

Leila is an established, well-regarded and sought after Barrister who specialises in public, regulatory and common law.

Leila is regularly instructed in complex and high profile cases to represent and advise local and central government departments, individuals, and a variety of public and private organisations before a range of courts, tribunals, and constitutional panels across a multitude of legal areas and issues arising in her areas of practice.

Leila has been instructed in matters of national significance such as the Manchester Arena Inquiry, the Gosport Independent Panel Inquiry, the Hillsborough Inquests, and in relation to the Northern Ireland Renewable Heat Inquiry.

PROFESSIONAL LEGAL RANKINGS

Ranked as a leading junior in Inquests and Inquiries:

"Offers exceptional support, quickly grasps the key issues and complexities in the case and adopts a methodical and thorough approach." "Her attention to detail is fantastic and she is very proactive. She is also easy to get hold of." **Chambers and Partners, 2022**

"Leila's attention to detail and thoroughness are outstanding. Leila is a fantastic team player and ensures that everyone's view is considered. Leila's view is invariably sensible and clear" **Legal 500, 2022**

"A skilled advocate with excellent experience in this field. She has represented both public authorities and the bereaved in numerous high-profile inquests and inquiries, including the fresh Hillsborough inquests. She also appeared on the Gosport Independent Panel" **Chambers and Partners, 2021**

"I would not hesitate to recommend her as she is excellent with clients and has a commanding presence on her feet in court." "Leila Ghahhary is extremely bright, thorough and meticulous; her analytical skills are second to none, as is her knowledge of public and regulatory law." "She is very sharp, delightful with solicitors and clients, and determined and fair in court. She's also meticulously well prepared." **Chambers and Partners, 2021**

"A 'commanding and authoritative presence on her feet', Leila Ghahhary is also one to watch in this area of practice" **Legal 500, 2021**

"Leila is an exceptional find! She has a background in local authority work which ideally suits some of the issues that arise in inquests and inquiries. Leila is an extremely competent advocate, compelling and impressive on her feet, always meticulously prepared and provides her clients with utmost confidence." **Legal 500, 2021**

Ranked as a leading junior in Business and Regulatory Crime:

"Leila is a fantastic addition to any team. Her attention to detail and knowledge of niche regulatory areas is worth its weight in gold. Leila is refreshingly hard working and gives masses of time and attention to any job" **Legal 500, 2022**

"Leila is becoming a true expert in this field. Her background is superbly suited to the difficult and unusual regulations that appear in many cases. She is an absolute delight to work with and often has razor-like insight into complex cases. Her client care is second to none and she is always a real help." **Legal 500, 2021**

"She has good judgment and a commanding presence in court" **Legal 500, 2020**

SPECIALIST PANEL APPOINTMENTS

Leila has been appointed onto:

- The **Attorney General's Panel of Counsel**. She regularly receives instructions from the Government Legal Department to represent and advise a variety of government departments on a range of public law and civil matters.
- The **Panel of Specialist Advocates in Health and Safety and Environmental Law** providing advice and representation to the Health and Safety Executive, the Environment Agency, the Office of Rail and Road, the Care Quality Commission, the Office of Nuclear Regulation and, Natural Resources Wales.
- The **Equality and Human Rights Commission Panel of Counsel** providing advice and representation to the Commission on matters relating to equality, public and human rights law.



CONTACT DETAILS

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PRACTICE AREAS

- Public Inquiries
- Inquests
- Judicial Review
- Equality and Human Rights
- Health and Safety
- Licensing
- Trading Standards / Consumer Protection / Food Safety
- Environmental Protection
- Fraud
- Professional Disciplinary
- Housing, Planning and Highways

APPOINTMENTS

- Attorney General's Panel of Counsel
- Panel of Specialist Advocates in Health and Safety and Environmental Law
- Equality and Human Rights Commission Panel of Counsel

MEMBERSHIPS

- International Bar Association
- Administrative Law Bar Association
- Health and Safety Lawyers Association
- Criminal Bar Association

EDUCATION

- LLB (Hons)
- LLM
- Bar Vocational Course

PRIZES

- The Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn National Moot Winner

Prior to joining Lincoln House Chambers, Leila spent over 9 years working in-house as a Local Government Lawyer within the Common Law Department of a Greater Manchester Local Authority. The work Leila undertook in this role was varied, complex, voluminous and covered the whole range of common law and statutory and corporate functions of a local authority, in relation to a wide range of legal issues relevant to all departments and levels of seniority within local government. Leila regularly represented the Council conducting court proceedings on a wide range of civil, criminal and regulatory matters, in all manner of courts and tribunals. Since joining the independent Bar, Leila continues to enjoy instructions from many local authorities on all aspects of local government business.

Leila accepts instructions on all types of regulatory and public law matters, her practice is not limited to the above list of areas. In this regard, Leila's background of experience brings to any case the added advantage of first hand understanding of the wider statutory, public law and corporate issues which affect local and national governance.

Leila also regularly delivers seminars and provides training to other legal professionals. These training courses are prepared and presented by Leila and have covered a variety of legal areas and issues. In particular she regularly provides such training to Local Government Officers on all stages of criminal investigations, disclosure and the preparation of a case for prosecution. In this regard Leila is accredited in Criminal Investigation Management by the University of Portsmouth.

PUBLIC LAW/PUBLIC INQUIRIES/INQUESTS

Leila's practice extensively involves inquiries, inquests, and large-scale review work across a range of disciplines, which are high profile in nature and of national significance.

Notable Cases:

Manchester Arena Inquiry (ongoing): Leila is currently instructed to represent a number of the bereaved families of those who died as a result of the bombing at the Manchester Arena in 2017. The Inquiry will investigate the deaths of the victims of the 2017 terrorist attack. The full hearings commenced in September 2020 and are ongoing.

You can read about the Inquiry, including its first report here: <https://manchesterarenainquiry.org.uk>

Gosport Independent Panel: Leila was appointed by the Secretary of State for Health, as Junior Counsel to the Gosport Independent Panel. This panel was constituted by the Minister to examine and report on historical events which relate to the care, treatment and deaths of the patients of the Gosport War Memorial Hospital (GWMH) in Portsmouth. The Panel's work was ongoing for four years and the Panel's report was published in June 2018. The issues and documents in this Inquiry were voluminous, varied, complex and sensitive. The number of patients and families involved in the events at GWMH were in the many hundreds and the number of documents which were under review were in the many hundreds of thousands. The work required Leila to plan and implement a large-scale document review, manage, supervise and oversee the work of a team of barristers and numerous other professionals who were involved in this work, undertake legal research and provide advice on an array of legal issues. Leila also presented findings to the Panel on a regular basis and, was instrumental to the writing of the report for submission to the Minister and for publication. After publication of the report, Leila worked with the Panel in handing over to the new and ongoing police investigation.

You can read the Panel's report here: <https://www.gosportpanel.independent.gov.uk/panel-report>

Northern Ireland Renewable Heat Inquiry / Data Protection Case : Leila was instructed by the UK Information Commissioner on matters relating to UK data protection law arising from the Northern Ireland Renewable Heat Incentive Inquiry (the 'Cash for ash' scandal). This Inquiry related to a controversial renewable heat incentive scheme and the actions of politicians, their special advisors and members of the energy industry. The controversy led to the collapse of Stormont in 2017.

Hillsborough Inquests before the Rt Hon Sir John Goldring, Assistant Coroner for South Yorkshire (East) and West Yorkshire (West): Leila was instructed as Junior Counsel for an Interested Party in the Hillsborough Inquests. These Inquests related to the events during and after the well documented Hillsborough football stadium tragedy in April 1989. This case is one of national importance and significance and is the largest and longest Inquest proceedings ever to be held in the UK. The Inquests followed an Independent Panel Report and successful application by the Attorney General to the High Court to quash the original inquest verdicts. The Inquest proceedings lasted 2 years, involved over 100 parties and hundreds of thousands of documents and concluded in April 2016 when the Jury reached its verdicts in all 96 cases. Other criminal investigations and prosecutions followed the Inquests and were recently concluded.

Inquests: Leila is regularly instructed to represent government departments, public organisations, professionals and individuals in complex Article 2 Inquests.

GENERAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT LAW / GOVERNANCE

Leila's past experience in local government has involved the administration of local law and governance. Leila has been involved in the implementation, administration and application of public law at all stages and levels of local government administration.

Notable Cases:

Implementation Taxi / Private Hire Minimum Standards and Conditions: Leila was instructed to advise the Greater Manchester local authorities on the drafting and implementation of a consultation, policy and minimum standards and conditions in relation to the UK taxi trade. This work fed into the wider regional and national Department for Transport ongoing taxi trade improvements.

You can read more about the topic here: <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/news/new-safety-standards-for-greater-manchester-s-taxis-move-a-step-closer/>

Local Implementation of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (2003 – 2012): The Act came into force in 2005 and requires any arm of the State to disclose documents it holds to the public when requested to do so by a member of the public unless, the document meets one of the statutory exemptions and is therefore not disclosable. Leila was part of team of lawyers under the Borough Solicitor responsible for designing, advising on and implementing local governance of the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and thereafter continuing to provide advice on FOI requests and issues.

Local Implementation of the Licensing Act 2003 (2003 – 2012): The Act came into force in November 2005. The Act overhauled the alcohol and entertainment licensing regime, transferring the administration and adjudication of licensing applications from the HM Courts Service to Local Government. Leila was part of a team of lawyers under the Borough Solicitor who were generally instructed to deal with licensing matters and responsible for the designing, advising on and implementing of local governance of the Licensing Act 2003 and thereafter continuing to provide advice to local licensing panels and to represent the Council in licensing appeals to the Magistrates, Crown and High Court.



LINCOLN
HOUSE
CHAMBERS

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Call to the Bar: 2010

Equal Pay Act 1970 / European Equal Pay Directive Group Action (2006 – 2012): Broadly speaking, historical manual worker pay schemes were successfully challenged and this led to a nationwide action against local authorities across the UK. The impact resulted in a 10-year job evaluation process carried out in consultation with the unions, wide scale claims in the employment tribunal for backdated pay and pension contributions and, a resulting settlement project agreed with the unions for thousands of workers who were deemed to be affected and therefore entitled to pay and pension claims. Leila was part of a team of lawyers under the Borough Solicitor who assessed, negotiated, and settled thousands of claims for pay and pension contributions within the agreed terms of settlement.

Local Implementation of Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 (2009 – 2010): The Act introduced a variety of new powers for local authorities in relation to protecting the local environment. This included the power to make Dog Control Orders. Leila was instructed to write and implement the Dog Control Orders for Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council. This involved the drafting of local legislation, reporting to the executive committee, dealing with public consultation and implementation of the Orders and the system of enforcement of the Orders.

REGULATORY / HEALTH AND SAFETY / TRADING STANDARDS / FOOD SAFETY / ENVIRONMENTAL / PLANNING

Leila is regularly instructed to prosecute, defend and advise on Health and Safety, Food Safety and Trading Standards offences. Leila also accepts instructions on Planning and Environmental offences and has been involved in cases prosecuted by local authorities and the Environment Agency.

Notable Cases:

Northwest Trading Standards – Leila is instructed on a number of large scale, complex, national, consumer protection criminal investigations and proceedings including, the ongoing case of Cheshire West and Chester Council v Andrew Pillley & Others; a case involving a multi handed large scale prosecution against a number of energy companies and company directors.

Advising a Large Private Health Care Provider - Advice relating to CQC matters, health care regulation and data protection.

Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council v Shop Direct Home Shopping Limited – Prosecution of a very large organisation in respect of Health and Safety breaches resulting in injury to a worker.

Bury Council v A Company – Defending a company prosecuted in respect of a planning enforcement notice relating to a listed building.

Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council v Mohammed Razaq t/a Debonair – Successful prosecution of a school uniform supplier for multiple, longstanding and flagrant breaches of trade marks law. This case involved legal arguments on novel points of trade marks and European competition law.

Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council v TGI Fridays – Successful prosecution of a large international restaurant chain based in a major UK shopping mall, for serious hot oil related health and safety breaches resulting in risk and injury to employees.

Trafford Council v Wellbeing – Successful prosecution of an internet food company and its director for breaches of food safety / health claim regulations and health products law. The regulations prohibit persons from making unapproved health claims in relation to food products. The prosecution was the first of its kind in the UK and involved technical and complicated areas of EU and domestic law. The breaches had occurred over many years and the evidence in this case was voluminous and highly specialised.

Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council v Ashton Hajj & Umra Ltd, Khadim-UI-Hujjaj Ltd & others – Successful prosecution of two companies and their directors for consumer protection offences involving the failure to secure required visas for travel for hundreds of customers resulting in hundreds of thousands of pounds worth of loss.

Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council v Diversity ETrade, Lubanzu & Mdenga – Successful prosecution of multiple defendants for large scale breaches of numerous car manufacturer trade marks and, Proceeds of Crime / Confiscation Proceedings.

Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council v Jawidani, Shapoli, Ahmadi & Ali Zada – Prosecution of multiple defendants for breaches of consumer health law and trade marks law in relation to the large scale importation and sale of counterfeit tobacco.

Pendle BC & HSE v Qasum – Representing the Defendant in a Prosecution involving unsafe machinery and an employee's loss of hand.

East Cheshire Council v Rowley – Successful prosecution of a puppy farm who in breach of animal welfare legislation and consumer protection law, bred dogs which later died from illness soon after purchase causing suffering to the animals and humans involved.

Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council v O'Brien – Successful prosecution of Funeral Director for fraudulently selling funeral plans to vulnerable and elderly customers.

LICENSING

Leila is regularly instructed by Local Authorities and Licensees to provide advice and representation in all types of Licensing cases, including:

Notable Cases:

Advising a Local Authority on enforcement issues relating to the management of the taxi trade at a major UK Airport including, enforcement action against the Airport itself.

Successful prosecution in a taxi licensing case which was listed for legal argument on novel and complicated issues concerning the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 and Article 8 of the ECHR. The outcome of this case, if not favourable to the Council, would have a significant impact on the enforcement powers of the local licensing officers in Greater Manchester.

Advising and representing a local authority on Taxi License Cross Border enforcement issues.

Advising a local authority on the implementation of licensing language and knowledge tests.

Successfully acting for Local Authorities in appeals relating to decisions to refuse or revoke driver, operator and vehicle licences.

Successfully acting for Local Authorities in appeals relating to decisions to revoke premises licences for example following a history of antisocial behaviour at a nightclub/restaurant.

Advising an animal boarding establishment regarding a Licensing dispute in relation to the imposition of new licence conditions and refusal to renew a licence for an animal boarding establishment.

Advising the Private Hire and Hackney Carriage trade and their Trade Union in relation to the licence conditions and permits associated with a Major Airport's taxi facilities.

Successfully acting on behalf of a local authority in an appeal by the local taxi trade of a decision to refuse to licence a non standard hackney carriage vehicle. The case involved issues of European and Human Rights Law.

Successfully representing a restaurant / cafe shesha business in a licensing hearing involving an action by the local authority to suspend its premises licence.



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PROFESSIONAL DISCIPLINARY

Leila regularly appears on behalf of regulatory bodies and individuals in Professional Disciplinary Proceedings. Such cases involve dealing with regulations and guidance, large volumes of evidence and multiple disciplinary charges and often requires the need to understand complex medical issues and evidence and, safeguarding issues.

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