

Legal Executive

Position Description

Business Unit	Transition Project Team	Department	Transition Project Team
Reporting to	Programme Manager	Total FTE (approx.)	N/A
Location	TBC	Grade/Band	TBC
Delegations	TBC	Review Date	1 July 2026

About the Organisation

This organisation is a new joint Council Controlled Organisation (CCO) for Hamilton City Council (HCC) and Waikato District Council (WDC) that will take over the provision of water services from 1 July 2026. This transition will occur in stages such as the current Watercare contract for Waikato District Council transferring to the CCO on 1 July 2026.

An Establishment Board, made up of an Executive Chair and two members, will be set up from 1 July 2025. This Board will manage the transition of staff, assets, and responsibilities from both councils to the new CCO.

Between July 2025 and July 2026, the Board will also begin shaping the CCO's long-term direction, including creating a Water Services Strategy to ensure safe, reliable, and efficient water services that support community wellbeing.

Position Purpose

The Legal Executive position is responsible for assisting in the implementation of the legal and contracts work associated with establishing the CCO to ensure contracts are in place for Day 1.

Working closely with key stakeholders including Council teams, the role will provide high-quality legal assistance to draft contracts and agreements to ensure legal and regulatory compliance, risk mitigation and alignment with the organisational objectives and legal framework.

Position Specific Responsibilities

Accountability	Deliverable
Contract management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the contracts already in place. • Assist in the amending of a broad range of new, combined or integrated contracts from the legal teams, including supply/service agreements, consultancy, construction or infrastructure delivery, shared services, project or multi-Council contracts. • Create (or combine) contract registers to support the contract lifecycle management system. • Identify and categorise contracts within a priority system so that contracts are finalised by the approved deadlines, ensuring key contracts are in place for Day 1 operations. • Support due diligence processes, including where contracts are being transferred from Councils. • As appropriate, ensure templated contracts reflect current best practice and meet the organisational legal and mandatory requirements. • Within scope of practice, assist the legal teams on legal matters relating to contracts, including contract terms, obligations and risks.
Legal frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working closely with specialist legal advice, assist Council teams to review all contracts against the legal framework to ensure contracts and agreements are in place for Day 1. • Provide additional support with legal requirements relating to becoming an established CCO e.g. setting up the governance framework and development of governance standards.
Legal assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working through the contracts to ensure that they are effectively transferred to the new CCO. • Establish (or transfer and amalgamate) a document management system (including a contract filing system). • Maintain accurate and complete records of contracts and associated documentation, ensuring secure storage. • Utilise technology to support document management and documented processes as appropriate (for example, e-signatories), managing the approvals and signing protocols. • Record, track and report progress, risks and issues.
Stakeholder management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with Council teams to gather information and inputs to ensure contracts are fit for purpose. • Collaborate with Council teams (legal, procurement, finance etc.) to ensure a comprehensive approach to managing legal matters through robust legal advice from specialist advisors. • Key stakeholders are kept up-to-date, well-informed and correctly advised relating to legal matters including legal documentation.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage transition to new contracts to ensure existing Councils are informed and engaged during the process.
Organisational Obligations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adheres to legislation relating to confidentiality, privacy and information management. • Responds to the changing needs of the organisation, performing other tasks, projects, programmes and/or functions as reasonably required. • Participate in and undertake emergency management duties as required, including training and exercises. You may be required to work in an area outside your core role to respond to an incident or emergency event. • Completes Civil Defence training and participates in events as required. • Champion a strong culture of health, safety, and wellbeing through visible leadership and full engagement with all related practices and policies. • All of our people have a responsibility for their own and others health and safety. This includes following all health and safety policies and procedures, including reporting events and hazards, and participating in health, safety and wellbeing initiatives and programmes as required.

Key Relationships

Internal	Chief Executive Officer/Executive Chair
	Interim Executive Leadership Team
	Heads of Business Units
	Legal and Governance Teams
	Procurement and Finance Teams
	Capital Delivery
	Internal Audit and Risk teams
External	Economic regulators
	Other water services entities
	Central and local government organisations
	Iwi/Māori
	Planning and design partners
	Developers and landowners

	Customers and suppliers
	Industry partners and providers of specialist services
	Legal firms, lawyers, advisors

Person Specification

Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal Executive, or similar legal qualification.
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 5 years' experience in a similar position. • Prior experience working with local government, with council-controlled organisations, or in a similar (infrastructure) industry would be preferred. • Experience with commercial contracts and Public Entities. • Experience merging complex organisations would be a strong advantage. • Proven experience in building and maintaining strong relationships with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders.
Essential Skills and Attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent ability to review, write and assist in the collation of contracts and legal documentation. • Strong understanding of legal and commercial information relating to contracts. • Working knowledge of legislation relevant to local government utilities and waters including waters legislation, the Local Government Act, Resource Management Act, etc. • High attention to detail with ability to plan ahead, prioritise, prepare and organise complex information. • High emotional intelligence, strong interpersonal awareness, and exceptional communication skills (written and verbal). • Resilience and adaptability in complex, fast-moving, sometimes ambiguous and politically nuanced environments. • Professional approach to work, proven leadership qualities with the ability to model executive-level behaviour while ensuring smooth execution of duties. • Strong political and contextual awareness at a local, regional, or national level.
Preferred Skills and Attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of governance and decision-making processes in the public sector context.