

Chief Digital Officer

Position Description

Business Unit	TBC	Reporting to	Chief Executive
Department	Office of the Chief Executive	Direct Reports	TBC
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, with staff moving over in 2028.

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. The WDC contract with Watercare is in place until 2028 and will be managed by the CCO from 1 July 2026.

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. The CCO will initially use the Council systems through a shared service agreement, but a strategic focus for the CCO is to also have the digital environment in place as the organisation grows into the future beyond 2028.

Position Purpose

In the Chief Digital Officer role, you will oversee the creation, integration and use of new systems and platforms, and information, data, and business intelligence for this new CCO. The prime focus of this role will be preparing for a new digital and operating technology environment from 2028, overseeing the development of the new end-state digital and operating technology strategy, developing the business case for the transition to end-state, and implementing the transition to end-state for 2028.

The role will have responsibility for a strong relationship with both Councils and Watercare to drive value and performance from any interim shared services arrangement and governance.

Responsibility for the establishment of digital services and operating technology for Day 1 (1 July 2026) and the operation of digital platforms and systems between 2026 and 2028 will remain the responsibility of the two councils and Watercare under shared services and contractual arrangements.

You will look for opportunities where the use of technology can become more efficient, or where there may be challenges in the future. You will also look over the development, integration, delivery, and support of applications.

Accountability	Deliverable
Digital: Strategy Architecture, Portfolio and Product Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leads the development and implementation of a central Digital Strategy and plan for the CCO for post 2028 (including enterprise and system architecture and incorporation of new technologies). Strategically plan for the Post 2028 CCO to have consolidated platforms, integrated or streamlined systems for commercial use, a future-proofed stack, overlapping tools eliminated, and a high-standard single source of truth created and upskilled teams. Recommend scalable automation tools for investment, for approvals. Ensures that Digital strategies and plans meet customer experience and service expectations post 2028. Manages the Digital portfolio ensuring future trends are identified, the business units are engaged and connected. These trends should drive efficiency, improve business value and improve customer outcomes. Manage knowledge and information transfer to ensure secure and comprehensive storage of historic data.
Data Governance and Data Insights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plans, creates and manages robust system integration for 2028, allowing information/data to be easily shared across systems (internally/externally). Plans to ensure that data is transferred and governed appropriately. Plan for and manage data and digital vendors and commercial agreements. Plan, create and manage the use of data to create meaningful insights for the CCO, including real time dashboards with live insights. Scan the horizon, identifying new and emerging trends and challenges relevant to the CCO, the long-term digital environment and the digital team. Monitor technology trends and identify opportunities for application within the business (both in the initial phases and long term) to drive efficiency, improve business value and improve customer outcomes.
Digital: Information, Data and Business Intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops and implements future plans to ensure the CCO post 2028 is well-placed to become a data-informed organization, able to use analytics for decision making across the business. Develop and implement systems that enable data management and integrity, including business intelligence and insight management and reporting. Plan and implement an effective information management system for post 2028, which is compliant with legislation and secure. Responsible for any regulatory reporting and compliance (economic and water quality regulation) as reasonably required.

Digital: Service Delivery and Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversees Digital Service Delivery and Operations functions. Control and operational systems management and maintenance in cooperation with water operations e.g. Operational Technology (OT)/SCADA). Plans for and executes the effective integration of operational technology from Watercare and Council systems for transition to end-state in 2028. Develops and implements a cyber security plan which protects systems and sensitive information from digital attacks post 2028. Performance manages data and digital vendors and commercial agreements, including negotiating new contracts transition to 2028 end-state and beyond. Develops and manages a fit-for-purpose secure and reliable network services which meets the needs of the business, both initially and post 2028.
Digital: Applications delivery and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversight of application implementation and support for the CCO end-state operations, including testing and quality management, ensuring applications are future-proofed. Plan and lead digital change and release management associated with the transition to end-state and beyond, to ensure effective management, planning, and control of software updates to improve quality, speed, and efficiency. Leadership of tools, people and processes to provide secure, reliable and cost-effective deployment methodologies.
Organisational Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manages the budget, resources and expenditure for own area, including projects, identifying opportunities for efficiencies. Manages business risks, by considering the impact of decision making and acting accordingly. Manages the performance and relationship with Council regarding Shared Services and governance. Coaches team members to make informed decisions, based on strategic priorities, digital vision post 2028, and customer needs. Responds to the changing needs of the organisation, performing other tasks as reasonably required. Support and empower the wider organisation to achieve their goals through a customer and outcomes-based approach to the delivery of organisational change, process improvement and technology.
Civil Defence and Emergency Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leads, supports and enables team to participate in civil defence training, emergency response initiatives and business continuity plan activities. Responsible for managing business continuity plan for own area and ensuring team understand and engage in activities.
Health, Safety and Wellbeing (HSW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keeps people safe, by taking practical steps to protect the safety of the team as a priority and empowers individuals to manage their own wellbeing. Proactively leads health, safety and wellbeing activities by addressing hazards and risks and ensuring compliance activities are completed. Role models positive leadership that ensures HSW is a priority. Creates a positive team environment and fosters psychological safety to enable people to thrive at work.

Functional/Team Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage a team so team members are supported and enabled to deliver their role to expected standards. Develop business plans for optimising resources and assets being managed within team so that an appropriate digital environment is implemented by 2028. Manage, monitor, and review the work of a team to make sure processes and procedures are properly implemented and ensure the team is achieving defined objectives and standards. Work within existing development framework to build own capabilities and those of direct reports. Provide specialised training or coaching to others throughout the organisation in area of expertise.
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Key Relationships

Internal	Water Operations, Customer and Digital Teams; People Leaders across the organisation; Direct reports; Employees across the organisation
External	Hamilton City Council teams, Waikato District Council and Watercare teams, External auditors; Specialist providers of data and digital services including payment transaction providers, meter reading providers and print providers; Customers and communities; Commercial customers

Person Specification

Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tertiary qualifications in a related field such as Information Systems, computer science or similar.
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extensive experience overseeing the digital or technology areas of an organization – ideally in a utility operator. Extensive experience overseeing the operational technology areas of an organization – ideally in a utility operator. In-depth understanding and working knowledge of project management methodologies, change management, IT operations and delivery methodologies and processes. Senior experience at building and leading technical teams Proven experience developing and leading financial plans and operational budgets. In depth planning experience with a strong future strategic focus. Extensive relationship, client, and/or people management experience Experience building effective relationships externally and internally Experienced at developing and leading change initiatives as well as embracing change. Excellent stakeholder management and communication skills.

- Culturally inclusive leadership which respects and values all our people, customers, and stakeholders.
- A high level of emotional intelligence. Is a visible and accessible leader.
- Innovative thinker.
- Strong influencing skills.
- Experience in the setup of new digital functions is essential.
- Experience with Local Authority specific IT applications, water services and solutions preferred.