

POSITION TITLE:	Senior Legal Advisor		
GROUP:	Corporate Services	SECTION:	Legal, Compliance and Risk
REPORTS TO:	Chief Legal Advisor		
RESPONSIBLE FOR:	N/A		
GRADE	20		
DATE REVIEWED:	April 2025		

HBRC STRATEGY

Our Vision:

We want a healthy environment and a resilient and prosperous community.

Our Purpose:

We work with our community to protect and manage the region's precious taonga of rivers, lakes, soils, air, coast and biodiversity for health, wellbeing and connectivity.

Our Values:

- **Partnership and Collaboration:** We work with our community in everything we do
- **Accountability:** We hold ourselves to account to deliver results, be responsive to community expectations, and the best use of ratepayers' funds and assets
- **Transparency:** We report on what we do and the value this delivers for our community
- **Excellence:** We set our sights and expectations high, and never stop striving to do better

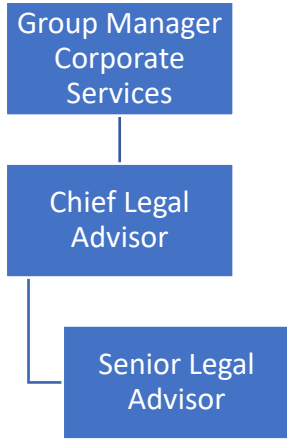
Our Focus:

- **Water quality, safety and climate-resilient security** ~ *Te kounga o te wai, te haumarutanga me te mārohirohi ā-āhuarangi o te whakamarutanga.*
- **Climate-smart and sustainable land use** ~ *Kia koi, kia toitū hoki te whakamahinga o te whenua.*
- **Healthy, functioning and climate-smart biodiversity** ~ *kio ora, kia āhe, kia mārohirohi ā-āhuarangi hoki te rerenga rauropi.*
- **Sustainable and climate-resilient services and infrastructure** ~ *kia toitū, kia mārohirohi ā-āhuarangi hoki ngā ratonga me ngā hanganga ā-whare.*

POSITION SUMMARY

The Senior Legal Advisor is an integral member of the HBRC legal team charged with supporting the Chief Legal Advisor on legal issues across all aspects of the organisation. This is a senior role with organisation-wide responsibilities and a mandate for assisting capability and understanding of legal matters across HBRC. The Senior Legal Advisor will provide high-quality, pragmatic legal advice across a broad range of matters including, commercial contracts, property dealings, procurement, disputes, privacy, legal compliance and general business operations. The role requires commercial acumen, sound legal judgement and a problem-solving mindset. You will be adept at instructing and managing external counsel to ensure that HBRC receives quality, fit-for-purpose, cost-effective legal advice that enables robust decision-making.

ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT



JOB SPECIFIC ACCOUNTABILITES

- Provide quality legal advice and support across all of HBRC taking into account HBRC’s statutory functions and roles, policy objectives and any relevant legal, organisational and political issues.
- Support our people and Councillors to reduce legal, commercial and reputational risks while being accountable, transparent and reasonable. There is a requirement to go beyond the provision of strict legal advice to bring a practical and commercial perspective that has regard to HBRC’s objectives and wider strategies. Problem solving skills are essential in order to identify and define issues, determine the cause, and select alternative solutions, and support implementation of solutions (including recommending appropriate risks).
- Assist with legal risk identification, management and associated compliance and training activities, including development of policy, procedures, contractual templates and reports to Council.
- Keep up to date with changes in the law and legislative developments, ensuring the council remains informed of significant changes that may affect its operations. Lead compliance with legislation, regulations, policies, codes of practice, safe operating procedures and best practice and maintain reporting of legal function in a Legislative Compliance Framework.
- Enhance capability, understanding and awareness of legal, organisational risk and legislative compliance matters across the organisation.
- Build and maintain effective working relationships with internal and external contacts, including the Chief Executive, Executive Leadership Team, external law firms, consultants and supplier.
- Lead engagement of external legal providers (as appropriate), manage and oversee outputs and external legal spend on outsourced matters ensuring compliance with legal and project budgets.

FUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Internal

- Chief Legal Advisor
- Group Managers
- Executive Team
- Elected members
- Team members
- Councillors

External

- Consultants and contractors
- Government agencies and departments
- Other regional and local authorities
- Technical and legal professionals
- Iwi and other community groups
- Members of our community

COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

Fostering good working relationships is fundamental to the successful achievement of strategic goals for HBRC. We know we can’t achieve change without the people (our community) outside our business. As expressed under our purpose statement, “working with our community” is at the heart of everything we do. This is particularly relevant to our relations with Tāngata Whenua in terms of co-governance and co-management. Successful

relationships involve building trust. Which in turn enables us to support each other to respond to new challenges as they arise.

This means:

- Professional attitude is projected at all times in dealing with external contacts.
- Information is accurate and is provided in a timely manner.
- Outcomes that are fair and clearly understood by both parties are achieved
- Customers are satisfied with responses to written or verbal requests for information.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

All Hawke's Bay Regional Council (HBRC) staff are expected to actively and enthusiastically promote the concept of continuous improvement in their work for HBRC. This means:

- Maintaining a positive overall attitude in the workplace, including promoting HBRC in a positive manner, as assessed by your peers and Manager
- Taking part in training opportunities provided by HBRC with an open mind, as assessed by pre and post training meetings with your Manager.
- Practicing the skills provided in training offered by HBRC, as assessed by regular feedback meetings with your Manager.
- Showing a strong team commitment, as indicated by peer feedback and your Manager's assessment.
- Practicing the concept of continuous improvement by showing initiative with new ideas and positively acknowledging other ideas.
- Giving honest and open feedback as and when required, aiming to constructively deal with all issues, as assessed by regular feedback meetings with your Manager.
- Deliver on project outcomes: on time and on budget.
- Displaying sound judgment and making responsible decisions.
- Working to high quality standards and where applicable contributes to maintenance of ISO 9001:2015 accreditation of the Quality Management System.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

All staff are expected to follow established health and safety procedures while working for HBRC, and in accordance with policies developed by HBRC. This means:

- Complying with and adhering to HBRC's accepted standards and procedures.
- Where appropriate, taking responsibility for workplace hazards/risks you identify and communicated to management.
- Undertaking regular reviews of workplace risks/hazards that are present in your work.
- When, and if, necessary, participate in the investigation of accidents/incidents according to HBRC procedures.
- Undertaking appropriate and effective staff training when required or necessary.
- Promoting a healthy and safe workplace.
- Actively supporting health and safety initiatives.
- Comply with any rehabilitation plan designed with you for a return to work after an accident.
- Comply with the COVID-19 Public Health Response (Vaccinations) Order 2021.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

When a Civil Defence event happens, you may be required to assist with carrying out the Council's Civil Defence responsibilities after providing required support for your family and dependants. All HBRC staff are expected to undertake such Emergency Management functions as are determined appropriate to meet HBRC's role and function in this area. This means:

- Undertaking such a role as is allocated for emergency management requirements.
- Participating in such exercises as are required to maintain a state of preparedness in HBRC.
- Responding to such requests to assume an emergency management role as are required by events.

- Understanding the contents of the relevant section of the Business Continuity Plan (BCP) and its implications for your role.
- Where the requirements of the role require it, review the relevance of the BCP for your team, section or Group on a regular basis.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Minimum Qualifications and Experience required

- Bachelor of Laws (LLB) Degree (or international equivalent);
- Admission as a Barrister and Solicitor of the High Court of New Zealand; and
- A current legal practicing certificate from the New Zealand Law Society.
- 10+ years post qualification experience.
- In-house legal experience is essential, with specific public sector experience being desirable.
- Valid driver's licence required.

Knowledge and skills

The following indicates what would typically be expected for this role at a competent level:

- Knowledge of legislation applicable to a Regional Council and local government, including official information and privacy principles.
- Ability to analyse complex legal issues and provide practical, clear, and actionable advice to non-legal stakeholders.
- Experience providing advice to elected members/politicians or governance boards and chief executives.
- Expertise in commercial law, including end to end contract processes, commercial transactions and structures, disputes and regulatory compliance.
- Strong analytical and problem-solving abilities.
- Ability to provide timely, pragmatic, strategic and solutions-based advice.
- Ability to operate in an environment of uncertainty and incomplete information and make well-reasoned decisions.
- Ability to work effectively with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders, including elected officials, senior management, and external legal partners.

Personal Attributes

- Prepared to challenge the status quo – displays courage, initiative, sound judgement and innovative thinking
- Collaborative and collegial working style – works towards shared vision and goals
- High level of personal resilience and emotional intelligence – can take and deal with the knocks
- Courteous and professional – displays confidentiality, honesty and integrity
- Effective co-ordination, influencing, conflict resolution and negotiation skills
- Cultural empathy and awareness
- Strong communication skills including written and oral presentation skills
- Sound decision making skills
- Effective time management, self-motivated and able to work unsupervised
- Ability to cope well with change
- Desire to enhance knowledge and skills

Awareness

- Community, cultural and political awareness.
- Understanding of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and its application in public administration.

CHANGES TO JOB DESCRIPTION

From time to time, it may be necessary to consider changes in the job description in response to the changing nature of our work environment. Such changes, including technological requirements or statutory changes, may be initiated by the manager of this job with due consultation with the position holder. This job description should be reviewed as part of the preparation for performance planning for the annual performance cycle.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I have read this job description and fully understand the requirements set forth therein. I understand that this is to be used as a guide and that I will be responsible for performing other duties as assigned. I further understand that this job description does not constitute an employment contract with Hawke's Bay Regional Council.

Employee Signature

Date

Printed Name