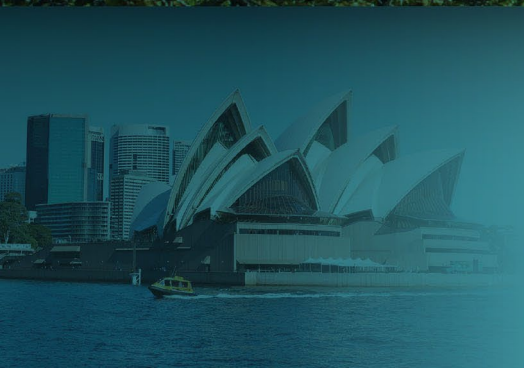




**finding leaders who inspire teams  
and drive growth**



**Candidate Brief**

**Environment Canterbury – General Counsel**

**Date: 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022**

**decipher** the people you need to succeed

## General Counsel

- Commercially minded lawyer leading the legal framework for key decision making
- Work with a high level of integrity and independence for the business providing unbiased advice
- Influence and lead a highly skilled team of professionals

## Kaunihera Taiao ki Waitaha | About Environment Canterbury

Environment Canterbury is the regional council for one of New Zealand's largest, most diverse, and naturally stunning regions. The stated mission of this vital organisation is to work with the community, taking action together to shape a thriving and resilient Canterbury, now and for future generations/Toitū te marae o Tāne, toitū te marae o Tangaroa, toitū te iwi.

## Kōrero mō te tūranga | About the opportunity

To lead a team of highly skilled legal professionals for the provision of vital advice on strategic legal matters for Environment Canterbury while enabling the organisation to stay true to its values and mission, we need a highly trustworthy, solutions focused leader who can withstand and respond to pressure and balance risk to ensure strong legal safeguards are in place for the organisation. Based in Ōtautahi, Christchurch, the role of General Counsel is a critical position reporting to and working closely with the Chief Executive.

As a strategic advisor to the Chief Executive and Council, the General Counsel will:

- Lead and manage a high performing legal function
- Lead the legal framework that facilitates and supports strong executive decision making
- Mitigate risks of legal challenge in accordance with all statutory and legal obligations
- Advise on appropriate strategic and operational legal actions
- Ensure appropriate advocacy is provided on all matters that are required by Council
- Manage the cost of internal and external legal resources

This role is dynamic and impactful across the organisation and has the opportunity to support the shaping of future decisions, actions and regional leadership across our local environment.

## About you

To be successful as the General Counsel, you will have at least 10 years PQE with a career demonstrating diverse and deep experience, ideally – but not necessarily - in commercial contracts law, property transactions, Local Government legislation, local and or central government policy, and official information situations. As mana whenua are key stakeholders in our region and within Environment Canterbury as an organisation, an understanding of principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and an affinity with the organisation's values will be important.

A strong level of commercial acumen and the ability to balance a range of risks, you will be known for your ability to swiftly and confidently provide well-considered, yet practical advice and you are “a trusted advisor” at

The information contained in the Candidate Brief is to assist candidates in their evaluation of the suitability of the advertised role. Decipher Group Limited accepts no liability for information provided, on behalf of the client, in good faith.



an executive and governance level. You will have an understanding of the Regional Management Act and how it applies within the Local Government context.

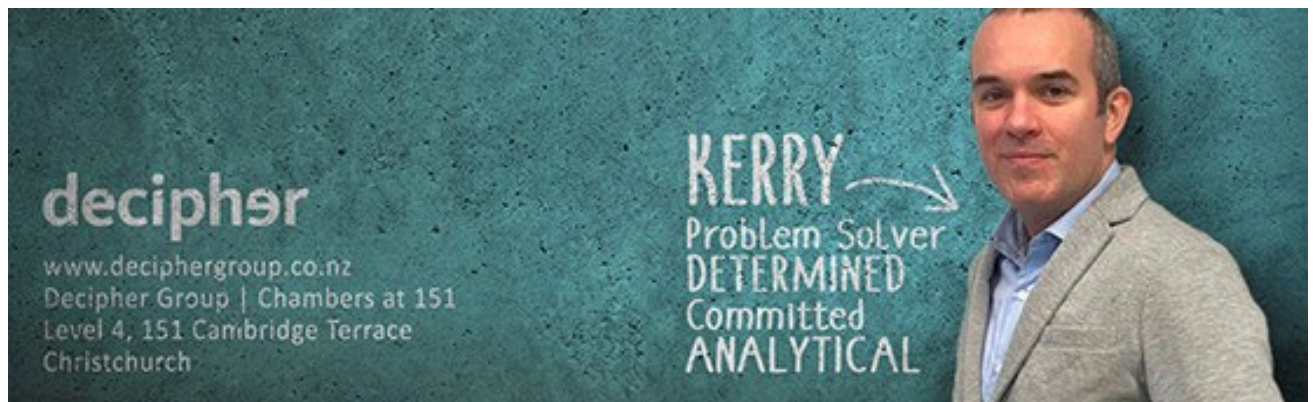
This role will suit an influential, intelligent, commercially capable and passionate legal professional who is ready to take on this critical, influential, leadership role within a complex and dynamic environment. Are you ready?

## How to apply

To discover more about Environment Canterbury visit [www.ecan.govt.nz](http://www.ecan.govt.nz)

For a confidential discussion about the role; please contact Kerry Ellis on 021 0886 7475 or email [kerry@deciphergroup.co.nz](mailto:kerry@deciphergroup.co.nz)

Applications close: Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2022



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## General Counsel



### Purpose

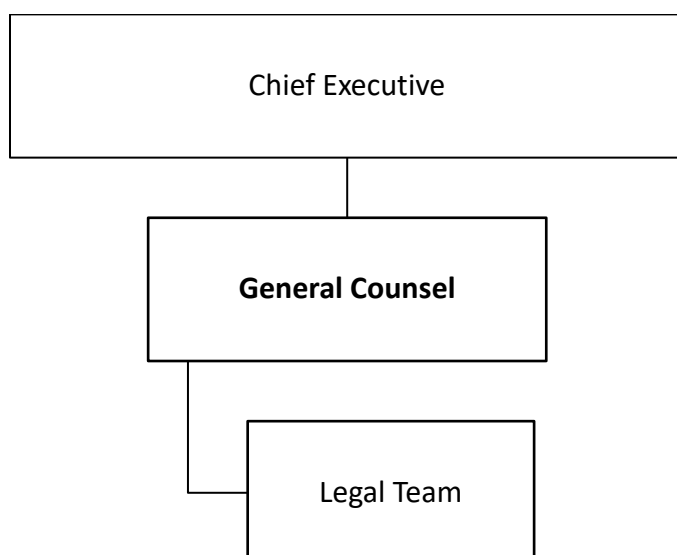
To lead the Environment Canterbury legal function and deliver a legal framework that ensures Environment Canterbury and its staff receive the appropriate strategic and operational legal advice to deliver the strategic outcomes.

As a people leader role, this position requires an organisational perspective and approach. This includes, thinking about organisation-wide interests and impacts when interacting with customers or when planning activities and expenditure, collaborating inside the organisation to achieve the desired culture, making sound business decisions and taking ownership of leading and managing our people.

Activities will be owned and delivered by the leader within the frameworks provided by corporate functions, for example, people leaders are accountable for, and supported to, lead their staff in all aspects of leadership and management through the provision of coaching, feedback, direction, support and development. Human Resources manages the overall framework around people policies and strategies, and managers operate and make decisions within it.

This role also has a reporting line to the Chief Executive with the expectation that the incumbent will have direct access to the Chief Executive at any time to highlight any relevant concerns around issues relating to eg organisational leadership, risk, fraud or conflict of interest. Where there is the potential for perceived risk involving the Chief Executive, the incumbent also has direct access to the Council Chair on a similar basis.

### Position



*Taking action together to shape a thriving and resilient Canterbury, now and for future generations.*

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CE	
Employee	

## Accountabilities

1. Provide a legal framework for management decision making that ensures legal risk is fully considered alongside other critical business risks.
2. Advise Environment Canterbury and its staff on the appropriate strategic and operational legal actions necessary to deliver the strategic outcomes.
3. Ensure appropriate advocacy is provided by Environment Canterbury on all matters related to legislative, statutory and other legal matters that are required by the Council.
4. Establish, shape, lead and manage a high performing legal function in line with organisational values and expectations.
5. Ensure that Environment Canterbury's processes and procedures function in a manner that is consistent and compliant with statutory and good governance requirements.
6. Manage the cost of internal and external legal resources to ensure that best value is achieved.
7. Ensure Environment Canterbury's strategies and plans are developed in accordance with all statutory and legal obligations to reduce the risks of legal challenge.

## Working Relationships

### Within the organisation

- Accountable to the Chief Executive for the regular provision of assurance and independent advice to enable the Chief Executive to achieve Environment Canterbury's strategic outcomes within the legislative framework.
- Regular and frequent interface with the organisation's governance body to advise on legal obligations and options.
- Frequent advice to executive and senior leaders to support them in achieving planned outcomes for their areas of accountability.

### Outside the organisation

- Contribute towards our effective, strong and valued partnership with all Papatipu Rūnanga within the Canterbury rohe and Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu. To demonstrate our Council's commitment to recognise and provide for the kaitiaki responsibility Ngāi Tahu has for the natural environment. This will include sharing of knowledge and information, creating opportunities for increased participation in decision making processes, effective engagement and development of existing working relationships.
- Frequent contact with external legal advisors, especially the designated relationship manager at our primary external supplier legal firm, to maintain a positive working relationship and ensure Environment Canterbury receives high quality advice and service.
- Frequent contact with Environment and District Court Registrars to manage court processes.

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Employee	

- Regular contact with legal advisors acting for submitters' appellants to achieve an expeditious and compliant outcome that meets customer needs where possible.
- Frequent contact with Local Government agencies and Central Government to share practices and apply relevant legislative requirements.

## Health and Safety

Environment Canterbury is proactive in advocating robust Health and Safety practices; we take health, safety and wellbeing very seriously.

So far as it is reasonably practicable, you need to ensure the Health and Safety of yourself, your team, contractors and visitors. You must comply with current Health and Safety legislation, regulations and guidelines, organisational policies, procedures and our code of conduct.

## Delegations and Authorities

Delegated authority to make decisions in accordance with Council approved delegations, and authority for decision making in accordance with policies and guidelines for financial, people management and media related activities.

## Capabilities

### Qualifications

- New Zealand barrister and solicitor with a current practising certificate.
- New Zealand Law Society membership.
- Full New Zealand class 1 driver's licence.

### Experience

- A minimum of ten years' experience in a professional legal firm with demonstrated proficiency in commercial, Local Government legislation, policy, privacy and official information situations.
- Experience interpreting legislation and advising on public law matters.
- At least five years' experience in leading and managing others, including recruiting, motivating, directing and developing people.

### Core competencies

Specific behaviours at the Senior Leader level beneath each of the following organisational competencies. To identify the competency expectations at this level, view the competency framework in the HR Kete or the Environment Canterbury Careers website.

#### Customer Focus

Ensuring that the customer perspective is a driving force behind decisions and activities. Initiating and maintaining relationships inside and outside the organisation.

#### Business Acumen

Using an understanding of the organisation's position to contribute to effective strategies and tactics by using economic, financial and industry information. Thinking from the ratepayers' perspective.

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Achieving Outcomes	Translating strategic priorities into operational reality; aligning communication, accountabilities, resources, internal processes and ongoing measurement systems to ensure that strategic priorities yield measurable and sustainable results.
Leading Change	Identifying and driving organisational and cultural changes needed to adapt strategically to changing demands, technology, and internal initiatives; using new approaches to improve results by transforming organisational culture, systems, or services.
Common Purpose	Working towards a compelling view of the future by engaging with the organisation's vision; understanding and aligning to the common purpose.
Building Capability	Attracting, developing, engaging, and retaining talented individuals allowing the organisation to meet current and future organisational challenges. Sharing authority, responsibilities and decision making to enable individuals to stretch their capabilities and accomplish strategic priorities.

The above statements are intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed; they are not an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, duties and skills required of the position and incumbent. However, from time to time the General Counsel will be required to accept and carry out other duties.

<b>Location</b>	Christchurch/ Environs	<b>Position Code</b>	EXECEXE.001
<b>Band</b>	9		

I agree to undertake the responsibilities detailed in this job description:

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

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Employee	



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