive, energy and enthusiasm; motivating and empowering work through others.	Essential
11	Exceptional local government experience with the ability to apply diplomacy, tact and discretion in challenging situations.	Desirable

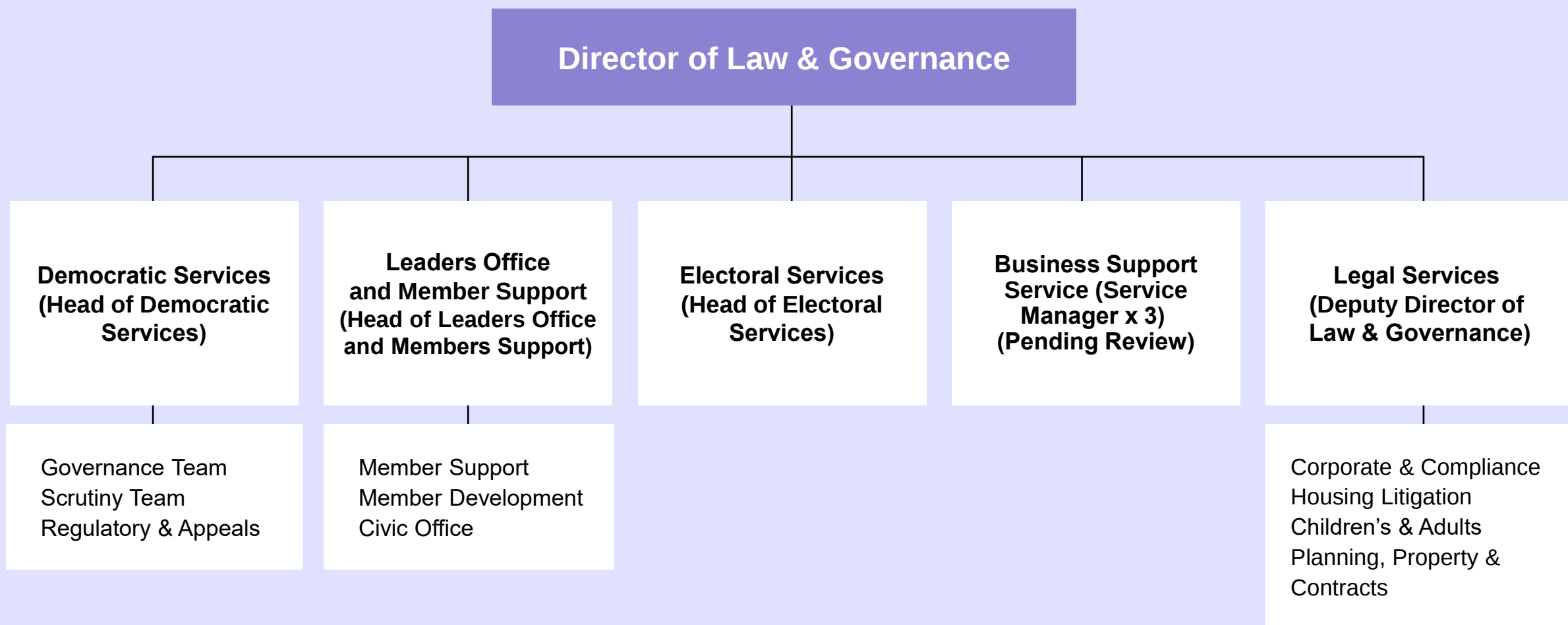
Our accreditations



Organisation Chart



Law & Governance structure





How to apply

This guidance provides essential information to support your application process:

If you need adjustments during the application, interview, or assessment process, including alternative formats, please contact us. We aim to make our recruitment accessible to everyone by accommodating disabled, neurodiverse, or long-term health conditions wherever possible.

Submit a CV and Supporting Statement. The supporting statement should be no more than four sides of A4. Ensure your documents are tailored to the person specification and include your contact information. In your supporting statement, describe the values and behaviours you bring to leadership and how your skills and experience will transfer into this role. For each essential criterion, demonstrate how you meet the requirements. Your CV should include a complete record of your employment history, along with information about your current salary. Include your contact details. Provide details of two referees. Referees will only be contacted if you are

shortlisted for final interviews and with your permission. Indicate whether we may approach each referee before the selection date.

Complete the Inclusive Monitoring Form when uploading your application.

Submit your application by the closing date **Thursday 3rd September 2026**. Late applications will not be considered.

How to apply

To apply for this role, please visit www.ransleyboardman.com or for a confidential discussion contact jo@ransleyboardman.com (07834 030501) or penny@ransleyboardman.com (07549 233685)

Date	Recruitment Stage
Thursday 3 rd September 2026	Applications deadline
Friday 18 th September 2026	Technical interviews
Friday 25 th September 2026	Shortlist decision
Wednesday 30 th September 2026	Fireside chat with Chief Executive
Thursday 1 st October 2026	Meet and greet stakeholder panels
Monday 5 th October 2026	Fireside chat with Council Leader
Friday 9 th October 2026	Final interviews

Thank you
for your interest
in Islington

