

Here's a little about me-

I have over twenty years' experience in local government legal services and currently **Principal Solicitor Litigation /Deputy Monitoring Officer at Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council.**

As a mother of four, familiar with juggling home and work commitments. I'm an avid hockey player, hockey coach, and have a love for open water swimming.

I am proud to also currently hold the role of **President for Lawyers in Local Government (LLG)**, a role I was elected to last year and will remain on the Board as Immediate Past President for the tenure of the Law Society Council Seat.

As LLG President and have had the privilege of overseeing:-

- The internal LLG Governance Review 2024.
- Hugely successful LLG Spring Conference 2024 and Governance Conference 2024.
- Promoting the Code of Practice for Statutory Officers on Good Governance, SRA Guidance to in-house lawyers, LGSCO Code on Dealing with Complaints, LGA Assurance Framework - the list is not exhaustive.
- Oversight of Consultation on Remote Meetings/Proxy Voting and now the Consultation on the Devolution White Paper.

Grass roots engagement and representation at leadership level was a key focus for me as President of LLG.

I have valued amplifying the voice of local government during my five years on the LLG Board and would relish the opportunity to continue this mission with the Law Society.

My priorities, if elected, would be to:

1. Commitment to supporting the Law Society campaign to improve the Justice System and HMCTS Court Reform.

As a magistrates court advocate and Principal Litigation Solicitor fully understand the needs of in-house lawyers. **I will wholeheartedly drive the vision of Court Reform and modernisation suited to the needs of in-house lawyers.** As **Regional SIG/SAA Prosecutions for Yorkshire Humberside (2010-2022)** actively supported/represented lawyers with local issues and local courts. The impact of inadequate resources on the justice system is a concern close to my heart, felt day-in day-out as an advocate and playing second fiddle as a local government advocate drives passion to continue to support the Law Society campaign. Alongside

supporting the profession in adapting to the introduction of digitalisation, digital transformation, data sharing and managing risk and accounting for the future of AI.

2. Focus on Law Society campaign on building public support and political will for protection of rule of law and the Justice System

The input of the role of in-house lawyers/ monitoring officers is pivotal in the campaign to upholding standards in public life and future reform. As lawyers working in a political arena with public service delivery at the core of local government legal work – standards in public life are key to trust and building communities – the unique role and voice for local government lawyers will be raised;

3. Collaborate with corporate in-house lawyers – ‘If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together’. The Post Office Scandal highlighted concerns shared by in-house lawyers.

Connect with other in-house lawyers and collectively address issues unique to in-house lawyers. **I would like to see more Law Society Regional In-House Committees.** Similar to Bristol Law Society that hosted an In-House Lawyers Conference leading to greater understanding within the profession of the challenges faced by in-house local government lawyers. For example lack of resources when demand for legal advice is increasing, the need to ‘grow our own’ talent, working in an ever-changing political landscape, keeping abreast of SRA requirements and restrictions, the commercialisation agenda, increasingly complex workloads, technology and AI, the challenges of local government reorganisation and devolution. Let’s share stories to share solutions.

4. Build on the SRA Guidance issued for in-house lawyers -to ensure it is fit for purpose and useful- protecting the public whilst allowing in-house lawyers the flexibility to serve the public to the best of their ability.

I was part of the **SRA working group for in-house lawyers** established prior to the recent SRA Guidance documents issued September 2024 gave an opportunity to input real life case studies but provided a realisation of the similar issues faced by corporate in-house lawyers whether GLD, banks, private sector. The SRA Guidance for in-house lawyers is welcomed and additional support from the Law Society on practical implementation will benefit local government lawyers.

The Code of Practice for Good Governance would further benefit from incorporating the SRA Guidance to in-house lawyers. **The unique position of being LLG President and member of SRA WG best placed to link into the Law Society Council Seat and practical approach to the SRA guidance to support the legal profession.**

5. Promote sound, transparent governance within the Law Society to better understand decision making and the unique role of local government lawyers.

As LLG President lead on LLG internal governance review and due to attend the **Law Society In-House Committee** and would like to promote transparent decision making and good governance.

Why me?

- Experienced in contributing to policy and strategies to enhance the standing of the profession, rule of law and standards in public life;
- Able to navigate challenges in a constructive and professional manner with an engaging approach;
- I am a role model for an increasingly diverse profession;
- I am passionate about training and supervision of local government lawyers of the future;
- Strong network;
- I am an eloquent and confident advocate, with a diplomatic approach, long term vision and always seek to do the right thing.