

## POSITION DESCRIPTION

<b>Position:</b>	Associate Counsel - Corporate
<b>Department:</b>	Finance Legal and Regulatory
<b>Location:</b>	Queenstown
<b>Reports to:</b>	General Counsel
<b>Date:</b>	September 2022

### BACKGROUND

Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) is a territorial authority in Te Waipounamu South Island of Aotearoa New Zealand, with a current resident population of approximately 48,300 which is projected to increase to 61,350 by 2031<sup>1</sup>. The Queenstown Lakes District is also a premier tourist destination making a significant contribution to the national economy. In recent years, the district has experienced significant and sustained growth in both resident population, and in international and domestic visitor numbers. Our demand projections forecast this growth to continue<sup>2</sup>. The overall growth pressures the district is experiencing has led to the 2021 -2031 Ten Year Plan setting out an ambitious programme of work, with over \$1.6 billion of capital investment to be made over the decade<sup>3</sup>.

QLDC has a central role to play in maintaining and enhancing the quality and liveability of the outstanding environment of the district. It also has a central role in development and regulation and provides high quality services and infrastructure to residents and visitors; managing the district's parks, trails, libraries and recreational facilities; enabling sustainable development through consenting services; and regulating local activities. QLDC's role in leading the recovery effort for the district in response to COVID-19, also means that the diversification of the district's economy is an increasingly important priority for our Council.

The community outcomes set out in the 2021 – 2031 Ten Year Plan are directly extracted from [Vision Beyond 2050](#), which is our community vision statement:



<sup>1</sup> [QLDC demand projections, March 2022](#)

<sup>2</sup> [QLDC demand projections, March 2022](#)

<sup>3</sup> [QLDC Ten Year Plan 2021 - 2031](#)

## VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

We're proud to be QLDC, and in response to the growth the district has experienced over recent years the QLDC organisation has itself experienced substantial growth. With an employed workforce of approximately 550 in July 2022, and a range of partner organisations delivering services on behalf of Council, QLDC is also a significant employer in the district. The range and types of work carried out at QLDC are extensive, and complex; becoming increasingly so as the district continues to grow.

Our culture is an important part of who we are. The vision, mission and values set out below are the foundation for our organisational culture; how and why we go about things:



## PURPOSE

The Associate Counsel - Corporate is a senior lawyer who provides strong legal advice in one of the key areas of legal risk for Council and provides management and leadership support to the General Counsel. The team delivering corporate and commercial legal services to QLDC comprises the Associate Counsel – Corporate, together with the Senior Legal Counsel – Corporate and Junior Legal Counsel. The Associate Counsel – Corporate has line management responsibility for this team.

The areas of expertise of the Associate Counsel - Corporate are multi-faceted and include the following areas:

- Commercial suppliers and procurement
- Property
- Development agreements
- Commercial negotiations and disputes
- Local government law
- Civil litigation
- LGOIMA and Privacy Compliance

- CCTO/CCO matters
- Reserves Act
- Legal issues around management and leasing of Council Assets

The Associate Counsel - Corporate will be expected to manage files in an autonomous way, and keep the General Counsel briefed of key risks and developments in their matters.

The Associate Counsel - Corporate will have a lot of interaction with external legal providers and will be expected to foster strong working relationships with these external parties, and actively manage the cost of their work.

The Associate Counsel - Corporate is also a member of the wider legal team that will function as a single service delivery unit and will therefore have the opportunity to work on other legal matters as they arise.

The General Counsel, Associate Counsel – RMA and Regulatory and Associate Counsel – Corporate work collegially to lead and manage the delivery of legal services to QLDC.

## KEY TASKS

### **Develop and Manage a Highly Effective Team**

- Build and enhance the capability of the Legal Services team through leadership of Senior Legal Counsel – Corporate and Junior Legal Counsel.
- Create and maintain a culture of high performance where excellence, work life balance and personal development is valued.
- Maintain high levels of staff motivation and team work with a focus on service standards, value for money and continuous improvement.
- Develop plans for the work of the team, measure progress and report to the General Counsel.

### **Leadership**

- Demonstrate leadership competencies.
- Participate willingly and positively in the orientation and training of new staff in specific areas.
- Mentor and coach more junior members of the Legal team, notwithstanding that they are not direct reports.
- Behave consistently with Council's values and behaviours.

### **Legal Advice**

- Provide timely, high quality and fit for purpose legal services to Council staff with a focus on high risk or complex matters:
  - Providing general legal advice in a variety of contexts which is well reasoned and high quality to enable pragmatic recommendations and decisions to be made.
  - Advising on, reviewing or preparing relevant agreements and memoranda on behalf of Council.
  - Developing and ensuring staff have access to appropriate legal templates and associated documentation.
  - Advising on issues relevant to relevant Acts, regulations and rules.
- Advising on matters of general legal education, including assisting with seminars to staff.

- Instruct and manage external lawyers as appropriate in accordance with Council policy and procedures and utilising systems developed for this.

### **Strategic Direction**

- Provide strategic advice to the organisation to facilitate good decision making, and robust decisions.

### **Financial Management**

- Supervise the outsourcing of legal services, with a focus on value for money, enduring solutions and continuous improvement.
- Keep the General Counsel briefed on upcoming legal costs and risks.
- Conduct any financial activity in accordance with current policy and procedures.
- Working within budget guidelines and delegations.
- Manage, or ensure that staff manage, external legal service provider engagements in a way that is documented, managed and monitored in accordance with policy in order to deliver efficient and effective legal services.

### **File Management**

- Manage information and records in a professional manner.
- Manage jobs in accordance with the team workflow system.
- Record time accurately and comprehensively.
- Ensure all members of the team complete their file management work to a high standard.

### **Customer Service**

- Maintain a professional, courteous and helpful attitude to all customers (internal and external) ensuring communication is accurate, succinct and in a manner which promotes customer service excellence.
- Maintain confidentiality at all times.

### **Teamwork**

- Provide a contribution to or participate in projects or initiatives within the Directorate or organisation where the opportunity arises.
- Participate in initiatives and contribute suggestions as to improvements and/or efficiencies to enable ongoing quality improvement.
- Fully participate as a member of the team undertaking all tasks maintaining positive working relationships with other staff members and internal / external customers.

### **Professional Development**

- Focus on continuous learning and professional development.
- Pursue appropriate professional development opportunities.

**Relationship Management**

- Develop and maintain effective relationships with staff and other stakeholders.
- Ensure the Council is positively represented to external stakeholders.

**Corporate Responsibilities**

- Build commitment to QLDC's vision, values and services.
- Willingly undertake any duty required within the context of the position.
- Manage own personal health and safety and takes appropriate action to deal with workplace hazards, accidents and incidents.
- Comply with all legislative requirements.
- Adhere to QLDC's Code of Conduct.

**KEY RELATIONSHIPS****Internal:**

- General Counsel
- All legal team members
- Chief Executive, Executive Leadership Team
- Other QLDC Managers
- Councillors
- Other QLDC staff

**External:**

- Legal services providers
- Central government agencies

**ACCOUNTABILITIES AND DELEGATIONS****Financial Delegation**

- No financial delegations held.

**Staff Authority**

- Line management of two lawyers.

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

### Education

- Tertiary bachelor qualification in law.
- Holds, or is able to obtain, a New Zealand practising certificate.

### Experience

- Substantial legal experience (7+ years) in the areas of corporate and commercial law. Experience in local government, public, litigation and/or resource management law will also be helpful.
- Excellent interpersonal skills and a demonstrated commitment to working collaboratively and in a customer centric manner with a range of people within and outside the organisation.
- Legal risk management skills.
- Successful track record of delivering customer-focused solutions that address underlying needs.
- Demonstrated sound analytical and decision-making skills.
- Ability to work unsupervised.
- Ability to establish and maintain effective relationships with internal customers and legal service providers.
- Demonstrated ability to lead and manage staff.
- Demonstrated professional ethics, integrity and reliability at all times.
- Demonstrated highly successful communication skills, both written and oral.
- Demonstrated commitment to the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and an awareness of Māori perspectives and issues relevant to Māori.

## COMPETENCIES

Core competencies for all employees of QLDC:

<b>Integrity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Represents QLDC in an honest, ethical and professional way, supporting a culture of integrity and professionalism</li> <li>▶ Acts on QLDC's vision, mission and values even when it is uncomfortable or difficult to do so</li> <li>▶ Follows through on agreements; can be relied on to complete tasks and meet commitments</li> </ul>
<b>Delivering Quality Results</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Emphasises progress over perfection, taking action and initiative to resolve issues within established process and procedure</li> <li>▶ Prioritises and aligns tasks across the team to maximise efficiencies and deliver or exceed expectations</li> <li>▶ Acts decisively to turn around inefficient or under-performing parts of the business</li> </ul>
<b>Adaptability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Is open to new ideas and is willing to try new ways of doing things</li> <li>▶ Coaches the team and others to adapt to changing circumstances</li> <li>▶ Clearly and positively communicates the benefits/requirements of change ensuring they are understood by others</li> </ul>
<b>Customer Focus</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Communicates effectively with customers and stakeholders to identify their needs and requirements</li> <li>▶ Creates a culture which embodies the delivery of a high-quality customer experience across QLDC, ensuring systems and processes drive service delivery outcomes</li> <li>▶ Understands the different groups and coalitions in the wider business / community environment including the reasons for their underlying concerns and agendas and how they can affect and influence decisions and outcomes</li> </ul>
<b>Managing Relationships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Establishes and maintains effective relationships with stakeholders and gains their trust and respect</li> <li>▶ Ensures actions, processes and decisions deliver sustainable relationships and support QLDC's interests</li> <li>▶ Actively builds and develops partner relationships to create common goals and understanding</li> </ul>
<b>Valuing Diversity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Is aware of and responsive to cultural differences when engaging with people and groups</li> <li>▶ Role models respect and sensitivity to diversity and difference to ensure an inclusive team environment</li> <li>▶ Creates a feeling of belonging and strong team morale through leveraging individual strengths and differences to enhance collaboration, discussion, and decisions</li> <li>▶ Builds an environment of collaboration and co-operation across QLDC, involving the most appropriate people from across the business</li> </ul>



Competencies specific to the role:

<b>Problem Solving</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Identifies potential problems, barriers, and risks and takes action to resolve them</li> <li>▶ Engages in critical analysis of complex issues, weighs up alternatives and identifies the most effective solutions</li> <li>▶ Seeks input and the perspectives of others to support efficient and effective problem solving</li> <li>▶ Exercises judgement and makes good decisions</li> </ul>
<b>Resilience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Demonstrates resilience by remaining composed and persevering through difficult or stressful situations</li> <li>▶ Role models patience and tolerance when dealing with inconveniences and difficulties</li> <li>▶ Takes personal responsibility for decisions, actions, and mistakes</li> </ul>
<b>Influencing and Negotiating</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Considers how to influence over time and adopts a number of deliberate strategies to influence and communicate with others</li> <li>▶ Achieves effective solutions and outcomes within challenging relationships, or when dealing with ambiguous and conflicting positions</li> <li>▶ Involves the broader QLDC community, building support for ideas and lobbying influential stakeholders</li> </ul>
<b>Collaborating</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Is open and transparent in expressing their views and opinions, offering ideas and suggestions to support the team and collaborating to achieve common goals</li> <li>▶ Displays openness to challenge from others, taking alternative viewpoints on board to create the best outcome</li> <li>▶ Acknowledges contributions of others in successful projects/ideas</li> </ul>
<b>Inspiring, Direction and Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Champions QLDC's vision and strategy and communicates the way forward generating enthusiasm and commitment to goals</li> <li>▶ Delegates projects and tasks to others allowing them sufficient autonomy and responsibility</li> <li>▶ Explains information clearly, ensuring messages are understood so team members understand their roles and what is expected of them</li> <li>▶ Anticipates and assesses the impact of changes to work-plans and initiatives such as changing political / economic conditions and responds appropriately</li> </ul>
<b>Commercial Awareness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Utilises networks and market information to gather multiple perspectives and insights into customer needs and perceptions</li> <li>▶ Grasps the full meaning and interrelationships of key financial indicators, analysing and cutting through complex data to evaluate and create strategic choices and options</li> <li>▶ Develops reciprocal, long-term relationships with partners to address current and future community needs</li> </ul>
<b>Change and innovation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Drives continuous improvement and identifies opportunities to enhance processes and practices</li> <li>▶ Encourages diverse thinking and innovative approaches to addressing problems and opportunities</li> <li>▶ Supports others through change, acknowledging and helping individuals to overcome change resistance</li> <li>▶ Creates an environment that provides direction and promotes continuous learning and development</li> <li>▶ Takes action to build team members' confidence and competence</li> </ul>