

POSITION TITLE	In-house Legal Officer
DEPARTMENT	Corporate & Community Services
GROUP	Development & Governance
LOCATION	Mareeba
CLASSIFICATION / LEVEL	LGOA Level 4
REPORTS TO	Senior Compliance Officer

Department Summary

The Corporate & Community Services Department ensures an integrated approach to the delivery of internal organisational services and the provision of external services of Council to the community.

Department business units include:

- Finance
- Information Systems
- Development & Governance
- Human Resources
- Customer & Community Services

Position Summary

The In-house Legal Officer works as part of the Governance & Compliance team providing legal services and advice across a broad range of Council areas. The In-house Legal Officer works under the guidance of the Manager Development & Governance and Senior Compliance Officer.

Key Responsibilities

- Assist Council staff to meet priority needs through the provision and delivery of legal services, under supervision
- Undertake legal research, provide clear legal analysis and draft accurate, timely and consistent legal advice in the areas of administrative, environmental, planning and/or property law to support decision making and assist with the effective resolution of identified legal issues
- Provide advisory and legislative services to assist in the management of legal risks and achieve outcomes for a diverse range of complex and sensitive projects that meet Council's statutory and legal obligations
- Provide specialist professional legal advice to Council and its committees, managers and staff on legally complex matters across a broad range of local government activities and responsibilities
- Manage often sensitive Council prosecutions and court actions and appearances, exercising considerable professional judgement and, where applicable, represent Council as required in courts, tribunals, commissions or other forums, as required
- Prepare complex legal documentation, contracts and agreements, as required
- Liaise with external law firms, government departments and other stakeholders in relation to the provision of legal advice
- Manage property transactions such as land sales/purchases, leases, licences, permits and covenants, with respect to both State land and freehold land

- Maintain and contribute to effective record keeping and precedent development within Governance and Legal Services
- Identify and recommend changes to Council policies and programmes arising from assigned judicial determinations, including assisting in the development and review of policies and procedures in a number of areas including delegations, instruments of appointment, information privacy and right to information
- Complete assigned legal tasks associated with legislative reform projects to enable delivery of legislative projects in line with Council objectives and timeframes
- Other reasonable duties as directed from time to time

Skills and Knowledge

- Extremely high-level written and verbal communication skills
- High ability to research, interpret and apply legislation and case law to provide informed and accurate advice
- Outstanding level of integrity and commitment to confidentiality and a demonstrated understanding of ethics as they apply to solicitors
- Experience with time management and handling multiple tasks simultaneously
- Comprehensive knowledge of the Local Government Act 2009 and Local Government Regulation 2012

Qualifications and Experience

Essential (Mandatory for the Position)

- Completion of a Bachelor of Law undergraduate degree or an equivalent postgraduate qualification in Law
- Significant experience working in a government administrative role where high standards of accuracy and efficiency and timely service delivery are expected
- Demonstrated experience in undertaking legal research, interpretation and application of legislation and the provision of legal advice
- Demonstrated significant knowledge and experience of the law generally, the principles of law, the practices and procedures of all courts and tribunals, including courts of appeal, and of the law relating to local government practice
- Excellent demonstrated communication skills, including highly developed written and verbal communication skills and the ability to effectively communicate legal advice
- Demonstrated experience with, and an understanding of, the role of a solicitor within a corporate governance framework
- Current Queensland C Class driver's licence

Desirable

- Hold a current Legal Practising Certificate pursuant to the Queensland Law Society Act
- Admission as a solicitor to the Queensland Supreme Court and a current practicing certificate
- Experience in local government or similar environment
- Post-admission experience in an area of law relevant to Council, for example: planning and environment; industrial relations and employment; regulatory and compliance; commercial; contract; property; governance or a broad generalist background

Environmental Obligations

All employees have a legal obligation to comply with environmental legislation and must comply with any Environmental Authority issued to Council to carry out activities. Clause 4.2.5 of the Employee Code of Conduct provides further detail on employee and supervisor compliance requirements.

Workplace Health and Safety Obligations

All employees have a legal obligation to comply with WHS legislation. Employees must work in accordance with the Council Safety Management System – SAFE PLAN and comply with the WHS Responsibility Statement relevant to their position - see Schedule S3 attached.

WHS RESPONSIBILITY STATEMENT

Workers

All employees have a legal obligation to comply with WHS legislation, the Council WHS Management System (SAFE PLAN), WHS policies, procedures and work instructions. These operate to ensure the health and safety of employees, contractors, visitors, volunteers, the public and the environment.

The following responsibilities apply to all employees, including permanent, part-time and casual employees:

1. Ensuring you keep up to date and comply with WHS legislation and SAFE PLAN (WHS Plan) and participate in the completion of Monthly Action Plans (MAPs)
2. Performing all work and associated functions in a safe manner
3. Complying with WHS policies, procedures, reasonable written or verbal work instructions issued by Council or its officers
4. Correctly using and maintaining all personal protective clothing and equipment supplied by Council
5. Identifying hazards, conducting risk assessments, and taking corrective action to eliminate hazards where possible in the workplace, and/or to report hazards and risks in accordance with WHS procedures
6. Establishing and maintaining a high standard of housekeeping and cleanliness within individual work areas and on Council property generally
7. Reporting and assisting with the investigation of all incidents in the workplace, including minor injuries, near misses and property damage as requested
8. Attending relevant toolbox talks, team discussions or specific training organised by Council
9. Identifying the location of first aid treatment centres, fire protection facilities and evacuation procedures in the work area
10. Working in a manner that will not endanger you, other employees or the public
11. Cooperate with any reasonable instruction given by Council officers
12. Report any safety concerns to your supervisor
13. Ensuring compliance with National Heavy Vehicle legislative requirements relevant of this position.

I have read and understand the above Position Description and WHS Responsibility Statement (S3)					
INCUMBENT NAME		SIGNATURE		DATE	
SUPERVISOR NAME		SIGNATURE		DATE	