

Position description

Title	Chief Financial Officer (CFO)
Number	
Group	Water Organisation
Division	Executive
Reports to	Chief Executive Officer - Water Organisation
Direct reports	Finance Manager, Procurement Manager, Strategy & Planning Manager, Legal and Commercial Manager
Date	May 2025

About the Organisation

This organisation is a new joint Water Organisation (WO) (yet to be named) for Tauranga City Council (TCC) and Western Bay of Plenty District Council (WBOPDC). The WO will take over the provision of water services from 1 July 2027 from the two Councils.

A Board of Directors, made up of an Executive Chair and initially two members, is currently being recruited, there will be a further two Directors recruited at a later time. This Board will manage the transition of staff, assets, and responsibilities from both councils to the new WO. Between June 2026 and July 2027, the Board will also begin shaping the WO long-term direction, including creating a Water Services Strategy to ensure safe, reliable, and efficient water services that support community wellbeing. This role is key as part of the overall leadership team that will ensure that this long-term objective is met.

Position Purpose

The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) position initially manages the financial components of establishing and transitioning to the new WO. Once the entity is established and functioning, the CFO position is then required to continue financial management from a strategic and operational perspective, to ensure strong financial performance.

The position will be focused on leading financial sustainability long-term, ensuring consumer value, and providing transparent reporting that demonstrates robust financial systems and processes, to meet financial obligations and standards, as well as overseeing the legislative financial reporting requirements including the annual budget.

As the Water Organisation establishes itself, the CFO will play a pivotal role in building the organisation's financial capability, and supporting the introduction of new financial systems, and processes. During this period, the CFO will develop and lead a Finance strategy to ensure organisational readiness, integrated

service delivery, and alignment with the Water Organisation’s strategic objectives. Over the next three years, a key focus will be leading a complex transition programme from the two Councils to stand up a fully self-sufficient WO in the areas of finance, strategy and planning, procurement and legal and commercial. A key component will be the alignment of new enterprise systems and organisational capability. This aspect of the role will evolve as the organisation matures, and enduring structures are implemented.

Key outcomes

<p>Strategic Leadership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In alignment with Board directives and Chief Executive directive, develop and implement the financial strategy and planning, aligned with sustainability goals, service requirements, infrastructure plans, Manaaki Whenua, and taking into account stakeholder and community requirements. • Accountability for ensuring the organisation fully complies with Commerce Commission economic regulation requirements, including information disclosure obligations under relevant legislation, by establishing robust financial reporting systems, maintaining data integrity, and delivering accurate, timely, and complete disclosures that support regulatory oversight and stakeholder confidence. • Lead the end-to-end institutional onboarding and accreditation process for Council, manage the execution of necessary statutory documentation, including the Multi-Issuer Deed, Security Trust Deed and Guarantee and Indemnity Deed. • Take the lead role for the development and implementation of the Water Services strategy • Provide accurate information, reporting, and sound strategic financial advice to the Water Organisation Board, Chief Executive and wider Senior Leadership Team to support informed and effective governance and leadership decision-making and organisational resilience. • Provide financial advice and information regarding opportunities for innovation, commercial opportunities, and long-term infrastructure investment. • Provide financial modelling, economic assessment, and commercial analysis for business cases to inform revenue modelling and income stream analysis. • Influence and guide effective financial decision-making across the organisation, supporting robust processes and improved financial outcomes
<p>Financial Leadership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During establishment and transition phases, design and implement an effective financial framework and finance systems to shape a financially integrated entity. • Collaborate with Finance teams at both TCC and WBOPDC to ensure a smooth transition and effective ongoing management of financial commitments.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead the establishment then oversight of core finance policies, processes, procedures, and systems to ensure compliant and transparent financial management of the entity, ensuring all regulatory and legislative requirements are met. • Support the successful transition of financial data and information, debt and liabilities to ensure accurate financial formation of the entity. • Lead ongoing financial operations including budgeting, accounting, procurement, and reporting to ensure standards meet requirements of the economic regulator. • Establish and maintain strong internal controls to manage financial risk and ensure audit requirements are met. • Establish and lead a high-performing engaged team, fostering a culture of health, safety, wellbeing, diversity and inclusion, with professional development opportunities and a culture of continuous improvement.
Asset and Investment Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead long-term investment planning and management including financial strategies for funding capital works and investment strategy, while collaborating with planning, asset management and infrastructure teams to align delivery. • Establish and maintain effective performance-based asset management practices and lifecycle costing, to ensure investment decisions are cost-effective and sustainable. • Ensure assets and investments are effectively accounted for while managing depreciation, capitalisation and impacts on revenue modelling.
Compliance Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead the finance function to ensure compliance with all relevant regulatory requirements and legislation (e.g. Local Government (Water Services) Act 2025, Local Government Act, Public Finance Act), accounting standards, and audit requirements. • Uphold the highest standards of public accountability and stewardship in line with public organisation obligations. • Ensure positive and effective relationships with external auditors, councils, and regulatory bodies.
Service/Partnership Level Agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the agreed Council partnership agreements operate efficiently, are aligned with organisational priorities, and deliver high-quality, customer-focused support across the organisation. This includes: • Providing strategic oversight and performance monitoring of partnership agreements covering customer billing and revenue capture to ensure effective delivery, value for money, and continuous improvement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Working collaboratively with the Service Managers and the wider executive team to align service delivery with the organisation's strategic goals and operational needs.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establishing performance metrics, reporting frameworks, and service level expectations to ensure accountability and transparency of service delivery. ○ Supporting the development of systems, policies, and processes that enable integrated, future-fit corporate services as the organisation grows. ○ Leading and supporting change management processes to transition corporate service functions into the new WO in the agreed timelines.
Stakeholder Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide clear financial communication to stakeholders including the Board/CE, Senior Leadership Team, Councils, Iwi/Māori partners, and communities. ● Support engagement on funding, pricing, and financial priorities in line with principles of equity, transparency, and partnership. ● Establish, foster and maintain strong, trusted relationships with Councils, Manaaki whenua, regulators, government agencies, communities and key consumers to support the success of the entity. ● Ensure meaningful engagement and partnerships with iwi in alignment with Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

The job description is not an exhaustive list of requirements, the job holder will be required to perform tasks assigned to them that are not explicitly described in this document.

Person specification

Qualifications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tertiary qualification (Bachelor's Degree or higher) in a relevant discipline (for example, accounting, economics, finance etc). ● Must be a Chartered Accountant (CA) or equivalent. ● Post graduate qualification in public policy, infrastructure or business administration would be advantageous.
Experience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A minimum of 10 years' executive leadership experience within a complex infrastructure, utility or public service organisation ● Experience in local government, public sector or similar complex work environments. ● Familiar with NZ public sector financial management frameworks and relevant legislation (e.g. Local Government Act, Public Finance Act). ● Demonstrated success establishing or transitioning an organisation, ideally in the public or local government sector. ● Proven people leadership skills and experience at a senior level and demonstrates well developed leadership attributes.

- Excellent financial literacy with strong understanding of budgeting, forecasting and financial management, including long-term financial planning, infrastructure investment, and performance reporting.
- Experience working in partnership with iwi and a demonstrated understanding of te ao Māori

Essential

- Strategic financial leadership with the ability to shape and drive long-term strategies to deliver public value and organisational outcomes.
- Excellent technical expertise with a deep knowledge of accounting standards, asset capitalization, depreciation, audit and risk.
- Commercial acumen with strong financial skills in modelling, pricing and capital planning within a public-good context
- Demonstrate exceptional interpersonal and relationship management skills, with the ability to engage, influence, and bring people on the journey, particularly across Council and partner organisations through collaboration, credibility, and sound judgement.
- Strong digital capability, able to implement modern financial systems, leverage business intelligence tools and analyses data to support decision-making.
- Strong understanding of regulatory environments, public accountability, compliance and reporting obligations.
- Well-rounded in management skills including self-organisation, people management, business improvement, policy and process.
- Understanding of or experience in working within a CCO, local government context, or comparable public-facing environment.
- Strategic thinker with sound judgement, resilience and the ability to manage complexity and change.
- High ethical standards of integrity, stewardship, accountability and public duty.

Preferable

- Experience in the Waters industry (or infrastructure), preferably in a similar position.