

# Sports & Leisure Manager



## Come work with us!

We do everything from roads to water, reserves to resource management, community housing to town planning, cultural facilities to an aquatic centre... and so much more! With our wide-ranging responsibilities and supportive team environment there's plenty of opportunity for you to grow and develop.

Yes, life in local government can be challenging, but it's also rewarding. At Waitaki District Council we're small enough to take the time to listen, to be real and to make a difference.

And what's not to love about a place where you can be in the ocean or heading into the mountains within half an hour? Where weekends can be spent biking, hiking, skiing, boating, or simply relaxing in some of the most spectacular hospitality and scenery in Aotearoa.



**Waitaki**

DISTRICT COUNCIL  
TE KAUNIHERA Ā ROHE O WAITAKI

# Sports & Leisure Manager

## POSITION DESCRIPTION

### Your place in Waitaki District Council

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You are a leader in the Community Engagement & Experience Directorate reporting to the Director, Community Engagement & Experience

### Purpose & outcome of this role

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To lead sports and leisure services, facilities and partnerships that deliver community wellbeing outcomes through strategic leadership, operational excellence and sustainable service delivery.

### About the Community Engagement & Experience Directorate

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We serve as Council's main connection to the community, providing essential services as outlined from the Strategy, Performance & Design Directorate.

Our key priorities are engaging with the Community to gather information for the Governance and Strategy, Performance and Design teams and overseeing professional customer service, focused on customer outcomes.

We implement Council policies to enhance the wellbeing of the Community in the areas of culture, health, recreation, education, and development.

### You are part of the Manager/People Leader cohort

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**People Leaders play a critical role in Waitaki District Council. You bring vision, innovation and the know-how to deliver on organisation and Directorate strategies personally and through others.**

As a Council leader you think of our organisation, community, customers and partners, before Directorate or team and you role model connecting with and working in partnership with others across Council and beyond, so we collectively succeed.

You confidently lead cross council teams and partnership initiatives to deliver strategic outcomes and priorities. You actively shape strategies and work plans in a way that enables people to manage both the work and their wellbeing.

You harness the talent of people in your team and across Council to both progress their careers and drive the Council forward.

You demonstrate being an authentic, people-centred leader with ease daily – being approachable and inclusive so your direction and guidance are sought.

You coach and empower others and promote continuous learning and self-awareness to enhance our collective capability and value.

## Context and responsibilities of this role

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Working closely with the Director, Community Engagement & Experience, you will help shape and implement the strategic direction for sports and leisure services, ensuring facilities, programmes and services align with community needs and Council priorities.

You will provide leadership across Council's sports and leisure portfolio, fostering collaboration between facilities, teams, community organisations, schools, sporting bodies and commercial partners to maximise participation, community wellbeing and service outcomes.

You will ensure sports and leisure facilities are accessible, safe, well-maintained and utilised effectively, delivering high-quality customer experiences while balancing operational, financial and community objectives.

You will lead and develop a high-performing team, providing clear direction, coaching and accountability while ensuring staffing resources meet operational requirements and future service demands.

You will drive operational excellence by ensuring services, processes and facilities operate in accordance with legislative requirements, industry standards and best practice. You will identify opportunities to improve efficiency, increase utilisation, grow revenue and introduce new programmes and services that respond to community needs.

You will manage budgets, contribute to Long Term and Annual Planning processes, monitor performance, and actively pursue external funding, commercial opportunities and strategic partnerships to support sustainable service delivery and asset stewardship.

**Empowering  
our people and  
place to thrive**

*Whakapuāwai  
takata,  
Whakapuāwai  
whenua*

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**Grade** 20

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**Last reviewed** 10.06.2026

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## Skills you must do well



### **Imagine the future**

Understand business drivers, strategic partnerships and how to deliver greater value for the community. Critically review what and how things are done now and imagine how they could be done sustainably in the future. Navigate a pragmatic path toward making innovation and strategic change a reality.

### **With others, improve our systems and processes**

Engage broadly, collectively and credibly with others – be part of the system that delivers on our community's vision and ambitions through inclusive, trust-based relationships. Influence across Council and sectors, collaborate and partner in ways that helps us make sustainable, people-centred improvements or large-scale changes.

### **Lead people and teams**

Lead and interact in ways that role models our values to others every day. Lead and role model application of our performance management framework. Coach, empower and develop individual, team and Council wide talent. Flex your style to enable and inspire individuals and team to realise their potential and perform at their best. Provide clear feedback on performance and address tough conversations early to prevent escalation.

### **Have a track record of delivery**

Turn strategy into something that can be delivered and measured. Meet targets and regulatory, legislative and quality expectations. Identify and manage risk and know how to make the hard calls. See and explain how work is integrated. Deliver for your group as well as collectively for Council.

### **Be agile and change capable**

Lead others to navigate change by articulating 'the what and why' and framing in positive and constructive ways. Adjust priorities, pivot to new challenges and opportunities and redeploy resources when needed. Adapt to change and uncertainty with a growth mindset and support others to do the same.

### **Lead a continuous learning approach**

Bring a collective approach to learning and improvement. Role-model the importance of experiments and taking calculated risks. Be deliberate about practicing lessons learned to improve the customer experience and support people's growth and development on the job.

### **Demonstrate our values and act with integrity, transparency and trust**

Provide authentic, honest, transparent communication and ways of working that builds trust, engages people, reflects Council values and advances the longer-term best interests of the Waitaki district and community. Step up to address difficult issues through having courageous conversations when required.

### **Community and outcome focus**

Champion delivering for the needs of our communities in all we do, focussing on outcomes rather than allowing process, outputs and distractions dominate.

### **Customer focus**

Promote a customer-centric culture in your team through actively gathering and integrating customer feedback. Collaborate across functions to streamline and align services with customer expectations and ensure a unified effort to consistently enhance the overall customer experience.

### **Demonstrate political acumen**

Navigate complexity and ambiguity of political and sector environments. Understand and successfully navigate local government decision-making and operating procedures.

### **Self-aware, reflective and adaptable**

Leverage self-awareness to improve how you interact and work with others. Actively seek feedback from those you lead and those inside and outside the Council that you interact with. Strengthen personal capability over time and optimise effectiveness with different situations and people to adapt well in a changing environment.

### **Resilient**

Show composure, grit, and a sense of perspective when the going gets tough; help others maintain optimism, keep focus on solutions and recover and learn from setbacks.

### **Cultural perspective**

Provide guidance and support for staff in understanding and valuing cultural diversity, fostering an inclusive and culturally sensitive work environment and helping us better reflect the diverse community we serve in the Waitaki District.

### **Curious**

Show curiosity, flexibility, and openness in analysing and integrating new ideas, information, and differing perspectives.

## Relationships

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### Internal

- You work collaboratively with your **leadership peers** across Council to progress strategically aligned activities and reinforce our people and customer- centred approach.
- You foster relationships with **elected members** by providing operational advice and enacting actions.
- **Council Leadership Team:** You build trust and credibility through understanding business needs and presenting informed proposals that are people and customer centred, demonstrate strategic alignment, value for the investment and connection across Council and/or the district.

### External

- You work with **sector counterparts** to facilitate alignment on shared issues and opportunities.
- You consistently consider how Council can work differently, potentially **partnering with relevant parties**, to better meet the needs of the community and broader Waitaki District.
- **Contractors, consultants, or vendors** - You carefully vet, engage and direct external expertise to ensure it is available at the right time to augment our inhouse capability when needed. You keep relationships strong to support regular and core multi-year programmes of work.



## Experience and qualifications

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In addition to 'skills you must do well' the following experience and qualifications are specifically required for this position:

### Qualification

- Relevant tertiary qualification in sport, recreation, leisure management, business, public administration or a related field.
- Swim Instructor/Lifeguard qualifications desirable.
- Children Act 2014 - satisfactory police vet required
- NZ Drivers Licence

### Knowledge & Experience

- Minimum 5 years' leadership experience in sport, recreation, leisure, aquatic or community facility management.
- Strategic planning, financial management and service delivery capability.
- Experience leading compliant, customer-focused operations.
- Strong stakeholder engagement and influencing skills.
- Local government experience desirable.



## All of Council responsibilities

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### Health, Safety and Wellbeing

As a leader, you lead by example and promote an organisational culture which fosters health, safety, and wellbeing through positive staff engagement, authentic leadership and by communicating and enabling policy that fosters a healthy, resilient and high-performing team.

You manage hazards and incidents effectively, you lead by example ensuring evacuation procedures are followed, and prioritise the physical and mental wellbeing of yourself and others in the workplace.

### Emergency Management, Civil Defence and Business Continuity

You champion the important role Council has in keeping the community and Council safe in response situations.

You actively participate in associated training sessions, promptly respond to adverse events, and effectively fulfil any role-specific responsibilities.

You ensure team members you are responsible for are supported and available to do the same.