

Weightmans LLP

RM6374 Legal Panel for Public Sector

Government
Commercial
Agency
Supplier

Lots:

- 1a – Full Legal Service Provision for all Public Sector
- 1b – Full Legal Service Provision for Local Government and Local Communities
- 1c – Full Legal Service Provision for Health and Social Care
- 2 – Focused Legal Support
- 4 – Projects and Complex Advice including PPP
- 6 – Costs Lawyer Services

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Disclaimer Notice:

All information correct on date of publication. The information provided throughout this document (particularly within case studies and key contact biographies) is not commercially sensitive, and where it is not a matter of public record then appropriate permission has been sought for inclusion.

Supplier Introductions

At Weightmans we have a rich heritage in providing legal services across the whole public sector. Several of our senior lawyers have held in-house positions in the sector or been seconded to clients – giving us a detailed understanding of the pressures and scrutiny our clients face.

Clients value our deep sector knowledge, full-service capability and pragmatic solutions-focused approach – enshrined in our purpose to ‘See the Possibility’.

From 10 offices across the UK, our public sector legal specialists support clients on matters ranging from complex public inquiries and judicial reviews to commercial procurement and employment law.

This prospectus introduces the range of services we offer for public sector organisations, and some of the key members of our 1,700+ strong team.



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267
Partners

1710
People

10 UK locations

- Birmingham

Cardiff

Glasgow

Leeds

Leicester
- Liverpool

London

Manchester

Newcastle

Nottingham



9.5 Overall customer satisfaction against legal industry average of **8.3**



Revenue
c£156.8million

Our clients include



210 Local Authorities / Other Public Bodies



104 NHS Trusts & Commissioners



67 Police Forces / PCCs / Fire & Rescue



42 Universities



84 Schools / Colleges



37 Registered Providers

Supplier Introductions

We have more than 350 lawyers working on behalf of our public sector clients across both the GCA mandatory and optional specialisms.

They are supported by more than a 1,000 additional lawyers and paralegals across the firm, giving clients confidence that we not only have a wealth of dedicated specialist advisors in the sector, but the bench strength to call on as required for ‘surge events’ – such as a major public enquiry.

Key members of our team are named here, and their profiles are all available by clicking their name or visiting: www.weightmans.com/people

Who to Contact

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Mandatory Specialisms

Children & Vulnerable Adults
Marion Robinson

Planning Law
John Gregory

Construction Law
Richard Vaughan

Public Inquiries & Inquests
Martin English

Employment Law
Nick Newman

Procurement Law / Public Private Partnerships (PPP)
Stephen Johns

Health, Healthcare & Social Care
Richard Jolly

Real Estate & Real Estate Finance
Rose Moss

Housing Law
Sian Evans

Restructuring & Insolvency
Charles Boyne

Optional Specialisms

Aviation & Airports
Andrew Krausz

Immigration
Younes Ech Chadli

Artificial Intelligence & Data Protection
Thomas Barrett

Pensions Law
Cat Ellis

Debt Recovery
Benjamin Davies

Tax Law
Haydn Rogan

Energy & Environmental Law
Simon Colvin

Insurance & Reinsurance
Keiran Jones

Social Value

Our vision is to become one of the most socially responsible and environmentally conscious UK-based law firms. We believe that focus on good governance, responsible sourcing, health, safety & wellbeing, diversity, equity & inclusion at workplace and environmental footprints reduction across our offices is paramount to our business success.

We have outlined our various social value activities linked to the eight policy themes and outcomes set out in [PPN 002: The Social Value Model](#) below. We would be delighted to work with Buyers on these and other initiatives through the current GCA framework.

Carbon Reduction

Interested in what we're doing on sustainability?

View our [Carbon Reduction Plan](#)



1. Fair work: that offers fair wages and good working conditions.

Weightmans has been recognized as a top employer in the UK for the 19th consecutive year, achieving a position in the Top 10 Employers list. The firm's commitment to people-centric policies and practices has been acknowledged by the Top Employers Institute, which celebrates organizations that create positive workplace environments.

The firm is an accredited Living Wage employer – demonstrating our commitment to fair pay and decent working conditions for all staff.

2. Skills for growth: supporting growth sectors and addressing skills gaps.

We were pioneers in developing the apprenticeship pathway into law by hiring the first Higher Apprentice in Legal Services in the country. Client apprentices receive networking and mentoring support as well as the chance to swap roles with our apprentices.

We also support staff by providing role-specific sponsored training and all employees have development plans to support them to maximise their potential and mandatory training, at least annually.

3. Resilient, innovative and flexible supply chains

Weightmans manages its supply chain on a responsible procurement basis, integrating climate action and social value into its Supplier Code and enforcing these through the supplier pre-qualification questionnaire (PQQ) process.

Specific supply chain monitoring efforts include:

- Prioritising Local Supply Chains: Weightmans actively prioritises local suppliers, supporting the local economy and reducing transport-related emissions.
- Management Systems Approach: The firm adopts ISO 14001 and

ISO 50001 management systems to manage climate change risks across its supply chain.

- ESG Manager Oversight: A dedicated ESG Manager works with clients and suppliers to lower emissions, deploy gap assessment tools, and use a carbon footprint calculator to track ESG progress.
- Dashboard Reporting: Supply chain commitments are recorded and reported, enabling joint tracking of progress with clients and suppliers.
- Quarterly Reviews: Social Value Champions meet quarterly with clients to discuss progress, exchange good practice, and address challenges, supported by wider CSR and ESG teams.

4. Sustainable procurement practices

We are committed to achieve net-zero by 2030, reducing our carbon emissions and achieving the highest Platinum sustainability rating by Ecovadis, evidencing our commitment. We are members of UN Global Compact initiative, the Legal Sustainability Alliance and signatories of the Greener Litigation Pledge. In our most recent NHS Evergreen sustainable supplier assessment we achieved Level 4 – the highest rating available.

Through sustainable service delivery and collaborative carbon reduction efforts, we can help buyers using GCA meet their net-zero/scope 3 emissions targets, by:

- Prioritising electronic meetings and public/clean transport for necessary business travel. We have committed to maintain a business miles travelled per £m of revenue ratio, of 60% less than on our 2019 baseline.
- Utilising green energy in our offices (6/10 offices of our offices currently utilise green energy).
- Reducing paper usage - achieving an 80% reduction on our 2019 baseline – verified in ISO audits.

Social Value (cont.)

5. Support the reduction in crime

We are dedicated to supporting local organisations in reducing anti-social behaviour and addressing the causes of crime, breaking the cycle of re-offending, and providing support for victims:

- We work with the ProBono network, Trust Law, an online initiative connecting disadvantaged communities without funding to access legal support.
- Within local communities, undertaking 'Right to Read' Initiatives (assisting primary school children with basic reading skills), holding mock careers interviews/CV assistance workshops.
- Volunteering with local community groups and charities. Staff are allowed 2-days leave, fully paid, to support charitable initiatives.

6. Employment and training for those who face barriers to employment

As a Ministry of Justice social mobility pledge signatory, Mindful Business Charter member, and a Living Wage employer, we tackle economic inequality by fostering social mobility, supporting skills development and promoting inclusive employment opportunities.

We promote access to legal careers through our apprenticeship academy. Our inaugural cohort of 7 students completed their SQ's in 2025 and subsequently secured full-time employment with us. Two interns from our social mobility program (with Everton in the Community) are also now employed by us. Our solicitor degree apprenticeship scheme provides an accessible route to the law for 15 students from underrepresented backgrounds.

We support young adults, with a focus on improving social

mobility and generating sustainable employment opportunities by working with:

- Sutton Trust - assisting universities with Pathways to Law (including placements and e-mentoring).
- Seashell Trust – assisting students with complex disabilities by providing work experience and supporting development of life skills.
- Citizenship Foundation – raising awareness of legal careers, hosting mock trials and mentoring.
- Action Tutoring – Supporting disadvantaged pupils to progress to further education, employment or training.
- BPP and University-affiliate law clinics - supporting students by providing pro bono legal advisory services to those in society unable to obtain paid legal advice or representation to resolve disputes.

7. Creating a pipeline of opportunities for the contract workforce, reducing barriers to entry for under-represented groups.

We ranked 5th in the Top Employer Institute survey, recognising outstanding people-centric policies and practices, supporting our inclusive culture across gender, disability & neurodiversity, LGBTQ+, and race, ethnicity and culture.

Our key initiatives, promoting diversity, inclusion and accessibility within our workforce include:

- Transparency in pay and promotion processes.
- Masking personal details in CV's to avoid shortlisting bias.

- Diverse interview panels.
- Traditional and reverse mentoring schemes.
- Equal opportunities in leadership development programs.
- Annual gender & ethnicity pay gap analysis.

As recognised Diversity Pioneers in the Lawyer UK 200 Diversity Awards, we will promote our continuing diversity initiatives collaboratively with buyers using GCA.

8. Increasing productivity through physical and mental wellbeing: in the supply chain and communities.

As a Mindful Business Charter signatory, we promote open dialogue and mental wellbeing, with our staff and have 50+ Mental Health First Aiders providing peer support. We embed wellbeing through:

- Flexible/hybrid working arrangements, promoting a healthy work-life balance.
- Personalised, role-specific development plans with targeted mentoring/training, supported by line managers.
- An Employee Assistance Programme, a confidential, free service available to staff 24/7/365.
- A volunteering policy enabling staff 2 working days per annum to advance social & environmental causes through volunteering/pro bono work with clients.

Mandatory Specialisms

Charities

Mandatory: Lot 1b..

Our multi-disciplinary charities team includes specialists in charity law, property, employment, trusts and corporate/commercial law and governance and regulatory matters. We advise a large number of charities and third sector organisations across the country.

With charities always looking to find ways to increase their funds available to meet their objects we provide trading, structural and tax advice including the incorporation of trading subsidiaries and ensuring arrangements between them and the charity are lawful.

Our specialist team regularly provides ongoing trustee guidance to a large number of charities including the drafting of appropriate minutes and resolutions, advice upon governance matters and training while our corporate/commercial team advises upon charity-to-charity mergers and acquisitions and ancillary agreements.

Similarly, we advise our charities clients on the use of and lawful disposal of charitable property, often working closely with charitable surveyors. We also deal with grant funding agreements.

With the potential for employment issues for charities providing a source of significant public exposure for charities our employment team advises on the drafting of contracts and policies to dealing with large employment claims or the exit of senior staff. The team appreciates the need to balance discretion with the requirement to make appropriate reports to the Charity Commission.

For example, we **worked with an NHS organisation** on a joint funding project with a company and its charity arm to develop a clinical trial network across the UK aimed at supporting advanced therapies for the treatment of patients with haematological malignancies, for whom access to novel treatment has been both challenging and geographically biased. Our support included advising on and drafting grant funding, collaboration and services agreements to comply with charity law and regulation.

Children & Vulnerable Adults

Mandatory: Lot 1b, 1c. Optional Lot 1a, 2.

Our dedicated adult and child social care team advises local authorities, healthcare commissioners and NHS Trusts across a range of care and safeguarding-related matters. Members of our team have worked in-house, giving them valuable insight into the challenges involved and the ability to quickly build strong working relationships with in-house teams.

We offer the scale clients need to tackle backlogs in work – **for example in the past two years we have conducted 206 Child Social Care** cases for local authorities across England & Wales, providing a full transactional service, including Advocacy as required.

We regularly advise public bodies on all aspects of their duties, including under the Children Act, Care Act, Mental Capacity Act, Mental Health Act, and the NHS continuing health care duties, as well as matter such as ordinary residence, charging and commissioning disputes. We specialise in adult and child protection matters.

Support when you need it

We operate a national **Out of Hours (OOH) Service**, for social care matters for than 50 local authorities, providing urgent advice and ultimately making urgent court applications (such as Inherent Jurisdiction applications) as the circumstances dictate. Under the Out of Hours Service, we annually provide In-House legal cover for those councils who have a shut down during Christmas and New Year, this extends to ad hoc days as any client may request from covering an urgent Strategy Meeting to picking up a case load when a member is absent.

Commercial Litigation & Dispute Resolution

Mandatory: Lots 1a, 1b, 1c, 4.

Weightmans offers extensive experience and expertise in a broad range of high value complex commercial litigation including professional negligence, warranty claims, breach of contract, confidential and restrictive covenant claims, misfeasance, contentious IP disputes, including copyright and trademark infringement issues, passing off claims, misuse of confidential information, defamation and brand protection, company/director claims, shareholder disputes and unfair prejudice petitions.

Of particular interest to public bodies is our work on procurement disputes. When procurement disputes arise, they can be complex and are subject to tight timescales. We recognise the need to obtain high quality, urgent advice and respond quickly. Our extensive legal and practical knowledge of how procurements should be run enables us to advise quickly analyse the issues, assessing whether a breach of the relevant regulations has occurred and the available options as a result.

We are often instructed to manage procurement claims in the High Court including specific disclosure requests, establishing confidentiality rings and applications to lift the automatic suspension.

The combination of our in-depth knowledge of the public sector and understanding of the unique characteristics of procurement challenges allows us to find commercial and cost-effective solutions for our clients.

Our team regularly delivers training on contract law and public procurement law, particularly on how to manage risk in contractual relationships and on how to manage risk during a procurement process, including under the Procurement Act 2023.

Competition Law

Mandatory: Lots 1a, 1b, 1c, 4. Optional: Lot 2

Following Brexit, the UK has developed its own competition, procurement and subsidy control rules distinct from those operated by the EU. Our recognised team of experts provides advice and training on these important areas of the law.

We also give specialist and practical advice on the new National Security and Investment Act and its impact on different types of transactions.

We specialise in subsidy control advice under the new UK regime post-Brexit and advise on grant and loan funding, regeneration projects and contract procurement. We advise local authorities, listed companies, universities, developers and venture funds on subsidy control issues with grants, loans and deal structures.

We continue to provide subsidy control advice and training to **the two largest English JEREMIE funds**, operated by the North West Fund and West Midlands Local Enterprise Partnerships, the Northwest Powerhouse Equity Fund and the Midlands Enterprise Investment Fund.

We provided **subsidy control advice to the University of Cumbria** in relation to the £11m grant funding of the Barrow Campus project to create a new University of Cumbria campus in Barrow. We advised on whether the project involved a subsidy for the purpose of Subsidy Control Act 2022 or whether it was outside the Act as core educational funding, as well as on whether amendments to the grant agreement brought the project within the scope of the Act.

Construction Law

Mandatory: Lots 1a, 1b, 1c, 4. Optional: Lot 2

Our construction lawyers provide a full service advising on all aspects of construction risk management from procurement to completion.

Clients include employers, contractors, sub-contractors, consultants, developers and end-users across all sectors. We are involved in a wide and diverse range of projects from biomass CHP plants, to mixed-use commercial schemes, university campuses, police and fire headquarters and more.

Our experience in acting in every stage of a construction project gives us the depth of knowledge to understand and address issues faced by clients in the industry. We listen to our clients and work closely with them to help understand and achieve their commercial aims.

We draft and negotiate on all the major standard forms of contract, including JCT, NEC, FIDIC, MF/1 and IChemE and prepare bespoke contracts where appropriate.

We are experienced in all forms of construction dispute resolution, including adjudication, arbitration, litigation, mediation and expert determination endeavouring to find a creative and cost-effective method for the early and commercial resolution of issues.

The team worked with the **University of Cumbria on the £78m Carlisle Citadels** scheme to create a new campus using the historic Citadels building as a gateway into the city of Carlisle. The many and varied elements of the project include advising on acquisition of the property and its development, appointment of the professional team, managing planning and environmental challenges and commencement of the negotiation of the building contract.

Contracts

Mandatory: Lots 1a, 1b, 1c, 4. Optional: Lot 2

Our experienced team of commercial contracts solicitors are here to help whatever your project may be, ranging from strategic transformational transactions to business-as-usual arrangements. Our public sector clients include local authorities, healthcare providers, police forces and education institutions.

We adopt a pragmatic and commercial approach. We take the time to understand your organisation and objectives. We then provide solutions and options that are tailored to achieve this. Our focus is always to listen to your needs and to work with you on the practical steps to take to maximise value and manage risk.

We pride ourselves on being responsive and achieving your goals within the desired timeframes. We are here to facilitate, not delay.

While we have wide-ranging contracts expertise, we typically advise clients on:

- Terms & Conditions – Digital, Services & Goods
- Framework Agreements / Master Services Agreements
- Agency Agreements / Distribution Agreements
- Manufacturing Agreements
- Advertising, Media and Marketing Agreements
- Consumer Terms & Conditions
- Confidentiality Agreements

Examples of our recent expertise include:

- Advising a healthcare provider on a master services agreement for the development of a patient support app.
- Advising a UK supplier of healthcare services provider on a warehousing and logistics agreement for the storage and delivery of pharmaceutical products.
- Advising public bodies on mobility as a solution projects, integrating various forms of transport into a single service.

Corporate Law

Mandatory: Lots 1a, 1b, 1c. Optional: Lot 2

We provide a wide range of corporate law services to UK and international quoted and private companies, public sector organisations, owner managed business, start-ups, banks, investment funds, management teams and entrepreneurs.

Our corporate solicitors provide a comprehensive range of corporate transactional services, including mergers and acquisitions (both public and private), management buy-outs and buy-ins, trade sales and disposals, private equity, capital markets transactions (including IPOs and reverse takeovers on the Main Market and AIM) and VCT investment.

We also handle company formations, reorganisations and restructuring, joint ventures, shareholder and investment agreements and advise on general company law compliance and corporate governance. We advise on share schemes and other employee incentives, from EMI schemes to more bespoke arrangements.

Public sector governance

Governance is a key area of concern for all public and quasi-public sector bodies, local authorities, universities, charities, registered providers, police authorities, fire and rescue authorities and health trusts.

Our company law solicitors can help you adapt to new legislative requirements, best practice and Corporate Performance Assessment achievement and bring together governance, internal control, risk management, legal awareness and compliance in the way that suits you best. We offer comprehensive in-house training on corporate governance and directors' duties.

Our depth of knowledge throughout the public sector enables us to provide in-depth advice on joint working arrangements. As a major national practice, we can draw on the special expertise of our corporate team to help you set up partnerships, joint ventures and innovative structures for joint service delivery. Our public sector governance advice offers a joined-up seamless service such that corporate structures are consistent with regulatory, procurement and state aid considerations.

Costs Law - General

Mandatory: Lot 6.

We have 20 legal costs specialists working within our firm, aligned to particular types of claims and sector areas, with in excess of 180 years of experience across a range of costs disputes on both the Claimant and Defendant side.

Our team all have experience in managing costs matters for public sector clients, including housing associations, local authorities and police forces. We are embedded with the litigation teams we serve, using the same case management system, providing an integrated service and one which benefits the conduct of the litigation rather than one which only gets involved at the end of a case.

We make extensive use of technology to ensure efficiency and reduce cost, for example we developed Calculate Costs – our digital tool used by the team to ensure fixed recoverable costs are accurately assessed. Reporting across the whole technology estate at Weightmans is provided by our Data Warehouse. The reports and data are presented to colleagues in a variety of methods, the most popular being PowerBI, and delivered to clients through our OneView extranet.

We have developed an in-depth knowledge of opponent's tactics and are able to utilise our knowledge and data to determine what can be recoverable from previous determinations at court, case law or handling on previous matters.

Where possible, the team deal with our own costs advocacy, which provides better knowledge of what the court and judges allow at any court assessments.

As an example of the impact of our work, over the last 12 months our team has worked with 25 of the firm's police force clients on over 400 **matters to save them collectively £1.6m** against values claimed – vital savings for the public purse.

Court of Protection

Mandatory: Lot 1c. Optional Lot 1a, 1b, 2.

We handle public sector Court of Protection work at scale, advising local authorities, NHS trusts, integrated care boards, independent sector health and social care providers and individuals across a wide range of circumstances, including those arising from clinical negligence, personal injury, acquired brain injury, dementia, stroke and aphasia.

The team handles the complete range of Court of Protection work, including: welfare and property and affairs deputyship applications; statutory wills and gift applications; Re X streamlined DoL applications; serious medical treatment decisions including end of life and withdrawal of treatment; restraint, sedation and transportation orders; s21A proceedings; financial abuse investigation and safeguarding; emergency deputyship; and cross-border matters involving overseas courts and administrators.

Members of our team include:

- Ben Troke - a nationally recognised authority on medical treatment decisions and deprivation of liberty. He sits on the Law Society's Mental Health and Disability Committee and the Law and Ethics Policy Unit of the Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine, served as legal adviser to the clinical ethics committee of Alder Hey Children's Hospital from 2024, contributed to the Law Society's updated national DoLS guidance and is the author of two published books in this field.
- Morris Hill – ranked in legal directories every year since 2013, and has an extensive catalogue of reported judgments representing local authorities and NHS bodies.
- Kirsty Stuart - chairs the Law Society's Mental Health and Disability Committee and has given oral evidence to the Joint Committee on the draft Mental Health Bill, with particular expertise in ATU cases and the MHA/MCA interface.

For example, we were instructed by an NHS Trust in relation to a young child who had been born with a congenital growth disorder, a rare genetic condition and a serious form of liver cancer. She had received chemotherapy, but the Trust considered it necessary for her to have a liver transplant – which the parents opposed. We applied to the High Court for an order that it was in this child's best interests to have the surgery. The Court agreed and the child received the life-saving transplant..

Education Law

Mandatory: Lot 1b. Optional Lot 1a, 1c, 2.

Our education legal team comprise considerable experience across both schools and higher education institutions – spanning public law, governance, student litigation, special educational needs and commercial / property law issues relating to the sector.

Our lawyers are experts in education, public law matters relating to child and adult protection, social and community care, judicial review and mental health/capacity issues. They understand the 'bigger picture' and the various tensions encountered and understand the complexities that arise when children and young people have additional needs arising from SEND, or who are subject to the Mental Health Act, looked after, involved with criminal activity or vulnerable to child sexual exploitation or County Lines.

Members of our team of education lawyers have held a variety of in-house posts in universities and thanks to our full range of legal services tailored specifically to higher education institutions and strong history of working with FE and HE, clients can be sure to receive a truly focussed service.

For example, **we advised QMUL on the establishment of a medical school in Malta**. Funded initially by the Maltese Government and based on the island of Gozo, the school provides a teaching programme delivered by staff from QMUL's Barts and The London School of Medicine and Dentistry. The school was built to QMUL's specification. QMUL entered into an agreed form lease on practical completion of the building for an initial term of 15 years. We advised on the education, construction, real estate and commercial aspects.

SEN Advice and Representation

We have supported local authorities to challenge adverse Tribunal decisions and have been successful in securing a review of those decisions or to have the case remitted for further hearing before a fresh Tribunal panel. We have yet to have a case where we have been successful in at the First Tier, appealed to the Upper Tier.

Employment Law

Mandatory: Lots 1a, 1b, 1c. Optional: Lot 2

Our market-leading employment lawyers advise employers, HR professionals and senior executives across the UK on all aspects of contentious and non-contentious employment law.

What sets us apart is our approach. We pride ourselves on being very commercial, seeing the big picture and understanding what is important to you. We take time to get to know you so that we can give you the best bespoke advice, concisely, in terms that you can easily digest.

You can trust us not to let you down when it comes to cost certainty, value for money and meeting deadlines. We also offer deep knowledge of the public sector – and the interaction between employment law and regulatory governance, in particular acting for:

- NHS bodies
- Local authorities – where we have developed a strong reputation for Equal Pay work
- Police forces
- Universities, colleges and schools
- Registered providers of social housing
- Non-ministerial government departments and non-departmental public bodies

Examples of our work include:

- Supporting several local authorities with all aspects of equal pay compliance. We have provided detailed advice on potential equal pay liabilities arising from matters such as contractual overtime, enhancements for bank holiday working, practices such as task and finish, the payment of market supplements and bonuses and job enrichment.
- Providing strategic advice to an NHS body on a major organisational restructuring – including the removal of three senior directors and the management of large voluntary redundancy schemes, all while the client was in the equivalent of “special measures” from a financial perspective.
- Representing a local authority in the defence of hundreds of Employment Tribunal claims brought by the trade unions relating to an alleged shortfall in holiday pay over several years arising from the UK Supreme Court decision in *Harpur Trust v Brazel*.

Finance & Investment

Mandatory: Lots 1a, 1b, 1c.

Weightmans’ experienced banking and finance team provides a uniquely broad and sophisticated offering to banks, borrowers, financial institutions and government departments on a wide spectrum of banking transactions including leveraged and structured finance, securitisation structures, syndicated lending and public sector finance.

We provide advice on all kinds of debt finance activity, including:

- Acquisition and leveraged finance
- Asset-based lending
- Asset finance
- Invoice discounting finance
- Fund Management
- Project and infrastructure finance
- Real estate finance
- Trade and export finance

Our banking and finance experts advise on security, intercreditor and related matters, on bilateral and syndicated loan arrangements including development finance, corporate acquisition finance and fund work. We have widespread experience on the establishment, regulation and dissolution of investment funds, including venture capital funds.

The team are also instructed by banks and borrowers and developers on all aspects of project, construction and development finance.

We are one of the few firms in the country to provide specialist advice to public sector organisations and fund managers on public sector investment funds. For example, our team is advising a national fund manager on numerous investor reserve allocation updates – including increase in funding to these entities. These funds are providing vital funding to SME’s across the North West and the wider UK – including both debt and equity finance

Grants

Mandatory: Lots 1a, 1b, 1c, 4. Optional: Lot 2

We specialise in subsidy control advice under the new UK regime post-Brexit and advise on grant and loan funding, regeneration projects and contract procurement. We advise local authorities, listed companies, universities, developers and venture funds on subsidy control issues with grants, loans and deal structures.

Our team are experienced in drafting templates for grant funding agreements, grant determination letters and Memorandums Of Understanding (MOUs) for grants awarded, as well as advising on the content of grant funding agreements, grant determination letters or MOUs for individual cases or schemes including any associated arrangements or documentation and negotiating such arrangements with other parties including any intermediary recipients or distributors.

We continue to provide subsidy control advice and training to **the two largest English JEREMIE funds**, operated by the North West Fund and West Midlands Local Enterprise Partnerships, the Northwest Powerhouse Equity Fund and the Midlands Enterprise Investment Fund.

We provided **subsidy control advice to the University of Cumbria** in relation to the £11m grant funding of the Barrow Campus project to create a new University of Cumbria campus in Barrow. We advised on whether the project involved a subsidy for the purpose of Subsidy Control Act 2022 or whether it was outside the Act as core educational funding, as well as on whether amendments to the grant agreement brought the project within the scope of the Act.

Health, Healthcare & Social Care

Mandatory: Lot 1c. Optional Lot 1a, 1b, 2.

Our health and social care team comprises more than 150 specialist health and social care lawyers, combining legal and medical expertise.

From commercial dispute resolution, healthcare regulation, to employment advice and risk management, we seek to offer the best guidance and practical advice on health-related matters. We are recognised by clients for our strength in the fields of inquests and mental health / mental capacity work.

Some of the key areas we cover include:

- Medical, surgical and dental malpractice/clinical negligence
- Services for NHS commissioners and providers
- Services for GPs, dentists, pharmacists and other primary care professionals
- Services for private health providers, including specialist hospitals, residential settings and community-based providers

Examples of our work include:

- Acting for an NHS Trust to navigate the complex legal and medical issues arising from the case of a detained patient who was 35 weeks pregnant at the time of instruction, with the local authority planning to take the child into care at birth. We worked with the trust and local authority to develop a complex conveyance and care plan. With our support, an application to the Court was avoided and the patient delivered a healthy baby and was able to receive the care and treatment she required.
- Working with an NHS Trust to review then develop and implement improvements to their coronial processes, after HM Coroner raised concerns with the Trust's Executive team. This involved an eight-month secondment, working with the Trust's legal, clinical and governance teams.
- Successfully representing Mental Health Trust in complex matter when a young man who had been detained under the MHA ligatured and sadly died in the mental health unit. We advised the Trust throughout during both police and CQC investigations. After submission of our detailed responses, the CQC did not prosecute.

Housing Law

Mandatory: Lot 1b. Optional Lot 1a, 1c, 2.

Our national housing law team comprise decades of experience and work with both registered providers and local authorities to help them manage their social housing stock in compliance with the relevant regulation.

We have a strong track record in managing housing condition / disrepair claims – **we achieve as much as 68% repudiation rate** (depending on organisation / client strategy and client) meaning nil damages paid to the Claimant or their solicitors particularly concerning the spurious or unwarranted claims. We also have expertise in defending high profile housing conditions class actions involving multiple residents represented by the same firm, carefully managing and co-ordinating response and overall strategy, to ensure consistency of approach, whilst protecting our clients from adverse publicity.

On housing management, we recognise the issues that can arise given the range of backgrounds and circumstances of tenants, so we have developed processes for tackling anti-social behaviour, gaining access to properties to carry out safety inspections, seeking possession of properties and pursuing debt recovery.

Our team can provide strategic advice at an early stage to try and nip issues in the bud. Where we can recommend pragmatic resolutions to issues, we will explore these with you. And when robust action is needed – such as emergency injunctions or issuing possession proceedings – we will take those steps to protect your communities and your organisation.

Housing Disrepair Tool

Our team have developed a bespoke disrepair reporting tool, which presents live data from client's disrepair instructions on our case management system and incorporates data extracts from their own system or data from other panel firms. The primary objective of our reporting tool is to deter solicitors from bringing misconceived claims with no reasonable prospect of success. The tool identifies which solicitors present the greatest challenge, based on the volumes of claims and the damages claimed.

Information Law including Data Protection

Mandatory: Lots 1a, 1b, 1c. Optional: Lot 2

For many organisations information, data and especially personal data are critical to the success of their businesses. Our data protection solicitors can help you protect these valuable assets. Public sector organisations are collecting, holding and processing ever greater amounts of personal data, special categories of personal data and other data in the course of their day-to-day operations. This data should be commercialised effectively and adequately protected.

Our expert team of data protection solicitors provides advice in respect of a full range of data protection and information governance related issues including:

- GDPR compliance audits
- Access to use and ethical exploitation of personal data
- Cyber liability and security breach management
- Data sharing, information sharing protocols and arrangements
- Data subject access requests
- ICO investigations and litigation
- Employment related issues
- International data transfers
- Social media and CCTV
- PECR and E-marketing
- Cookies and cookie policies.

We have a significant practice advising a wide variety of clients on data protection and information governance matters, acting for healthcare providers, universities, police forces and local authorities.

For example, we worked with the **West of England Combined Authority on their Future Transport Zone** programme, including the creation of a Mobility as a Service (MaaS) solution - a public transport app for the West of England. Part of our role has been to advise on the complex IT and Data Protection aspects of the project, ranging from advisory (lawful use and processing of high volumes of personal data) to transactional (drafting and negotiation of various data sharing arrangements within overarching IT agreements and discrete documentation), together with advice and preparation of various data-related documentation (e.g. EULAs and Privacy Notices).

Information Technology Law

Mandatory: Lots 1a, 1b, 1c. Optional: Lot 2

Our specialist IT lawyers have extensive technical expertise and experience in every aspect of software, e-commerce and IT law, including drafting bespoke contracts, acting on corporate transactions in the sector, and pursuing and defending claims.

Our cross-sector expert team has a deservedly solid reputation for providing high value, solution-focussed and commercial advice on complex IT law matters to high profile clients within the public sector – including NHS bodies, local authorities, universities and police forces.

We make it our job to understand IT, so we can work with you to enable your organisation to access IT resources. We are always clear about our role and deliver your needs in a pragmatic and efficient way. A major benefit for our clients is that we advise clients within the public and the private sector, and advise both vendors and purchasers of software system, therefore we have extensive and specialist knowledge from “both sides of the fence.” Our team also contains experts from various fields including IT, telecoms, data protection, IP, competition, litigation, cyber, corporate finance and taxation.

We are well known for advising public bodies upon transformational IT projects and disputes. We have advised a number of clients upon their innovative use of data analysis and complex and major AI projects and are regularly invited to discuss the development of AI with the media and at conferences.

Some recent examples of our work include:

- Advising a university upon a transformational core systems project
- Advising various public bodies upon the best routes to procure IT
- Advising an NHS Trust upon a software backed multi-Trust bank system for junior doctors
- The sale of a cloud-based video collaboration software business
- Successfully negotiating and terminating a high value IT agreement for a local authority due to a number of material defaults

Intellectual Property Law

Mandatory: Lots 1a, 1b, 1c.

Our specialist intellectual property (IP) lawyers are highly experienced in every aspect of intellectual property law, including drafting bespoke contracts, acting on corporate transactions in the sector, and pursuing and defending claims.

Our cross-sector expert team of intellectual property solicitors has a deservedly solid reputation for providing high value, solution-focussed and commercial advice on complex IP matters to high profile clients within the public and private sectors.

We make it our job to understand intellectual property law, so we can work with you to enable your organisation to use and commercialise intellectual property. We are always clear about our role and deliver your needs in a pragmatic and efficient way.

Intellectual property is often a valuable asset and its unique need for legal protection requires expertise.

Our IP expertise covers both non-contentious (such as assignments and licences) and contentious (IP disputes). We regularly advise clients upon IP matters whether as part of a larger project or transaction or as a stand-alone arrangement.

Recent examples of our work include:

- Licence of genomics software from one NHS trust to another
- Collaboration and development agreement between a University and a police force
- Licence and assignment of various IP rights for a University in relation to student learning and online training platforms
- Licence of various IP rights for medical supply and health care originations in relation to treatment and international training platforms.

Outsourcing

Mandatory: Lots 1a, 1b, 1c. Optional: Lot 2

Outsourcing can be a high stakes exercise. It can transform and drive an organisation forward if successful but if unsuccessful can have serious operational and financial impacts.

Our experienced outsourcing lawyers understand this dynamic. We help our clients across the outsourcing lifecycle from procurement, supplier selection, contract drafting, negotiations, contract management and termination/exit support.

We adopt a pragmatic and commercial approach. Outsourcing arrangements are typically long-term arrangements and need to commercially incentivise good performance whilst having robust levers to challenge and resolve unsatisfactory performance. We have the expertise to advise and guide you through this process.

We typically advise on the following types of outsourcing arrangements:

- Technology outsourcing
- Business process outsourcing
- Warehousing and logistics
- Facilities management
- Insurance claims handling
- Call centres
- Catering

We have experience in acting both on the client and supplier side of outsourcing arrangements.

Our recent experience includes:

- Negotiating a £35m technology outsourcing contract.
- Advising on a major tender for the outsourcing of road maintenance services.
- Acting for the supplier in relation to the outsourcing of the technology activities of a local authority.

Planning Law

Mandatory: Lot 4. Optional: Lot 1a, 1b, 1c, 2.

Weightmans' national planning team help clients across the UK to achieve their objectives and navigate the complexities of the planning and infrastructure consent regimes.

Our planning lawyers provide strategic advice, regularly undertaking legal audits of large planning applications and environmental statements to de-risk major projects and maximise the prospects of obtaining consent. We routinely negotiate high-value and complex planning and highways agreements and deal with associated highways and rights of way issues.

Key aspects of our practice include:

- **Contentious Matters and Planning appeals.** We regularly act in relation to high profile Judicial Review and Section 288 challenges. We are also regularly instructed on planning enforcement matters in the Magistrates' Court and provide legal support at appeal hearings and public inquiries.
- **Homebuilding.** Our team of specialist planning lawyers has advised on numerous urban extension projects and regularly advises both household name residential developers and local planning authorities.
- **Infrastructure.** Our team has strong major infrastructure experience — our planning lawyers have advised on over a dozen development consent order applications for nationally significant energy and infrastructure projects, representing promoters, local authorities and consultees.
- **Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs).** The team has notable CPO experience and is currently advising on the promotion of CPOs for major regeneration schemes.
- **Large developments.** The firm has unrivalled knowledge of advising local planning authorities on large and often contentious developments. This practical experience informs our advice to all clients and greatly assists in identifying solutions.

For example, we are advising two local authorities in relation to an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) for a **major new Solar Farm and Biodiversity Park**. This has included using our experience and expertise in dealing with major infrastructure projects to advise the local planning authorities on the drafting of the DCO; the disapplication of the usual planning controls and the fees and consenting regime.

Projects & Transactions

Mandatory: Lot 4. Optional: Lot 2.

Our team has considerable expertise in advising on major projects in terms of their value and strategic importance to clients. This includes key infrastructure projects, complex strategic procurements, public private partnerships and investments in energy efficient technology.

Our clients include local authorities, universities, police forces, registered providers and NHS bodies. Recent examples of our work include:

- Working with **Sunderland City Council on the £50m Sunderland Specialist Eye Hospital** project. We advised the council, who built the hospital in partnership with the NHS Trust, in the drafting, negotiation and conclusion of a building contract and all associated documents (Parent Company Guarantee, Performance Bond), consultant appointments, novations, and warranties.
- Advising **Wigan Council in relation to Together for Adoption**, a Regional Adoption Agency, involving Wigan and four neighbouring local authorities working in collaboration. This was a multi-disciplinary project requiring advice on public procurement, commercial, data protection and employment and pensions.
- Advising five local authorities on the planning, infrastructure and partnership elements of the **£1.3bn Harlow and Gilston Garden Town scheme**, which will create four new Garden Towns with 16,000 new homes in and around Harlow, as well as several town centre regeneration projects.
- Acting for the **University of Cumbria on the £78m Carlisle Citadels** scheme to create a new campus using the historic Citadels building as a gateway into the city of Carlisle. The many and varied elements of the project include advising on acquisition of the property and its development, appointment of the professional team, managing planning and environmental challenges and commencement of the negotiation of the building contract.
- Acting for **Merseytravel** on the procurement and contracting for the build of two new Mersey Ferries, providing environmentally friendly passenger and cruise services on the River Mersey and the Manchester Ship Canal.

Property & Real Estate Litigation / Disputes

Mandatory: Lot 4. Optional: Lot 1a, 1b, 1c, 2.

Our well established and nationally recognised Real Estate litigation team deals with a broad range of high value and technically complex claims for commercial clients, universities, local authorities and residential and social housing clients across the country.

Social housing is a key strength of the team including many of the largest social housing providers in the UK, including the largest provider, Clarion Housing.

We are a leading practice for healthcare-related property disputes involving care homes, private hospitals, and general practitioners' surgeries. Our ability to offer regulatory, health and safety advice to complement our real estate litigation capacity means we are perfectly suited for clients including NHS Foundation Trusts.

We advise on all aspects of property disputes and landlord and tenant issues including: enforcement of covenants, possession claims, service charge disputes, commercial rent arrears claims, enforcement of option agreements, dilapidations claims, contested business lease renewals under the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954, rent reviews, boundary disputes, party wall disputes, infringement of easements, rights of way and property arbitrations and property related contractual disputes.

Recent examples of our work include:

- Leading a claim in the High Court for recovery of over £5m for a local authority against the former owners of a shopping centre.
- Acting for a local authority pension fund in a dispute with a tenant of a London office property concerning service charges, the maintenance of mechanical and engineering plant at the building and alleged disturbance caused by a refurbishment.
- Regularly advising a nationwide registered provider of social housing on boundary disputes, claims for adverse possession and claims for access to neighbouring land.
- Advising a police force on lease renewals and terminations including advising on a building with a complex dilapidations liability.

Public Inquiries – Support to Participants & Inquests

Mandatory: Lots 1a, 1b, 1c. Optional: Lot 2

One of the core strengths of our public sector practice is our extensive statutory Public Inquiries work, demonstrated by our central involvement in almost every ongoing nationwide statutory Public Inquiry, where we represent a diverse range of clients across multiple industry sectors. Over recent years, our work in this area has covered representing multiple clients in:

- The Covid-19 Public Inquiry (CPI)
- The Southport Public Inquiry (SPI), commissioned by the Prime Minister in January 2025 following the attack in July 2024 in which three young girls were killed.
- The Thirlwall Public Inquiry (TPI) into the murders and attempted murders committed by Lucy Letby.
- The Nottingham Inquiry, established following the fatal stabbing attack in 2023.
- Representing multiple clients in connection with the Heaton Park Synagogue attack in Manchester in October 2025, including a blue light responder. We were instructed within 24 hours of the incident, reflecting the trust that emergency services place in Weightmans at the most critical moments.

We also have one of the largest specialist inquests and coronial law practices in the country with a clearly defined inquest team, including inquest advocacy team. We have a team of 70 lawyers, which handles law-defining work in inquests and coronial law and is instructed on almost 500 inquests a year, covering almost every coronial area in England & Wales. The nature of our client base means that we regularly handle complex and high-profile inquests including deaths in custody and complex mental health issues.

For example, we recently acted for clients in two inquests that resulted in Judicial Review hearings in the High Court and Court of Appeal, with one of those cases also being heard in the Supreme Court. Both cases are now cited as key authorities in the application of Article 2 ECHR in the inquest process.

Public Law (inc. Litigation & Disputes)

Mandatory: Lots 1a, 1b, 1c, 4. Optional: Lot 2

Our public law team has considerable experience in advising and representing clients during investigations and judicial reviews, as well as supporting in the creation and running of non-statutory Public Inquiries.

Judicial Review

This expertise extends into representing a wide spectrum of clients in Judicial Review, advice to organisations around their powers and administrative functions, as well as involvement in appeals arising from Disciplinary Hearings.

Our work in this area includes advising and representing: Regulatory Bodies; Judicial Office Holders, such as Coroners; Commissioned healthcare services; Local government organisations; Police Constabularies; Vulnerable and 'looked after' children; Executive officers and elected members of local authorities; and Regulated Inspectors.

Non-statutory Public Inquiries

Our specialist knowledge of the powers of administrative and local bodies has resulted in significant instructions on behalf of local authorities conducting non-statutory Public Inquiries.

We have often been appointed to commission and establish the Inquiry itself, most notably on inquiries such as the Telford Child Sexual Abuse Inquiry and more recently the Independent Inquiry into the Sheffield Street Trees Dispute.

Public Private Partnerships (PPP)

Mandatory: Lots 1a, 1b, 1c, 4.

Weightmans team has a long track record with PFI. Having first advised on numerous projects when originally procured in the early 2000s, we have more recently acted on a variety of issues arising from operational schemes. These include voluntary terminations, major variations, refinancings, contract interpretation, dispute resolution, and project restructuring. We have particular expertise in the complex insurance cost sharing arrangements that are typical in PFI contracts.

We have detailed knowledge of the original Treasury SOPC guidance and standard form sector-specific contracts, and we keep fully abreast of ongoing guidance issued periodically by NISTA - indeed, members of our team have been involved in the drafting of some of that guidance. All of which means we can quickly get to the heart of any contractual issue affecting your project and provide the best possible advice.

We can help with:

- Contract management – application of payment/performance mechanisms, poor performance issues
- Contract mechanisms – insurance cost sharing/Joint Insurance Cost Reports, energy consumption risk share arrangements, third party income share arrangements, benchmarking and market testing
- Major variations
- Project restructuring and Refinancing
- Contract interpretation
- Dispute resolution – negotiation, settlement agreements and project resets, adjudication processes
- Early termination
- Expiry planning and handback arrangements

We advised a police authority on preparations for expiry of its early PFI project, which includes unusual option arrangements relating to reversion of the assets to the authority at the end of the term. In addition to advising on contractual processes and valuation matters, we are also assisting the authority in its consideration of how to employ the PFI assets in future as part of its wider estate planning.

Public Procurement Law

Mandatory: Lots 1a, 1b, 1c, 4. Optional: Lot 2

Currently acting for over 180 public bodies, our commercial legal team aim to be an integral part of a client's 'legal eco-system', comprising legal, operational teams, other suppliers, consultants, customers and personnel.

It is an approach which translates equally well to either ongoing retainers or single projects where we can work in a way which optimises communication, reducing management time and waste.

The public procurement rules apply to public bodies when they are buying goods, works or services. A lot of the firm's health, emergency services, local government and education clients are subject to the regime, and it affects a number of our sectors and services involving both advisory and claims work.

We spend a lot of time structuring projects to be compliant with the rules including making use of exemptions for things like public sector collaboration and property development/regeneration schemes. We also advise suppliers to public bodies on the application of the rules to their projects.

For example, we supported **Greater Manchester Combined Authority on Project Skyline**, a collaborative project bringing together the ten Greater Manchester local authorities, the combined authority and the NHS to deliver residential children's homes with the objective of improving quality and cutting cost.

Working closely with legal officers at all 12 parties, we have developed the Partnership Agreement which is central to the project, setting out the roles and responsibilities of each of the authorities. This has required a strongly collaborative approach, recognising the common goals of all parties.

Real Estate & Real Estate Finance

Mandatory: Lots 1a, 1b, 1c, 4. Optional: Lot 2

Our national real estate practice specialises in advising public sector clients, including local authorities, NHS bodies, universities, schools and several blue light authorities.

We are used to supporting significant regeneration projects and legacy developments nationwide – working closely with our colleagues in construction, planning and commercial to provide the specialist team these major projects require. This includes a strong specialism in delivering ambitious decarbonisation and renewable energy schemes.

On real estate finance we work with some of the country's leading financial lending institutions, as well as private investors from the UK and overseas. We support our clients with refinancing and complex bridging loan transactions, ensuring compliance and efficiency as they are subject to tight timescales.

Recent examples of our work include:

- Acting for a university on a complex lease of a building on their science park to become a veterinary teaching hospital – creating employment opportunities for university graduates.
- Working with a local authority to increase children's services across the borough through development of a uniform lease which to date we've used across 40 different sites.
- Advising a police force on the sale of their headquarters for a mixed use development scheme. The disposal included complex title considerations, leasehold challenges, environmental challenges, multiple and complex overage agreements; and multiple stakeholder considerations including public consultations.
- Working on behalf of a local authority to acquire three sites for schools needed as part of their urban extension plans. The transaction has involved complex title and planning issues, including the negotiation of extensive positive and restrictive covenants, step in rights and statutory agreements relating to highways, services and adoption. Our role has been critical in helping the council meet start-on-site deadlines, to safeguard new school places in the area.

Restructuring & Insolvency

Mandatory: Lots 1a, 1b, 1c. Optional: Lot 2

Our restructuring and insolvency solicitors provide a comprehensive UK-wide restructuring advice service based on extensive experience and expertise, to help you make the best of any situation.

We offer expertise in areas such as company and insolvency law, tax, finance, property, banking, employment and dispute resolution, so we can advise you on the full range of options available to you. We'll give you pragmatic and objective commercial advice to help you achieve the best results, whatever the circumstances. The team also has expertise of cross-jurisdictional insolvencies with a particular focus on asset recovery and extensive experience of director disqualification work.

Our team can advise on how to restructure a business to keep it trading, including restructuring the balance sheet, rescheduling debts and raising new funds. The team also assist with advising directors on their duties and providing contingency advice.

Our restructuring and insolvency lawyers also have extensive experience advising on solvent restructuring projects, ranging from demergers (whether to separate assets following a shareholder dispute, facilitate a sale or create separate and distinct companies or groups) to capital reductions to create distributable reserves or return surplus capital to shareholders and internal group reorganisations of assets or subsidiaries.

Where restructuring isn't possible or desirable, we can help maximise the value gained for a company's creditors through formal processes such as administration and liquidation.

We acted for **Oldham Council on an urgent purchase through administration of the assets of a care home**. We worked closely with the Council team to provide a legal solution to the deteriorating financial condition of the existing care provider and safeguarding the continued provision of services to 100+ vulnerable residents and preserve the employment of 200 employees.

Optional Specialisms

Artificial Intelligence & Machine Learning Law

Optional: : Lots 1a, 1b, 1c , Lot 2.

We regularly advise on the legal implications of rapid developments in AI and machine learning, including regulatory compliance, intellectual property protection, and personal data use.

As the use of AI has gathered pace, we've invested in recruiting a number of senior specialists to support our public and private sector clients in delivering their technology projects. Our team includes:

- **Thomas Barrett** – Thomas leads on Data Protection and Privacy. Prior to joining Weightmans, Thomas worked at the UK Government Legal Department providing advice to the Home Office, the Cabinet Office and the Ministry of Justice. He has an established track record in navigating complex and strategic data compliance issues including those arising from the application of novel technologies such as facial recognition, AI/machine learning and automated decision-making.
- **Rem Noormohamed** – Rem is a highly experienced international lawyer with extensive strategic advisory, transactional, regulatory, commercial and dispute resolution expertise. He specialises in AI/technology and telecoms, data privacy and cybersecurity, EU/UK digital regulations, IP and EU/UK competition and complex business change / digital transformation. Rem has dual qualifications as a lawyer and an electronic and communication engineer.
- **Bill Molloy** – formerly Head of Technology and Life Sciences at an international law firm, Bill advises in respect of high value corporate and shareholder disputes; commercial disputes and disputes concerning AI, technology, telecoms and data. Bill has significant experience of large scale technology projects and associated intellectual property rights in the energy, life sciences and communication sectors.

A major benefit for our clients (and the firm) is that we advise clients within the public and the private sector, and advise both vendors and purchasers of software, therefore we have extensive and specialist knowledge from “both sides of the fence.”

We are currently advising a number of police forces on the **adoption of automated facial recognition technology** – a key tool in the future of law enforcement, but one that carries significant legal implications.

Aviation & Airports

Optional: Lots 1a, 1b, 1c , Lot 2.

Our experienced aviation lawyers advise clients on a very broad range of aviation matters, be it within the general aviation, business jet, airline, airport, engineering or product/manufacturer arenas.

We are established on most of the major aviation underwriter panels / panel equivalents and are in repeated receipt of high-value complex aviation instructions.

Contentious work typically includes defending clients and dealing with personal injury/fatality, damage and product liability claims or dealing with insurance coverage. Subrogation claims are also a regular feature. We also have experience in dealing with regulatory matters and commercial disputes. We pride ourselves on being a one-stop shop for clients who often also need assistance with employment, property, tax, corporate/commercial or private client matters.

Our membership of global networks, such as Insurance Law Global and Legalink, as well as our team's extensive network of contacts and experience in managing aviation correspondent lawyers, means we are perfectly placed to handle claims with an international element.

The team's recent experience includes:

- Being appointed as sole provider for consumer claims in the UK and Ireland by a leading passenger airline, in a competitive tender – demonstrating our ability to handle a wide variety of aviation matters including regulatory advice, fuel supply and supplier anti-competitive behaviours, claims involving breach of human rights, etc.
- Bringing a \$20m subrogation claim against the operator of an airport and the ground handling agent after an aircraft was accidentally towed into a lighting mast, which fell onto the plane, meaning the entire nose cone needed to be replaced. We are leading this claim, with assistance of local German Counsel.
- Defending a personal injury claim brought by a helicopter pilot who alleged the accident was due to defective maintenance by our client. We utilised expert evidence to demonstrate our client's technical compliance and the negligence of the pilot, which led to the case settling at only a fraction of the cost originally demanded (£50,000 rather than £5 million).

Criminal Law

Optional: Lot 2.

Our national team of regulatory lawyers is a single-source service for all regulatory compliance issues. Whatever your business, we'll help you to prevent problems wherever possible, and to manage them effectively when they do occur, engaging with the regulator on your behalf to protect your business.

For critical situations where you may need immediate support and advice, we provide a 24-hour crisis response service. Our expertise includes:

- **Health and safety** - representing clients in the criminal courts and coroner's inquests following incidents involving asbestos exposure, electrocution, driving for work, falls from height, railway incidents, fire safety, building safety, transportation of hazardous materials, terrorist incidents, and corporate manslaughter
- **Environmental** – dealing with post-incident investigations by the environmental regulators — such as local authority EHOs, the Environment Agency, Natural Resources Wales, the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency, the Marine Management Organisation.
- **Financial crime** – acting for clients across all sectors in criminal investigations and prosecutions brought by all enforcement and prosecuting authorities including the Serious Fraud Office, Crown Prosecution Service, the Financial Conduct Authority, HMRC and the Information Commissioner.
- **Healthcare** – supporting organisations through coronial inquests, regulatory/CQC investigations and safeguarding / LADO and police investigations. Every year we represent hundreds of healthcare professionals before their regulators, in criminal investigations, at inquests, in disciplinary proceedings and many other professional matters.
- **Transport law** - representing organisations and its drivers during DVSA investigations and Traffic Commissioner proceedings and public inquiries, as well as representing company drivers, employees or managers during any interview under caution conducted by either the police, DVSA, or other enforcement body.

For example, we defended a local authority under investigation by the HSE after a tree on council land fell, killing a person. We utilised experts and detailed evidence of the tree inspection regime at the inquest to achieve a positive outcome for the Council.

Debt Recovery

Optional: Lots 1a, 1b, 1c , Lot 2.

Weightmans has been providing specialist recovery services to private and public sector clients for over 25 years, annually collecting in excess of £150 million. We take a commercial approach, focusing on the practical realities of each situation and creating bespoke processes to suit each client's requirements.

For our extensive public sector client base, budget pressures and funding cuts continue to be the driving factor for an increased reliance upon our debt recovery service – with instructions up 380% in the last year. Successful recoveries ease budgetary pressures, benefiting the public purse, and avoiding the need for further cuts to pay for debts that may otherwise have been written off.

Our client base includes:

- Police forces – including recovering legacy book debts and Proceeds of Crime Act criminal orders.
- NHS bodies – recovering legacy debt but also defending claims brought by care homes against NHS integrated care boards
- Local authorities – recovering adult social care costs, business rates, council tax and other sundry debts.

For example, we were instructed **by an NHS body to recover three unpaid invoices totalling £3.4m** from a company providing biological material delivery services. Working quickly alongside the client team, we agreed insolvency action would be the most cost-effective and time-efficient action to take and undertook the work on a contingent fee basis – our willingness to share risk providing assurance to our client.

Within 24 hours of the petition being issued, an instalment payment of £1m was received, with commitment to pay the remaining sums within 3 months. We recommended our client to counteroffer, requiring payment of interest and all legal costs immediately, given the risk of another creditor petitioning for the defendant's insolvency. The defendant accepted, resulting in our client recovering the debt owed within 28 days of instruction, on a cost neutral basis.

Emerging Policy & Legal Risk Advisory

Optional: Lots 1a, 1b, 1c , Lot 2.

Public bodies regularly call upon us to assist them in developing policy, or identifying potential legal risks involved in strategic projects including:

- High-value strategic procurements, including collaborative procurements
- Infrastructure projects that may be unpopular and opposed by local communities
- Complex restructuring projects, including those with trade union involvement
- Departures of senior executives
- Contentious matters that could proceed to Judicial Review or Public Inquiry
- Matters involving potential misconduct by senior employees or elected officials
- Increased use of new technologies including AI and machine learning
- Commercialisation of technology and intellectual property
- International expansion

The range of skills and experience across our senior lawyers, plus the fact that many of them have previously worked in-house in government departments, police forces, local authorities and universities means we are ideally placed to provide practical advice, tailored to the circumstances – not just black letter law.

Examples of our work include:

- Advising **Wigan Council in relation to Together for Adoption**, a Regional Adoption Agency, involving Wigan and four neighbouring local authorities working in collaboration. This was a multi-disciplinary project requiring advice on public procurement, commercial, data protection and employment and pensions.
- Advising five local authorities on the planning, infrastructure and partnership elements of the **£1.3bn Harlow and Gilston Garden Town scheme**, which will create four new Garden Towns with 16,000 new homes in and around Harlow, as well as several town centre regeneration projects.
- Advising a number of police forces on the legal considerations around use of **automated facial recognition** technology.

Energy & Natural Resources

Optional: Lots 1a, 1b, 1c , Lot 2.

Our lawyers work closely with organisations including large utilities, project developers, funders, new energy services companies, local authorities, resource/waste companies, major energy consumers, and water/wastewater companies and telecoms operators providing commercially focused legal advice to help them benefit from the opportunities created by market regulation, policy and other market drivers.

We advise our clients on:

- Energy generation projects, including solar, wind (both onshore and offshore), battery energy storage system (BESS) and other storage, energy-from-waste, marine energy, biomass, hydrogen and traditional oil and gas projects.
- District heat networks
- Water use, including emissions and pollution
- Climate change, carbon reduction and net zero
- Waste management and the circular economy

Our energy law experience includes:

- Advising the Liverpool Combined Authority on the delivery of the proposed Mersey Tidal Power Project.
- Advising Liverpool City Council on the energy services company arrangements for the supply of heat and electricity to its multi-phase mixed use development at Paddington Village.
- Advising a UK energy park on its energy supply and power purchase agreement arrangements, and related regulatory advice.
- Instructed by a local authority following the construction of a new development in close proximity to a previously unidentified water main. Advice provided upon access rights, statutory diversion procedures and legal remedies.
- Advising New Resource Partners in the negotiation and completion of a six-party consortium agreement for the development of a decentralised smart energy network in the greater Liverpool area. The project utilises new, innovative technology and is being part-funded by Innovate UK.

Environmental Law

Optional: Lots 1a, 1b, 1c , Lot 2.

We have a team of lawyers experienced in dealing with environmental, social and governance (ESG) related matters. They can help navigate your organisation through the challenges and opportunities that ESG presents. ESG means increased scrutiny for organisations and individuals. Consequently, actions that have environmental and social consequences are increasingly under the spotlight. This has caused a significant increase in ESG disputes and risks to reputation.

We prevent and solve disputes involving environmental compliance, including regulatory investigations and enforcement action, including defence of investigations into environmental performance led by the Environment Agency, Natural Resources Wales and the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency.

Our team also works closely with our real estate, planning and construction colleagues on planned developments with actual or potential environmental issues, to ensure these are dealt with as part of any planned development.

We practice what we preach, as demonstrated by Weightmans being members of the Greener Litigation Pledge steering committee, and also receiving the highest Gold rating by EcoVadis, a global sustainability rating provider.

Our environmental law experience includes:

- Advising a local authority on its role and responsibilities under the UK Contaminated Land Regime in connection with two contaminated sites in its area – which were the subject of a recent television documentary.
- Supporting an NHS body in relation to a loss of fuel from a refueling site near a hospital - we are advising our client on the associated environmental risks and liabilities especially in connection with its lease to occupy part of the site and use of the refuelling facilities.
- Advising a council in connection with their operation of a cemetery, which was at risk of closure due to potential unlawful groundwater contamination. We devised a plan of action for the Council around sensible investigation, risk mitigation and remediation that enabled it to keep the cemetery operations and at the same time remain compliant with the relevant legislation and guidance.

Financial Institutions Rescue & Insolvency

Optional: 2.

Complex insolvency or business restructure issues, including changes to management, ownership or financing, involve many different aspects and require wide-ranging professional support. Through the combined experience of our restructuring & insolvency and banking & finance teams we have the experience needed to handle these highly complex matters.

Our team includes restructuring and recovery specialists with expertise in areas such as company and insolvency law, tax, finance, property, banking, employment and dispute resolution, so we can advise you on the full range of options available to you. We'll give you pragmatic and objective commercial advice to help you achieve the best results, whatever the circumstances, wherever your interests are in the UK. The team also has expertise of cross-jurisdictional insolvencies with a particular focus on asset recovery and extensive experience of director disqualification work.

The team is led by four core partners, supported by 20 more dedicated staff. We act for insolvency practitioners, stakeholders, corporate entities and directors, handling all aspects of corporate restructuring work, and can advise on how to restructure a business to keep it trading, including restructuring the balance sheet, rescheduling debts and raising new funds.

Where restructuring isn't possible or desirable, we can help maximise the value gained for a company's creditors through formal processes such as administration and liquidation.

For example, **we advised the joint administrators of a specialist insurance broker**, in relation to the sale of the business and assets out of administration. This involved liaising with the FCA to obtain their consent of the administration and the ongoing provision of services to the customers, ensuring active policies continued and the employment of staff, TUPE considerations, providing advice regarding fixed and floating charges, dealing with the negotiation of and securing a debenture against the purchaser, to allow for a prompt completion in advance of receipt of deferred consideration.

Health & Safety

Optional: Lots 1a, 1b, 1c , Lot 2.

Our specialist team of health and safety solicitors provide organisations with a comprehensive service to help achieve compliance with regulatory requirements and robust support in the event of a serious health and safety incident.

Health and safety legislation is continually evolving and the penalties for non-compliance can be significant. Larger organisations risk fines measured in the millions and penalties can be imposed on leaders in their personal capacity. Our team is highly regarded in the field of health and safety and we can help you meet your legal obligations, avoid incurring heavy penalties and protect you against reputational harm.

We act for global insurers, commercial organisations and public sector as well as smaller organisations. Our recent cases include incidents involving asbestos exposure, electrocution, driving for work, falls from height, railway incidents, fire safety, building safety, transportation of hazardous materials, terrorist incidents, and corporate manslaughter cases.

Examples of our work include:

- Representing a local authority at six linked inquests resulting from deaths at a care home funded by the local authority. The families of the deceased allege that the six deaths in a four-year period were in part due to poor care offered.
- Representing a fire and rescue service in the Police, HSE and coronial investigation into the deaths of two firefighters and a member of the public in a blaze.
- Defending a local authority under investigation by the HSE after a tree on council land fell, killing a person. We utilised experts and detailed evidence of the tree inspection regime at the inquest to achieve a positive outcome for the Council.
- Defending a local authority from a police and HSE investigation following the death of an elderly pedestrian stuck and killed by a reversing waste collection vehicle.

Immigration

Optional: Lots 1a, 1b, 1c , Lot 2.

Our dedicated team of immigration solicitors specialise in providing strategic solutions to organisations of all sizes. We understand the unique challenges you face in today's global environment and offer tailored immigration guidance to facilitate your operations. We provide expert immigration advice and consultancy services to a range of clients including:

- Universities and other education providers in relation to student and worker sponsorship and compliance
- Local Authorities, to obtain immigration permission for children and vulnerable adults.
- UK employers and HR teams who need advice on employing migrant workers to fill skills gaps.

Key services include:

Sponsor licences

We regularly provide advice on sponsor licence applications, including gathering the required documentation, setting up compliant HR processes and advising on the Home Office's rigorous requirements for sponsor license holders.

For organisations that already have a sponsor licence in place, we are on hand to provide ongoing support on sponsor licence compliance, advising on issues such as: sponsor duties; ongoing record-keeping and reporting obligations; and preparing for Home Office audits and compliance visits.

If the worst happens and your sponsor licence is at risk of suspension or revocation, we can provide rapid and expert guidance to addresses any issues and remove the threat to your organisation.

Right to work checks and preventing illegal working

We can help you establish robust right to work checks, train your HR team on immigration rules and compliance, and provide guidance on any complex issues that arise.

Business visas and immigration routes

We can advise you on the full range of visas available to organisations seeking to appoint migrant workers and apply for the most appropriate route on your behalf.

Insurance & Reinsurance

Optional: Lots 1a, 1b, 1c , Lot 2.

Our national team of 400 insurance lawyers led by 41 partners prides itself on providing highly responsive solution driven expertise to leading global and national insurers, the London Market, insurance-related intermediary organisations and also counts numerous 'household name' self-insured organisations amongst its clients.

In the public sector, we advise approximately 300 local authorities, 150 NHS bodies and over 60 blue light services on their insurance claims.

We provide a full-service claims proposition from first notification of loss through to strategic litigation across a broad range of insurance disciplines, including motor, casualty, occupational disease, property damage and business interruption, clinical negligence, product liability, directors and officers, political risk and terrorism, professional risks, cyber, regulatory, reinsurance, subrogation, recoveries, marine and goods in transit.

We handle all sizes of claims with an estimated £2.3 billion of claims reserves under our management at any one time.

Examples of our work include:

- Successfully defending a six-figure claim against a local authority after a tree fell on two people, injuring one and killing their friend. A claim was filed despite reports from two tree experts stating that, although the tree had been planted 40 to 45 years prior to the accident, its falling was not foreseeable. We kept up a robust defence and the claimant discontinued.
- Successfully defending a claim from the deceased's son against a local authority. Following a suspected stroke the individual concerned spent two months in hospital before being discharged to a care home. After nine days there, he was discharged home and two days later fell, suffering fatal injuries. The claimant alleged that the decision to discharge his father from the care home caused his death. We maintained a robust denial regarding duty of care, and declined a settlement offer, and the claim was subsequently withdrawn.

Maritime & Shipping

Optional: Lots 1a, 1b, 1c , Lot 2.

Our marine and shipping law team comprises specialist solicitors and industry consultants and advises commercial marine and offshore operators and their insurers on contentious and non-contentious matters, including:

- **Shipping** - Our team of specialists advises ship operator and insurer clients (P&I, hull and machinery) on a range of liability and coverage issues in the areas of carriage of goods, time and voyage charterparties, cargo sale and supply contracts, and port and terminals liability, dealing in both defence and recovery matters. Our involvement ranges from routine laytime and demurrage disputes to financial disputes under charterparties and more complex matters involving cargo condition and specification, and in emerging marine sub-sectors including renewables and energy.
- **Cargo and vessel operations** - We have a wealth of experience in disputes involving loading/discharging operations, cargo shortage, contamination and loss, collisions, groundings. We act in all relevant forums including LMAA, LCIA, ICC, in the English courts and in mediation.
- **Marine contracts** - We advise on commercial shipping contracts and projects, including the drafting and negotiation of vessel sale agreements, charterparties, port terminal user contracts, supply agreements, logistics framework contracts, and routinely advise on BIMCO standard forms and wordings, including cyber, sanctions, emissions trading, and war/sanctions risks.
- **Personal injury** - Our specialist marine personal injury team commonly deals with fatal accident, injury and related loss claims, including Coroner's Court inquests. Our team also handles complex crew and stevedore injury claims.
- **Ports & terminals** - Our clients include some of the UK's largest port and terminal operators, port authorities and marinas. We provide advice on contentious and non-contentious issues. We deal with all issues arising out of the interaction between ship, port and cargo interests. From claims arising out of collisions, unsafe ports, pollution and environmental incidents, bailment and goods in transit to fatal accidents, HSE and MCA intervention, our detailed understanding of operational and legal issues affecting the marine industry as a whole enables us to give clients genuinely commercial advice.

Merger & Acquisition Activity

Optional: Lots 1a, 1b, 1c , Lot 2.

Our mergers and acquisitions lawyers cover the entire country with teams in Birmingham, Glasgow, Leeds, Liverpool, London, Manchester and Newcastle.

We act for both buyers and business owners in a wide range of industry sectors on M&A transactions, ranging from strategic acquisitions to entrepreneurs selling or exiting their businesses.

Our clients include larger corporates and listed companies, owner-managed businesses, SMEs and individual shareholders.

In the public sector we advise on deals of any size, ranging in value from less than £5 million to up to £100 million or more. Our M&A expertise includes:

- Share sales and purchases
- Business and assets transactions
- Buy and build transactions
- Strategic acquisitions and disposals
- Group restructurings and accelerated M&A.

For public bodies we call upon the expertise of our regulatory and compliance teams to ensure that the deal complies with an organisation's regulatory responsibilities.

For example, we worked on the **merger of two NHS trusts to create an organisation with an annual revenue of £750m**, undertaking substantial due diligence and advice on deal critical UK care regulatory and HSE regulatory aspects of the proposed acquisition. Our due diligence review was a statutory requirement as part of the review of the acquired trust prior to requesting the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to approve the transaction and move necessary legislation in Parliament to give effect to the merger. Our employment lawyers also assisted with the substantial TUPE consultation exercise.

Partnership Law

Optional: Lots 1a, 1b, 1c , Lot 2.

Our partnership team acts for professional partnerships including limited liability partnerships (LLPs) on the full spectrum of partnership matters.

From governance to restructurings, partnership disputes, and mediation, our partnership solicitors have extensive experience working with solicitors, doctors, dentists, accountants, architects, brokers, and other privately and family-owned businesses.

Partnership dispute solicitors

Our team is recognised as being truly expert in dealing with partnership disputes – whether that involves disputes between the owners, partnership exits (from both the firm's perspective and that of an outgoing partner or team) or dissolving a partnership. We routinely advise on the enforceability of post exit restrictive covenants and can assist with interim injunction applications, where an outgoing partner's right to work for clients of the firm is in question.

We deal with cases in the courts and (as is often provided for in partnership agreements) in arbitration. We also advise on internal and external regulatory and conduct issues, which often go hand in hand with disputes between professionals.

Partnership mediation

Members of our partnership team have decades of experience and can help to resolve disputes between partners through mediation, drawing on extensive experience of disputes in partnerships to defuse emotion and revolve confrontation, cost effectively.

Partnership agreements, structures, regulatory and compliance

We act in relation to the formation of partnerships, drafting partnership agreements and policies and restructuring. We offer practical and pragmatic advice to ensure your partnership is fit for purpose. We also offer a periodic health check to ensure that your arrangements are up to date and effective. Prevention is better than cure – and nowhere is that truer than in ensuring that your partnership is set up to run smoothly.

Pensions Law

Optional: Lots 1a, 1b, 1c , Lot 2.

For many public and third sector organisations pensions are a critical financial and practical concern. Employers must understand the risks and opportunities associated with their workplace pension schemes to control the risks and costs of providing the pension benefits they've promised. Scheme trustees and managers are concerned with the effective financial control and governance of their schemes.

We understand the issues faced by employers, trustees and others involved with pensions, thanks to extensive experience of working on a wide range of pensions matters.

The team works with a diverse range of clients in the local and central government, health, the emergency services, education, social housing and third sectors as well as advising private sector contractor clients operating within those sectors.

Recent examples of our work include:

- Working with a university to develop a cutting edge solution to save on employer Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) pension costs. The advice has included advising on a transition support scheme offered to current staff with a TPS entitlement to join the cheaper, USS scheme. It has also included advice in respect of a "total reward solution" such that staff can choose which pension scheme they participate in (ie TPS or the cheaper USS) and then take the balance of the reward envelope as pay.
- Advising a housing association on their exit from the LGPS fund, providing advice on feasibility, consultation with employees and unions analysis of past service benefit entitlements, design of future service benefits, and amending the contracts of employment of the affected employees.
- Providing strategic pensions and employment law advice to a local authority in respect of its proposed re-structuring of various services, assisting the client to prepare for the TUPE transfer of staff in relation to high-profile council services.

Project & Asset Finance

Optional: Lot 2.

Our real estate finance lawyers provide an expert advisory service on commercial property funding and security for corporate and commercial banks and other financial institutions.

Property deals can generate profitable business for finance providers, but only if the funding and security arrangements are tied down effectively. With many years' experience and expertise in this area, our experts can help you avoid the pitfalls and minimise any risks.

Our specialist real estate finance lawyers work closely with you on every aspect of a property transaction, from due diligence to the perfection of your security.

We act for major high street banks and financial institutions, providing advice on funding agreements and the creation of security over freehold and leasehold property. Our experience includes lending transactions from single land sites to complex property portfolios and mixed-use development schemes.

We can advise you on the different forms of security and explain the advantages and disadvantages of each, acting as your independent solicitors or in conjunction with your customer. As independent advisers, we understand your reputation is on the line and take every step necessary to protect it.

You can choose to have a basic or complete assessment of your existing security to ensure your interests — and ultimately your bottom line — are safely protected. We'll advise you on the enforceability and effectiveness of your security by explaining rights and obligations in the context of real-life scenarios.

Tax Law

Optional: Lots 1a, 1b, 1c , Lot 2.

Our expert tax solicitors provide practical and commercial tax advisory and support services for individuals, businesses and organisations including advice in relation to:

- Corporate transactions (mergers, acquisitions and reorganisations)
- Employee share schemes and incentives
- Investments and accessing investment reliefs (EIS and VCT)
- Property transactions (ranging from residential and commercial property investments to lease renewals and surrenders, joint ventures and development projects) including SDLT and VAT issues
- Joint ventures and public/private sector partnerships
- Shareholder disputes and tax-related professional negligence claims
- Employment status issues

Particular areas of specialism and expertise of our tax advisory team include:

- Working with public sector bodies to provide tax-efficient models for joint ventures and collaborative operations
- Advising on the design and implementation of employee share incentives
- Advising on tax-efficient corporate restructurings including demergers and capital reductions
- Providing legal transitional tax support to other professional advisers.

We understand that you need commercial as well as technical advice. We cut through the complex technical language to get to the heart of the issue, discuss the relevant issues and options in plain terms and provide clear practical advice. We also help to implement transactions to ensure that the contractual documentation is drafted so as to achieve the desired effect.

For example, our team worked with colleagues in the commercial and property teams in relation to the negotiations for a **lease of new headquarters for a police authority**. The proposals involved entering into an Agreement for Lease and contributions towards works. The tax team, working closely with the property team, were able to provide advice on the SDLT reporting and payment obligations and identify opportunities to defer and/or mitigate the overall SDLT costs.



See the Possibility[★]