

JOB DESCRIPTION

LEGAL EXECUTIVE

JOB OVERVIEW

Location	Masterton
Business unit	Legal function within the Strategy business unit
Reporting to	Legal Counsel
Direct reports	Nil
Delegated responsibility	Nil

OUR COUNCIL

Working at Masterton District Council means being part of a motivated, professional, and customer-focused team in one of New Zealand's most beautiful districts. Our people play an integral role in delivering services for our community and we are focused on both 'what', and 'how' we achieve our goals. Our values help us build a workplace culture that is challenging but fun, because enjoying coming to work is important!

We want to be the best provincial council in New Zealand.

- We are an employer of choice in the Wellington Region
- Our staff recommend us to their family and friends

OUR VISION

Masterton/Whakaoriori: Providing the best of rural provincial living.

OUR VALUES

HĪKINA TE MĀNUKA	By figuratively lifting the mānuka we show that we are responding and rising to challenges by being innovative , hard-working, and collaborative .
MANA TĀNGATA	Our organisation recognises the diversity and individuality of each of our staff members. We act with integrity and respect each other's lived experiences and the value they bring to the workplace.
HE TOA TAKITINI	Every staff member is a crucial part of the team that makes up Masterton District Council. We trust and support each other to succeed by drawing on our collective strengths.

TE TIRITI O WAITANGI

The Treaty of Waitangi

We are committed to the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi / Treaty of Waitangi: partnership, participation, and pro-active protection. We recognise Tikanga Māori values in the workplace and community and know we can do more.

MY DEPARTMENT/BUSINESS UNIT

The Strategy Business Unit:

The role and functions of the Strategy Business Unit include the provision of support for transparent and open decision making; the development and review of strategies, policies, bylaws, and corporate plans; strategic advice and support to the Council; governance advice and support to our elected members; legal services; district planning policy and consenting; the Building Consent Authority; and Environmental, Animal and Bylaw Services.

MY TEAM

The Legal Team:

The Legal function provides trusted, practical legal advice and support to the Chief Executive and other Council staff. At present, this sits primarily with the Legal Counsel, with the function continuing to grow as additional capability is brought in.

The focus is on supporting sound decision-making across the organisation and ensuring Council activities are legally sound and aligned with relevant legislation and regulatory requirements. This includes advising on contracts, property matters, procurement, governance processes, and supporting the review and preparation of key documents to support this.

The function also plays a key role in identifying and managing legal risk, resolving legal issues as they arise, and working collaboratively across the organisation to ensure legal advice is practical, timely, and supports effective operational delivery.

MY ROLE

Key responsibilities of the Legal Executive role:

The Legal Executive will provide practical, high-quality legal support across the organisation, working under the guidance of the In-House Legal Counsel.

Legal Support may include (but isn't limited to):

- supporting governance and decision-making processes, including review of Council reports, resolutions, and statutory compliance requirements;
- drafting, reviewing and negotiating contracts, commercial agreements, and procurement documentation;
- supporting property matters including acquisitions and disposals (including under the Public Works Act), leases, licences, easements, agreements to lease, and development agreements;



- assisting with infrastructure projects and delivery;
- supporting regulatory and enforcement processes;
- assisting with resource management and planning matters;
- managing LGOIMA and Privacy Act requests;
- identifying legal and regulatory risks and providing practical, solutions-focused advice;
- liaising with external legal counsel and supporting external legal work where required;
- maintaining accurate legal records and supporting compliance activities across the organisation;
- providing legal training to teams within the Organisation.

MY KEY RESULT AREAS (KRAs)

Legal Services Delivery

Undertake delegated legal work across a range of areas, including:

- property transactions (sale & purchase, leases, licences, easements, caveats);
- road legalisation processes (acquisition, disposal, agreements);
- prepare and process documentation for registration with LINZ and other statutory bodies;
- assist with documentation required for subdivision consents (e.g. easements, covenants, bonds);
- obtain and manage legal records such as titles and related documentation;
- support the administration and progression of legal proceedings, including preparation of documentation and liaison with relevant parties;
- assist with the execution of documents under Council seal and maintain accurate legal registers;
- ensure all work is completed in accordance with legislative requirements, Council policies, and internal processes.



Legal Advice and Operational Support	• Provide preliminary legal guidance and support to staff on routine matters, within delegated authority; • Assist the Legal Counsel in researching legal issues and preparing advice; • Support responses to LGOIMA and Privacy Act requests as required; • Assist in monitoring legislative changes and identifying impacts on Council activities; • Contribute to ensuring staff have access to clear, practical legal information and resources; • Escalate complex, high-risk, or sensitive matters to the Legal Counsel in a timely manner.
Legal Process and Compliance Support	• Follow and support legal processes that ensure compliance with legislation and governance requirements; • Assist in identifying opportunities to improve legal systems, processes, and documentation; • Maintain accurate and up-to-date legal records and documentation systems; • Support the consistent application of legal standards and templates across Council; • Contribute to the effective management of legal risk through accurate and timely execution of work.
Policy and Documentation Support	• Assist with drafting and reviewing standard legal documents, templates, and agreements; • Support policy development processes through research, drafting, and documentation; • Ensure legal documentation is consistent, accurate, and aligned with legislative requirements; • Assist in preparing material to support Council reports and decision-making processes.
Team Contribution and Ways of Working	• Work collaboratively with the Legal Counsel to prioritise and deliver legal work; • Take ownership of allocated work and ensure timely progression and completion; • Proactively communicate progress, risks, and issues; • Contribute to a positive, responsive, and customer-focused legal service; • Support continuous improvement in how legal services are delivered across Council.

MY HEALTH AND SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES

Health, Safety, Wellbeing

It is your responsibility to:

- always ensure your own and the safety of others
- comply with policies, procedures and safe systems of work;
- report all incidents/accidents, including nears misses, in a timely fashion
- actively participate in the hazard management and identification process
- escalate risk as per the Risk Management Policy.

MY OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES

Self-Management, Training and Development

You are expected to:

- set realistic goals for own performance
- undertake change based on regular self-evaluation and feedback
- identify opportunities for personal and professional development and growth
- undertake both internal and external training identified as relevant to the role.

Policies and Procedures

You are expected to:

- comply with the Council's Code of Conduct, Staff Manual including its Policies and Procedures at all times
- ensure the implementation and compliance with the Council's Code of Conduct and Policies and Procedures, within all areas of responsibility.

Participate in the Council's civil defence emergency response

You are expected to:

- participate in relevant emergency response training and duties as requested by the Chief Executive;
- undertake such other duties as may be required from time to time by your (ELT) Manager.



Other duties	• All duties must be carried out to the prescribed timeframes, systems, quality, and standards and to the satisfaction of your (ELT) Manager; • Duties and responsibilities described above should not be construed as a complete and exhaustive list as it is not the intention to limit in any way the scope of functions of the position. Duties and responsibilities can be amended from time to time to meet changing conditions.
Internal	• Line Manager and ELT Manager • Immediate Team • Masterton District Council Staff • Mayor and Elected Members
External	• Other local and regional authorities • Government agencies • Contractor/Consultant and Alliance Relationships • Local community groups • NZ Law Society • Legal Community

MY QUALIFICATIONS/KNOWLEDGE/SKILLS/EXPERIENCE

Qualifications, Skills and Experience

While not all the following qualifications and experience are required, we'd like to see as many as possible:

- have a legal executive qualification e.g. NZ diploma in legal executive studies (level 6)
- be an associate or member of New Zealand institute of legal executives
- **for experienced legal executives:** substantial experience in a legal executive or similar legal support role, with the ability to manage matters independently and exercise sound judgement
- **for mid to junior solicitors:** 2–5 years' post qualification education (or equivalent experience) with a strong foundation in legal research, drafting, and providing practical, solution-focused legal advice
- strong written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to prepare clear, concise legal documents and provide practical advice tailored to a range of audiences
- able to build trusted relationships and communicate effectively with stakeholders at all levels
- proficient in using modern technology and software applications to support legal work.



MY COMPETENCIES/ PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

Competencies

- **CUSTOMER SERVICE ORIENTATION:** Make efforts to listen to and understand customers (both internal and external); anticipate customer needs; give high priority to customer satisfaction.
- **COMMUNICATION:** Express ideas effectively in individual and group situations (including non-verbal communication); adjust language structure or terminology both orally and in memoranda, letters and reports to the characteristics and needs of the audience.
- **WORKING CO-OPERATIVELY:** Work effectively with others inside and outside the organisation; take actions that demonstrate consideration for the feelings and needs of others and awareness of the impact of one's behaviour on others.
- **HEALTH AND SAFETY:** Commit to applying core safety knowledge, skills, and attitudes to everyday work to optimise health and safety. Promote safety through effective communication. Anticipate, recognise and manage situations that place individuals at risk. Recognise the occurrence of an incident or near miss, responding effectively to mitigate harm to individuals and ensuring proper reporting and preventing recurrence.

Personal Attributes

- Demonstrates respectful, honest, and open behaviour.
- Operates with integrity, valuing diversity and respecting the needs of others.
- Shows initiative and a high level of self-motivation.
- Approaches challenges positively and constructively.
- Takes accountability for own actions and contributes effectively as a team member.
- Builds strong working relationships through effective communication and collaboration across teams and management levels.



JOB DESCRIPTION AGREEMENT

My name	
My signature	
Date	

JOB DESCRIPTION VERSION CONTROL

Author	Version	Comments	Date
Manager – People and Capability	1	New role	25 May 2026
Legal Counsel	2	Reviewed and updated JD content	July 2026
People and Capability Advisor	3	Format JD and review content	July 2026

ATTACHMENT A

Place in organisation

