



# WHANGANUI DISTRICT COUNCIL

Te Kaunihera a Rohe o Whanganui

## SENIOR POLICY ADVISOR Position Description

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Post Number:	EMV 211
PD Created / Modified:	April 2019
Department/Group:	Policy and Governance / Strategy Group
Responsible To:	Policy and Governance Manager
Location:	Municipal Building, 101 Guyton Street, Whanganui
Position Purpose:	<b>This position exists to:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide senior level policy analysis and advice to the Council on strategic, organisational and community issues.</li></ul>

### ***Whanganui District Council Vision***

Whanganui: Leading Edge:

- A deeply united community
- Connected
- Innovative and creative
- Safeguarding our place
- Works for everyone

### ***Whanganui District Council Purpose***

SUSTAINING *the safety and welfare of our community*

SUPPORTING *richness and opportunity through education, lifestyle and commerce*

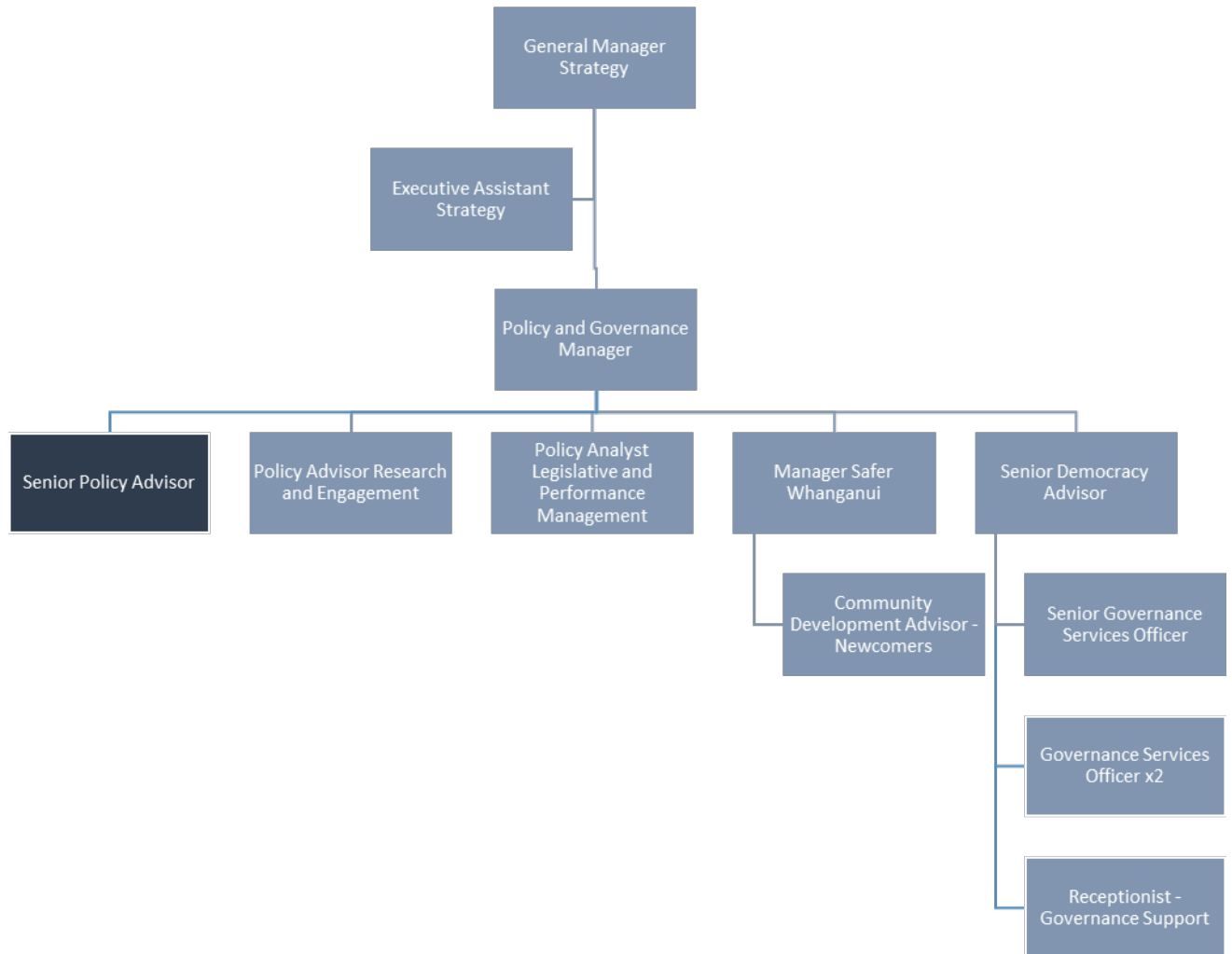
PRESERVING *our exceptional heritage and infrastructure*

PROTECTING *our environment and Awa*

### ***Our Values***

- Positive and encouraging
- Collaborative brilliance
- Make great happen

## Department Structure



## Functional Relationships

<b>Key Internal and/or external contacts</b>	<b>Nature of the contact most typical:</b> <i>(e.g. courtesy, understanding others, giving/receiving information, explaining things, liaising, advising, gaining cooperation, facilitating, influencing and persuading, resolving minor conflicts, mediating, negotiating, formal negotiation, supervising, leading.)</i>
<b>External</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Horizons Regional Council</li> <li>• Other Territorial Local Authorities</li> <li>• Colleagues throughout New Zealand</li> <li>• Government Agencies</li> <li>• Government Departments</li> <li>• Interest and Community Groups</li> <li>• Public</li> <li>• Central government</li> <li>• Iwi</li> <li>• Internal/External Working Parties</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Courtesy, co-operation, explaining things to people</li> <li>• Convincing others and gaining co-operation, resolving minor conflicts</li> <li>• Networking skills to build relationships</li> <li>• Training and communication skills to consult with and present to groups</li> <li>• To reach agreement on overall plans, gain co-operation or participation</li> </ul>
<b>Internal</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chief Executive</li> <li>• Executive Leadership Team</li> <li>• General Manager Strategy</li> <li>• Policy and Governance Manager</li> <li>• Council Staff</li> <li>• Mayor and Councillors</li> <li>• Strategy group</li> <li>• Policy and Governance team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Courtesy, co-operation, explaining things to people</li> <li>• Convincing others and gaining co-operation, resolving minor conflicts</li> <li>• Networking skills to build relationships</li> <li>• Training and communication skills to consult with and present to groups</li> <li>• To reach agreement on overall plans, gain co-operation or participation</li> <li>• Facilitating and persuading</li> <li>• Having the interpersonal skills required to manage group dynamics and get others to adopt recommended course of action</li> </ul>

## Responsible For:

Direct Management of Staff:	Nil
Indirect Management of Staff:	Nil

## Financial Responsibility:

Delegated Authority:	In accordance with WDC delegated authority guidelines
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## Key Task Summary:

The position of **Senior Policy Advisor** encompasses the following major functions or Key Result Areas:

1. Team Mentorship
2. Research and Analysis
3. Consultation and Collaboration
4. Corporate Planning
5. Monitoring and Non-Financial Performance Reporting
6. Policy Advice and Support
7. Implementation and Evaluation
8. Policy Procedures
9. Strategy and Policy Development
10. Strategy and Policy Adoption
11. Strategic Initiatives
12. Customer Service
13. Long Term and Annual Planning Process
14. Emergency Management
15. Risk Management
16. Health and Safety
17. Professional Development and Training
18. Other

<b>Key Result Area:</b>	<b>Job holder is successful if:</b>
<b>1. Team Mentorship</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide guidance to the team and support to the Policy and Governance Manager.</li> <li>• Prepare monthly reports.</li> <li>• Review team reports for Council meetings.</li> <li>• Organise regular team meetings to help foster an informed, motivated and capable team.</li> <li>• Deputise for the Policy and Governance Manager in their absence.</li> <li>• Encourage innovation within the policy team.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guidance in relation to workloads is provided in accordance with Council priorities.</li> <li>• Assistance is provided in meeting statutory obligations.</li> <li>• Team meetings provide important opportunities for collaboration and information sharing.</li> <li>• Monthly reports are accurate and are received by the Policy and Governance Manager to meet the require timeframes.</li> <li>• Staff are supported to become better at their job.</li> <li>• The Policy and Governance Manager receives support and insight, particularly in relation to higher level strategic opportunities.</li> <li>• Peer reviewing of the policy team's work is effectively undertaken and improvements are made.</li> <li>• Continuous improvement opportunities are sought and implemented where appropriate.</li> </ul>

<b>2. Research and Analysis</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take the lead on more complex research projects and provide support to the Policy Advisor Research and Engagement.</li> <li>• Undertake evidence based research as part of policy development projects.</li> <li>• Provide commentary with the final research findings with sound recommendations.</li> <li>• Collect, collate and feedback background information on technical and implementation issues to the commissioning officer as requested.</li> <li>• Work with community groups on research projects.</li> <li>• Proactively identify issues and investigate in line with achievement of our overall strategic direction.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research is effective and supports policy development.</li> <li>• No complaints about the timeliness or quality of the information provided.</li> <li>• Commissioning officer is kept well informed through process and happy with outcome.</li> <li>• Commentary is clear and appropriate.</li> <li>• Positive relationships are established and maintained with the community during research processes.</li> </ul>
<b>3. Consultation and Collaboration</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take the lead on more complex engagement and consultation initiatives and provide support to the Policy Advisor Research and Engagement and Policy Analyst Legislative and Performance Management.</li> <li>• Undertake consultation to meet statutory requirements and good practice guidelines.</li> <li>• Develop and maintain a collaborative approach (and active networks) with other agencies and organisations in terms of achieving the community's strategic direction.</li> <li>• Encourage a collaborative approach to Council's policy issues amongst interested groups, including internal customers.</li> <li>• Demonstrate a commitment to authentic engagement and actively seek out opportunities to achieve this using existing forums and new approaches.</li> <li>• Work with other councils in the region on regional policy issues.</li> <li>• Effectively advocate Whanganui District Council's position on issues where required.</li> <li>• Prepare submissions to legislative changes, policy developments and planning issues which accurately reflect issues pertinent to the Whanganui District.</li> <li>• Communicate policy information internally throughout the organisation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statutory consultation requirements are met.</li> <li>• Strategies and plans have the buy-in from the Council and the community.</li> <li>• The community's strategic vision is pursued and achieved alongside other organisations and groups.</li> <li>• Strategies and policies reflect collaborative community partnerships.</li> <li>• Other councils and the community seek support and regard work as good practice models.</li> <li>• Submissions are pertinent to the Whanganui District.</li> <li>• The content of submissions is supported by Council resolution.</li> <li>• Staff are kept informed on Council policy and involved in policy discussions and planning.</li> </ul>

<b>4. Corporate Planning</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist in the development of Council and community visioning and strategic planning processes.</li> <li>• Document and maintain corporate planning processes and information.</li> <li>• Provide support for the non-financial aspects of the annual report.</li> <li>• Actively participate in the integrated planning and management processes supported by CammsStrategy.</li> <li>• Take the lead on more complex corporate planning projects and provide support to the Policy Analyst Legislative and Performance Management.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manager is well supported to deliver best practice strategic planning advice and plans.</li> <li>• Core corporate planning processes are completed thoroughly and on time.</li> <li>• Legislative and audit requirements are met.</li> <li>• Partnerships with the community are built and sustained.</li> <li>• Strategic plans reflect Council and community aspirations.</li> <li>• Processes and procedures are documented in a way that is accessible and easily understood by staff.</li> <li>• Progress on actions and KPIs is kept up to date.</li> </ul>
<b>5. Monitoring and Non-Financial Performance Reporting</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure actions arising from the Long Term and Annual Planning processes are assigned and implemented.</li> <li>• Assist with production of quarterly organisational performance reports.</li> <li>• Assist with non-financial performance reporting for the annual report.</li> <li>• Document performance management processes and information.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CammsStrategy is regularly updated to ensure it is a live source of corporate information.</li> <li>• Organisation performance reports provide a complete record of non-financial performance at the end of each quarter.</li> <li>• Non-financial performance results are communicated and explained to internal and external customers.</li> <li>• Quality and timely information is provided for the annual report.</li> <li>• Corporate knowledge is documented in a way that is accessible and easily understood by other staff.</li> </ul>
<b>6. Policy Advice and Support</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide senior level advice and support on behalf of the Policy team to Council, Committees, subcommittees and Boards.</li> <li>• Provide policy advice to other Council staff.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chairs, Elected Members and senior officers to Committees, subcommittees and Boards feel supported and in receipt of good policy advice.</li> <li>• No complaints received from other staff regarding the quality of advice given.</li> <li>• Advice is relevant, accurate, well documented, clearly communicated and timely.</li> <li>• Advice meets duty of care regarding facts, assumptions and proper process, balance in argument, frankness of advice and if necessary of warning(s).</li> <li>• Statutory process is followed.</li> </ul>

<b>7. Implementation and Evaluation</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake a review/audit at the end of each project to evaluate success in developing the strategy or policy, and to enable the manager to improve policy development processes.</li> <li>Monitor implementation of the strategies and policies and progress towards targets, and initiate remedial action with managers as required.</li> <li>In partnership with managers, design and implement effective evaluation, monitoring and review processes which focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategic and operational relevance of the plans/policies</li> <li>Effectiveness and efficiency of the implementation process</li> <li>Impact of current performance on future performance</li> <li>Evaluation of qualitative initiatives.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project audits completed in a timely manner and manager informed.</li> <li>Plans are reviewed annually or as required and monitoring systems are kept up-to-date.</li> </ul>
<b>8. Policy Procedures</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribute to the maintenance of policy systems and procedures.</li> <li>Active participation as a member of the Strategy team.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responsibilities to maintain project information in the CammsStrategy database are met.</li> <li>Participation in the Strategy team is positive with effective input.</li> </ul>
<b>9. Strategy and Policy Development</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide strategic policy analysis and project management on social, economic, cultural, environmental and corporate issues.</li> <li>Compatibility and links between all Council and community plans is ensured.</li> <li>Project manages the more complex strategy and policy projects.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Council has a coherent set of strategies and policies that are current and comply with statutory requirements.</li> <li>Appropriate policy development processes initiated on agreed issues.</li> <li>Project plans are completed, kept up-to-date and adhered too.</li> <li>Policy documents meet the tests of policy quality.</li> <li>Legislative and regulatory processes are complied with.</li> </ul>
<b>10. Strategy and Policy Adoption</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare written reports for Council committee meetings.</li> <li>Attend Council committee meetings and answer questions if necessary.</li> <li>Liaise with senior officers for relevant committees.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No complaints received from elected members regarding the quality of advice given and reports prepared.</li> <li>Verbal advice to elected members is clearly and confidently articulated.</li> <li>The committee senior officer is appropriately briefed prior to Chair's Briefings and committee meetings.</li> </ul>

<b>11. Strategic Initiatives</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initiate and develop strategic initiatives in order to improve processes and procedures.</li> <li>Proactively develop initiatives in response to the changing local government environment to ensure Whanganui District Council leads best practice and regional relationships are strengthened.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrable improvements personally initiated are evident.</li> <li>Progress and initiatives are reported and highlighted to senior management as necessary.</li> </ul>
<b>12. Customer Service</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrate a “customer first” culture within the team, group and in the wider organisation.</li> <li>Act as a Customer Advocate in the team, group and in the wider organisation.</li> <li>See customer feedback as an opportunity to improve service.</li> <li>Develop partnerships within the organisation to meet customer needs.</li> <li>Contribute to the development of customer focused policies and procedure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is demonstrated application of the Customer First and associated guidelines.</li> <li>Availability for customers is ensured.</li> <li>There is evidence of understanding of the needs of the customer.</li> <li>Evidence of improving customer service.</li> <li>Any appropriate Service Level Agreement requirements are met.</li> <li>CRM and correspondence are responded to in required timeframe (where appropriate).</li> <li>Customer queries/requests are followed through in manner that ensures closure.</li> </ul>
<b>13. Long Term and Annual Planning Process</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support and participate in the Long Term and Annual Planning Process for the Council when required.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Project Manager receives effective support in achieving the Council's statutory obligations in the development of the plans.</li> </ul>
<b>14. Emergency Management</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support and participation in Emergency Management for Council when required.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Emergency Manager receives effective support in achieving the Council's statutory and community obligations in emergency and risk management.</li> <li>Effective and active participation, and, where appropriate, the release of staff for emergency response situations and planned training.</li> </ul>
<b>15. Risk Management</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compliance with Risk Management.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Best practice risk management procedures apply to all projects and activities.</li> <li>Compliance with Council risk management policies and procedures.</li> <li>Risks associated with functions managed/policies being developed are accurately identified, evaluated and reduced.</li> </ul>



16. Health and Safety	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comply with all safe work procedures, policies and instructions.</li> <li>• Report all incidents, hazards/risks and injuries to supervisors in a timely manner.</li> <li>• Actively participate in the ongoing development of safe workplace practices in the Whanganui District Council.</li> <li>• Take personal responsibility for own safety without putting others at risk.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comply with any reasonable instruction that is given to you by the PCBU or your Manager.</li> <li>• Timely, full and accurate completion of incidents on the Health and Safety electronic reporting.</li> <li>• Participate in all Whanganui District Council Health and Safety Induction programmes and updates as and when required.</li> <li>• Demonstrate commitment to Health and Safety for yourself and your work colleagues.</li> </ul>
17. Professional Development and Training	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional Development/Training Needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify training opportunities for the Policy team as required.</li> <li>• Own training needs are identified through appraisal and training needs analysis.</li> <li>• Agreed training programmed/development opportunities are taken up.</li> <li>• Knowledge of both management and professional areas remains up to date.</li> </ul>
18. Other	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special projects are completed from time to time, meeting quality standards and deadline requirements.</li> </ul>	

**Note:**

*The above performance standards are provided as a guide only. The precise performance objectives and measures for this position will need further discussion between the jobholder and manager as part of the performance management process.*

<b>Work Complexity</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mentoring a team.</li> <li>• Understanding relevant legislation such as the Local Government Act and keeping up-to-date with amendments and national policy directions.</li> <li>• Clear analytical thinking to enable research, analysis, policy development and evaluation across a broad range of issues that cover social, economic, environmental and cultural dimensions.</li> <li>• Project management skills. Using initiative and working with minimal direction.</li> <li>• The ability to present clear, concise and balanced policy advice to Council and other groups via both written and oral reports.</li> <li>• Often working with many other stakeholders on projects and finding solutions to opposing views on issues.</li> <li>• Understanding regulatory compliance to a level that allows by-law development to be undertaken.</li> </ul>
<b>Level of assistance to solve problems</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Precedents and broad guidelines, drawn from experience, allowing room for judgment and initiative.</li> <li>• Precedents not necessarily well-defined, but a range of varied, but established methods within the discipline from which to choose.</li> <li>• Team support or availability of others to help solve the problem.</li> </ul>

### ***Person Specification:***

<b>Qualifications</b>	
<b>Essential:</b>	<b>Desirable:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tertiary qualification or equivalent in public policy, planning or other related discipline.</li> <li>• A current NZ drivers licence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership training</li> </ul>
<b>Knowledge/Experience</b>	
<b>Essential:</b>	<b>Desirable:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least four years relevant experience</li> <li>• In depth knowledge of the Local Government Act</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supervisory experience</li> <li>• Local Government policy experience</li> <li>• Experience in qualitative and quantitative research</li> <li>• Proven experience of achieving outcomes at a senior organisational level</li> </ul>

## Key Skills/Attributes/Job Specific Competencies

The following levels would typically be expected for the 100% fully effective level:

<b>Core competencies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Live our values</b> – keeping the organisation’s values at the forefront of decision-making and action</li> <li>• <b>Improve ways of working</b> – taking action to improve existing conditions and processes; identifying improvement opportunities, generating ideas and implementing solutions</li> <li>• <b>Focus on customer service</b> – ensuring that the customer and stakeholder perspective is a key consideration behind decision-making and action</li> </ul>
<b>Technical competencies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional Skill – sound working knowledge of the policy development and corporate planning processes, and the Local Government Act</li> <li>• Analysis – securing relevant information and identifying key issues</li> <li>• Collaboration – working effectively with others across the organisation</li> <li>• Community Awareness – understand the local community and considers impacts of actions on the community</li> <li>• Consultation – applying appropriate consultative processes and procedures</li> <li>• Facilitating groups and meetings – ability to lead groups and run meetings</li> <li>• Follow-Up – establishing procedures to monitor projects</li> <li>• Oral Communication – expressing ideas effectively to the needs of the audience</li> <li>• Problem Solving – identifying solutions to problems</li> <li>• Project Management – planning and managing projects within timeframes</li> <li>• Quality and Accuracy – accomplishing tasks to required standards, checking your own and others work to ensure accuracy</li> <li>• Relationship with Elected Members – building effective professional relationships in accordance with established procedures</li> <li>• Report Writing – expressing ideas clearly in reports</li> <li>• Corporate planning processes – understanding of Annual and 10-Year Planning processes</li> <li>• Strategic awareness – establishing a course of action to accomplish a long range goal or vision, allocating resources, defining intermediate goals and contingencies</li> </ul>
<b>Working Knowledge</b>	<p><b>Treaty of Waitangi and Iwi Protocols</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understands the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi and the local protocols for liaising with Iwi</li> </ul> <p><b>Political Awareness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understands the workings of local Government and recognises the boundaries between governance and management and acts accordingly</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Council Policy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands and follows Council policies and procedures and how they affect the tasks and responsibilities in one's job.</li> </ul> <p><b>Computer Aptitude</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands PC operations such as operating systems, common spreadsheets and word processing software. Uses this knowledge to improve one's ability to perform job duties.</li> </ul> <p><b>Legislation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands relevant laws and regulations and how they affect the tasks and responsibilities in one's job (e.g. H&amp;S, ERA etc.)</li> </ul>
<b>Awareness</b>	<p><b>Health and Safety</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands Health and Safety in the Workplace and hazard identification.</li> </ul>
<b>Personal Attributes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self-motivated and proactive</li> <li>Positive attitude and works well in a team environment</li> <li>Clear analytical thinker</li> <li>Sensitivity to Maori</li> <li>Ethical approach and integrity</li> <li>Ability to perform efficiently and meet deadlines</li> </ul>

## ***Variation***

From time to time it may be necessary to consider changes in the position description in response to the changing nature of our work environment – including technological requirements or statutory changes. This Position Description may be reviewed as part of the preparation for performance planning for the annual performance cycle or as required.

## ***Acceptance of Position Description:***

I have read the attached Position Description and agree that it represents the duties I will perform for the above position.

Employee: \_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Manager: \_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

**Policy and Governance Manager**