

2022 2026

WORKFORCE Management Plan



Narrandera
Shire Council

Welcome

Nginyanhi Wiradjuri mayiny gawaymbanha nginyalgir Wiradjuri-gu Ngurambung-gu

We the Narrungdera Wiradjuri people welcome you all to Wiradjuri Country

Acknowledgement

Narrandera Shire acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders as the first Australians and recognises that they have a unique relationship with the land and water. Council recognises that we are situated on the traditional lands of the Narrungdera Clan, of the Wiradjuri Nation who have lived here for thousands of years. We offer our respect to their elders past and present and through them, to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.





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COVER PHOTO: Narrandera Shire Council Councillors, staff and Youth Advisory Council attend workshop.

INSIDE COVER IMAGE: Wiradjuri Elder Michael Lyons playing the didgeridoo, as part of the Sandhills Artefacts Tour.

Message from
George Cowan
General Manager

One of the most important assets available to the Council in meeting its own and the community expectations is the staff. In small rural community's staff support and development is critical to the success of the organisation. This Workforce Plan details the initiatives designed to provide the Council with the skills and resources necessary to guarantee those outcomes.

We are mindful that times have changed and our approach to workforce planning and support has to evolve to suit the times and the challenges of the future. The traditional approaches are no longer sufficient and our processes for learning and development are still evolving. Technology offers us many options. As we establish the next normal, how do we discover a hybrid method of working and learning that allows for creativity while boosting productivity? And more importantly, what lessons from the recent past can we take with us into the future?

This Workforce Plan is an evolving document that compliments the suite of documents produced by Council as part of its Integrated Planning process. Continual review of this document will ensure that staff demographic information is accurate, current and can better identify future skill needs. The review will also allow for better pathways for learning and development, enhanced position descriptions and competency statements leading to better staff recruitment and retention outcomes.

George Cowan
General Manager



The New South Wales State Government introduced an Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework in 2009. The framework required local councils to develop and adopt a Workforce Management Plan. The Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework requires all NSW Councils to develop long term Community Strategic Plans and four-year Delivery Programs. This Workforce Plan forms part of the Resourcing Strategy and outlines how Narrandera Shire Council will implement the priorities and strategies within its Delivery Program, within the constraints of Council's long term financial plan.

This Workforce Management Plan 2022-2026 forms part of the Resourcing Strategy and is a second-generation document that has been developed by Council's Human Resources Team in consultation with key stakeholders including Council's General Manager, the Executive Leadership Team, the Senior Management Team and Council's Consultative Committee.

The plan sets the goals and strategies that need to be implemented to ensure that Narrandera Shire Council has the labour resources to achieve the requirements of the long-term community priorities.

As the Workforce Management Plan is a second-generation document the achievements/results of the 2017/2021 plan act as a report card and provides a clear representation of where Council needs to concentrate its resources for continual improvement. Other resources such as the Price Waterhouse Cooper yearly survey and participation in The Voice Project Bi-annual employee opinion survey have also been instrumental in providing a clear benchmark of Council's current workforce situation and improvements that are required.

While the plan is a four-year document to ensure that the plan remains current a report on all goals and actions is provided to the Executive Leadership Team each month. This report is provided to ensure appropriate oversight of Council's Human Resources and Work Health Safety and Risk Management. The report provides an update across all HR and WHSR functions in a format consistent with Council's Workforce Management Plan and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Diversity Plan. Many initiatives adopted in the previous plan have seen substantial workforce/workplace improvements.

Councils are required to undertake workforce planning to support the achievement of the Delivery Program. The Workforce Management Plan addresses the human resource requirements to achieve the activities identified in the Delivery Program.

The following IP&R flowchart has been updated to reflect the 2016 amendment to the Local Government Act. The flowchart forms the basis of Narrandera Shire Council's reporting framework. Council's Workforce Management Plan is a key component of Council's resourcing strategy and therefore plays an important role in delivering Council's strategic objectives.

NARRANDERA SHIRE COUNCIL COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

The 2022-2026 Community Strategic Plan was developed after community engagement. This process was assisted by partnering with two consulting companies and commenced in 2021. While it is difficult to gauge the number of residents that contributed to the plan it is estimated that around a thousand people engaged to assist Council in guiding the future of Narrandera Shire Council for the next four years.

Delivery Program

The delivery program outlines the projects and services Council has committed to delivering over a four-year timeframe. The program is a statement of the commitment to the Narrandera Shire community from the newly elected Council. The delivery program is developed in response to the community's priorities and goals.

Operational Plan

An operational plan is required each financial year of the delivery plan. This plan outlines what actions will be undertaken to achieve the community's goals.

The operational plan links directly to Council's community Strategic plan, Operational Plan, and resourcing strategy. None of these plans should be read in isolation.

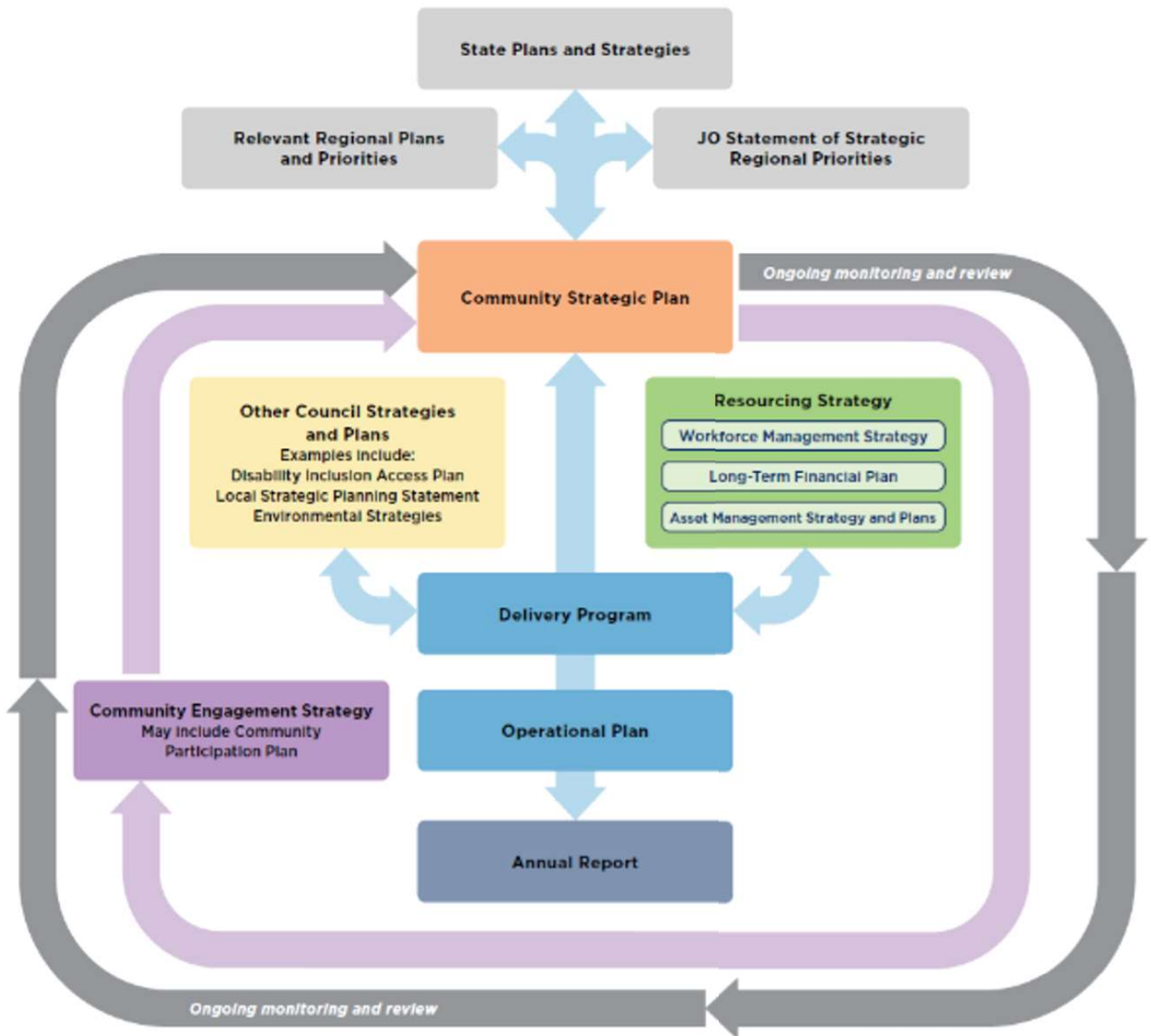
Resourcing strategy

There are three components that make up the resourcing strategy:

- The Long-Term Financial Plan
- The Asset Management Plan
- The Workforce Management Plan

These plans identify the money, assets and people required to achieve the community priorities.

Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework



WHAT IS WORKFOCE PLANNING?

Workforce planning and development is a management technique used to effectively manage workforce demand and supply. It is the process used to align the needs of the organisation with those of its workforce.

An effective workforce plan is a continuous process of shaping the workforce to ensure that it can deliver the Council's objectives now and in the future. The plan aims to provide Council with the people best able to inform its strategic direction, develop innovative approaches to complex issues and deliver appropriate services consistently, effectively, and efficiently.

For the process to be truly effective, workforce planning needs to be recognised as a business-driven process, which is a fundamental component of the integrated planning and reporting framework.

Workforce planning and development is strategic and operational and needs to be successfully integrated into overall business strategy and corporate objectives.

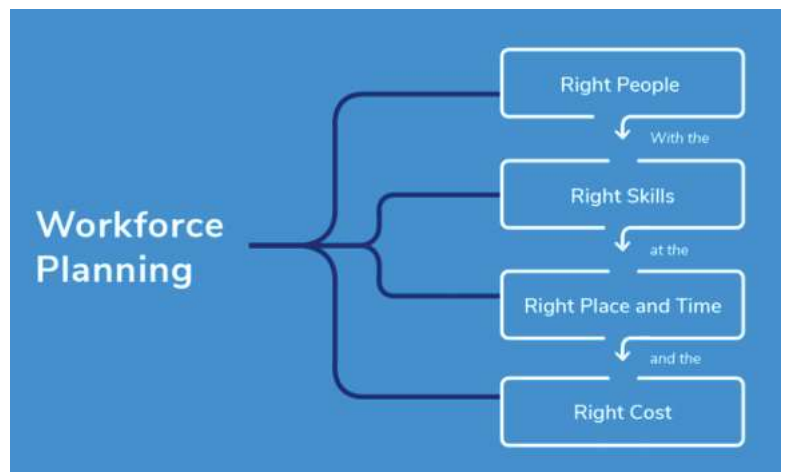
While Workforce Planning is the key to forecasting future labour requirements, it is also used for:

- Identifying staffing problems.
- Developing new workforce skills.
- Monitoring and containing workforce costs.
- Ensuring that there is adequate service delivery into the future.
- Improving the employee experience

WHY IS IT NECESSARY?

Workplace planning, apart from being a tool to have the right employees in the right place at the right time, can help with both expected and unexpected business changes. Workforce planning provides organisations with a framework and opportunity to:

- Understand issues and risks associated with the workforce.
- Make informed, evidence-based decisions in relation to current and anticipated workforce requirements in terms of capacity, capability, organisational culture, working styles and opportunities for change.
- Develop alternative courses of action to meet changing community expectations.



WHAT IS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT?

Workforce development is those policies and practices which support employees in participating effectively in the workforce and to develop and apply skills in the workplace, where learning translates into positive outcomes for the organisation.

Workforce development strategies are relevant to the entire workforce, permanent full-time and part-time employees, contractors, casuals, and volunteers.



COUNCIL Overview



Narrandera
Shire Council

INTRODUCTION

Narrandera Shire Council is a significant employer within the Local Government Area (LGA), employing 103 equivalent fulltime employees, and representing more than 10% of the employment within the LGA. Council has a strong relationship with its workforce – long term employees, a small workforce and tight knit community all support the connected, professional, and personal approach to management.

AIM

A strong, diverse, committed, and motivated workforce is at the core of any successful business. Getting the right people into the right jobs is paramount and requires a commitment to attract, develop, retain, and recognise talented and motivated employees who are aligned with our Vision and Values.

Narrandera Shire Council is a multi-faceted organisation, with several functions and operations. Accordingly, a diverse workforce is required that can deliver positive outcomes for the organisation and to help grow the community. Council is however faced with many challenges, including a large proportion of our existing workforce nearing retirement and recruiting the next generation of skilled specialist employees.

It needs to be ensured that councils employees are able to deliver the community's priorities. Council needs to involve our employees and support them in learning improved ways of working.

This Workforce Management Plan aims to support Narrandera Shire Council in achieving the skilled, motivated, flexible, and diverse workforce it needs, to deliver value for money services that make a difference to our local community.

OUR MISSION

"To provide high quality affordable local government services and representation for people who live, work, and visit Narrandera Shire, and to assist also, those who have a stake in our local and regional prosperity; by way of effective consultation, policy making and responsive delivery that meets the needs of our community "

FIVE KEY THEMES

Narrandera Shire Council has identified 5 Key themes to strive toward in our Strategic Community Plan 2017-2030:

Theme 1: Our Community

Theme 2: Our Environment

Theme 3: Our Economy

Theme 4: Our Infrastructure

Theme 5: Our Civic Leadership

Council's Vision, Mission and Values

Our vision

Achieving Together

Our values



Ethical

Be transparent and equitable in all our actions



Caring

Be helpful, supportive and thoughtful towards each other and our community



Loyalty

Take pride in our work and our organisation



Accountability

Be responsible for our actions



Integrity

Be trustworthy, honest and consistent



Respect

Respect for each other and the role we play



Safety

Work safely to protect ourselves and the public

WHAT DOES WORKFORCE PLANNING LOOK LIKE AT NARRANDERA SHIRE COUNCIL?

Workforce planning is seen as an important component in long term planning of Council. It is critical for ensuring that there are sufficient people to carry out Council's Delivery Plan and that the right people are in the right place at the right time with the right skills and attributes to shape Narrandera Shire Council as a strong and sustainable Council.

INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

As discussed, a Workforce Management Plan is a requirement of the NSW Local Government Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework.

Narrandera Shire Council's integrated planning framework comprises the following plans/programs:

- Community Strategic Plan – identifies the community's main priorities and aspirations for the future and outlines strategies for achieving these goals.
- Delivery Program – describes the activities we will undertake over the next four years to achieve our long-term goals and outcomes.
- Operational Plan – outlines the details of the specific projects and activities that will achieve the commitments outlined in the Delivery program.
- Resourcing Strategy - comprising the Workforce Management Plan, the Long-Term Financial Plan and the Asset Management Plan. These facilitate achievement of the community's strategic goals, as expressed in the Community Strategic Plan, and provide the resources necessary to achieve the Delivery Program.

SCOPE OF THE WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Workforce Plan must address the human resourcing requirements of Council's four-year Delivery Program. The following strategy considers the availability of labour from a number of perspectives, what is the likelihood and the reasons behind employee 'separations', the availability of employees from a local perspective and considers community expectations in relation to employment in the local area.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The Workforce Management Plan aims to ensure the Narrandera Shire Council's workforce has the right skills, at the right time and in the right quantities to ensure sustainable service delivery in the future and to meet the community aspirations.

Key objectives of the Workforce Management Plan are to identify:

- Gaps between current and future workforce capability for example skills required to meet the requirements of the Audit, Risk, and Improvement committee (ARIC).
- Areas of skills shortage –example currently Council is struggling to fill a number of Plant Operator positions.
- Issues arising from an ageing workforce.
- Areas of workforce growth and shrinkage.
- Strategies to address the gaps and mitigate risk.
- A succession plan for critical positions.
- Ensuring sound workplace morale.
- Other areas that are unique or are a concern for example the current pandemic and the effects it has had on the workforce and the organisation.

METHODOLOGY

The development of the workforce plan was based on the following process:



WORKPLACE Achievements



Several initiatives identified in the 2017-2021 workforce management plan have seen substantial workforce improvements. These include:

Workforce Resourcing

WORKFORCE PLANNING

- Significant improvement in relation to tracking statistical employee data has taken place over the preceding four years. This data is tracked manually by Excel spreadsheets.
- Exit interviews are extended to all employees that leave Council, the response rate in participating in this process is in excess of 95%+ and provides valuable information in making improvements across all employment and organisational areas.

Meeting Organisational Needs

- Council is committed to assisting employees achieve their set goal by providing additional employee with the skills to assist where a need has been identified. This assistance is in addition to existing positions in the organisational structure and are normally short, fix term or contract arrangements.

Recruitment and Selection

- Using social media as a recruitment tool is now embedded in normal recruitment practice.
- Applications for vacant positions are now mainly submitted online.
- Council is considered to be a flexible workplace and has many policies in place to support employment flexibility that is both beneficial to employees, prospective employees, and Council.
- Council provides detailed position descriptions which include competencies. The information included in these documents provides clear detail on career, skill, and salary progression.
- Promoting Local Government as an attractive career opportunity is an ongoing process. Council has been involved in school, work experience placements for several years and more recently School Based Apprenticeships (SBA). These apprenticeships are becoming increasingly popular with students. This year we have five apprentices in various workplaces across Council.

Placements

- Council's Human Resources Manager has visited Narrandera High and St Francis de Sales college during the period of the 2017-2021 plan. The purpose of the visits was to explain the Work placement and School Based Apprenticeship (SBA) programs and promote Council as an employer of choice.
- The visits plus word-of-mouth endorsement by previous SBA's has resulted in an increase in interest in students wanting to pursue the opportunity of incorporating an apprenticeship into their Higher School Certificate and exploring the employment opportunities Council has to offer.

EMPLOYEE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Trainee and apprentices

- As mentioned, Council has employed five SBA in the current year and has supported local schools with work placement and SBA's. Council is also currently considering the possibility of employing several second-or third-year apprentices to fill gaps identified in the current or near future organisational structure.

Succession planning

- A succession planning policy has been developed and adopted.
- A succession plan has also been developed identifying all critical position in the organisation, this plan is a living document that is regularly updated to reflect changes in the organisational structure.
- All positions have a comprehensive position description that has a competency statement attached.
- A number of employees have commenced gradual retirement.
- Training opportunities to assist with career advancement are available to all employees.

Learning and development

- The HR team always consider the most cost-effective ways of providing training. Examples of recent free or subsidised training includes:
 - o Double diplomas
 - o Certificate III in Civil Construction
 - o Basic computer training for 12 employees
- Several employees are at various stages of completing external study as part of their professional development.
- Identifying employee development needs is embedded in the annual Performance Appraisal process.
- While the cost of requested training often outweighs the available budget, requests are now categorised due to organisational requirements and approved over a 3-year cycle.
- Training is approved by category in order of importance from an organisational point of view the five categories in order of importance are:
 - a. a legislative requirement
 - b. a required competency
 - c. the organisation at risk by not having knowledge/training
 - d. it supports the strategic plan
 - e. it is an identified area of required skill development

REWARD AND RECOGNITION

Employee performance reviews

- Employee performance reviews is an embedded process that has seen substantial improvements in the way the process is managed in particular the completion of the process within the set timeframe.
- The Pulse system (Employee Performance Management) continues to be used for performance appraisals.

Employee Recognition

- Council continues to recognise and celebrate key service milestones for long term employees at staff breakfasts, and where appropriate in the media.
- Celebrate and acknowledge qualification and achievements made by employees during staff breakfasts.

WORKPLACE RELATIONS

Work/life balance

- The Flexible Work Arrangements Policy has been reviewed ensuring it remains relevant for supporting work/life balance.
- Promotion of the policy to all employees through the Consultative Committee and weekly Communiqué and at Team Meetings has occurred with several employees taking up various

flexible arrangements.

Equal Employment Opportunity

- Council employees are regularly provided training in the prevention of bullying and harassment in the workplace.

Employee Assistance

- Council continues to provide free confidential counselling services for employees & families.
- This service is promoted at Staff Breakfasts, through the weekly Communiqué, noticeboards and when employees are noticed to be struggling or are involved in grievances

Work Environment

- Conduct Code of Conduct refresher training is conducted regularly.
- Code of Conduct and other policies are promoted through all relevant internal media and meetings.
- Senior management and HR support managers in addressing poor behaviour promptly and in accordance with Council's policies.
- Council promotes the Council's Values (ECLAIRS) through each employee's annual performance plan. The values are assessed at the annual performance appraisal.
- Councils' values are also documented in each position description.
- Councils' values are promoted on posters across all areas of Council and at team meetings and employee events.
- Council Conducts an employee opinion survey (Voice Project) every 2 years.
- Council implements a Voice Project Action Plan following, focus group feedback on the results.

WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY AND WELLBEING

Safe Work Environment

- All Human Resource and Workplace, Health and Safety (WHS) processes are reviewed in consultation with employees through the Consultative Committee and the WHS Committee and at team meetings.
- Council provides regular refresher training on WHS.
- An annual WHS Action Plan has been developed and implemented.
- WHS and risk management is on the agenda at all toolbox and team meetings.
- WHS and risk is on the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) agenda each month.
- Council proactively and in a timely manner investigate all workplace incidents and grievances.

Risk Management

- Council has adopted the Enterprise Risk Management Policy and framework.
- Council has developed and implement an annual Corporate Enterprise Risk Management Plan with department plans attached.
- All employees are trained in risk management concepts and can undertake required risk identification and management tasks.
- All required Council services, events and programs have appropriate risk management plans developed and implemented.
- WHS and risk management is on the agenda item at all toolbox and team meetings

Injury Management

- The injury management policy has been reviewed concentrating on strengthening incident investigation, early injury management and allocation of alternate duties

- Injury/near miss and management are monitored through Vault (DAMSTRA)
- All injured employees are provided with alternate duties (where possible) until they return to their full pre-injury duties

Employee Health and Wellbeing

- WHSRO and the WHS Committee has implemented a Well Being policy.
- Council continues to subscribe to and promote the “Well at Work” magazine for employees

LEADERSHIP CULTURE

Strong Leadership

- All new supervisors are required to attend leadership training – (Certificate IV in Leadership and Management).
- All leadership employees are given an opportunity to participate in development opportunities such as the annual Rural Management Challenge and the Local Government Mentor program. (The pandemic impeded participation for the last two years).
- Employees are Regularly updated on key issues, projects, and decisions through the General Manager’s weekly Communique, Senior Management Team (SMT), team meetings and employee breakfasts and noticeboards.
- Employees are provided higher duties and secondment opportunities to trial leadership roles. Council has adopted a Succession planning policy.

Organisational Culture

- Council conducts an employee opinion survey (Voice Project) every 2 years to gauge wellness of the organisation.
- Voice Project Action Plans are implemented following focus group feedback on the results.
- Leadership values are included in each supervisor’s performance plan and are assessed annually.

Employee Engagement

- All teams have regular team and toolbox meetings where two-way communication is promoted.
- All employees are actively involved in reviews of all documents that effect their work for example policies and procedures, integrated planning and reporting documents including the Community Strategic Plan as appropriate.
- A weekly Communique is provided to employees which includes social and work-related information.
- The General Manager addresses employees on a regular basis via Zoom. These meetings were designed initially to get COVID related information to employees in a timely manner and will possibly be used as a communication tool in the future.
- Employee breakfasts are another way of engaging staff.



CURRENT Workforce Profile

At the time of preparing this report the most current ABS statistics available were from 2016. The Shire population, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), was 5,853 persons.

The Shire has an ageing population, with 1,293 (22.1%) of the population 65+ years old, which is above the State average.

There are 4,703 residents aged over 15 in the Shire, of which, 2,475 are in the workforce. Of these 60.1% are employed full-time, 26.9% employed part-time, 6.9% away from work, 6.1% unemployed looking for work.

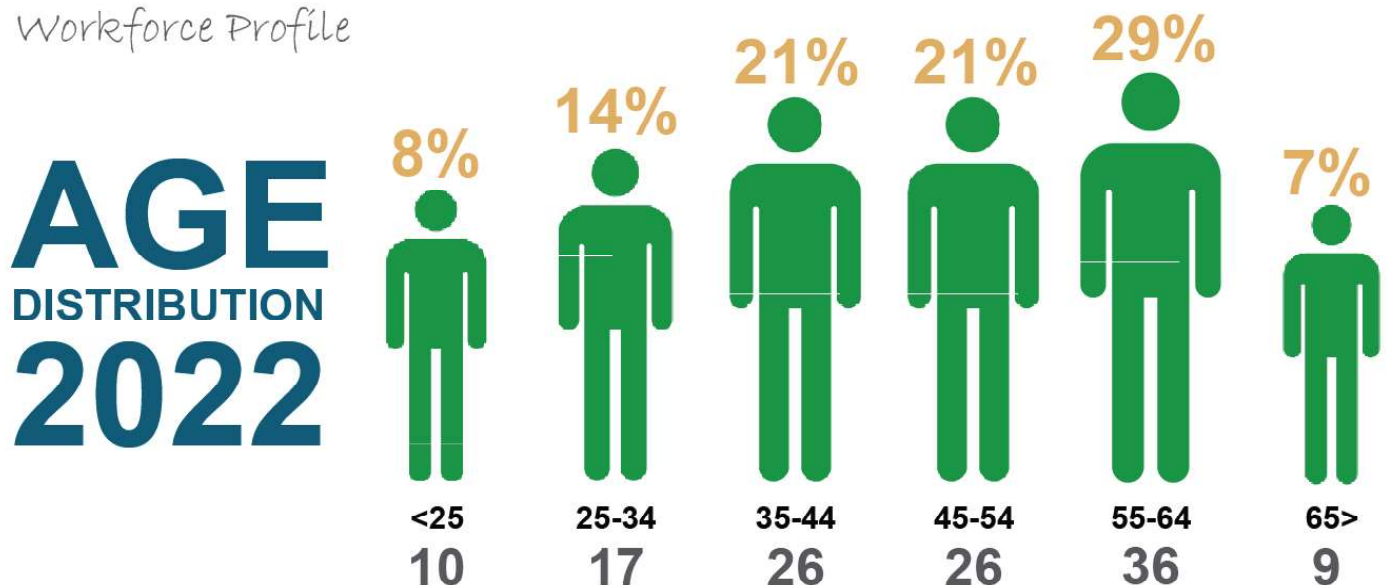
DATA PROFILING

Data profiling Council's workforce has been gathered over the previous four years. This information has been reported to Management (ELT and Senior Management Team) monthly and Councils Consultative Committee bi-monthly.

Data has been extracted from:

- Council's payroll system, (Practical),
- Various excel spreadsheets (maintained by HR).
- Price Waterhouse Cooper statistical reporting completed each year by HR.
- Price Waterhouse Cooper comparison data, which compares NSC to other group 10 councils who have participated in the survey. These Councils are of similar size to NSC.
- Data provided by the Macquarie University Voice Project. The university work closely with the Human Resources Team to facilitate this employee engagement survey which is completed by over 80% of employees every two years.
- External data was also collected from various other sources including, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Community Profile, National Skills Shortage Strategy for Local Government, Survey of Skills Shortage in NSW, Australian Jobs (DEWR), and Federal Government websites.

Workforce Profile



Age Comparison 2017 - 2022

AVERAGE AGE

2017

44.85
YEARS



2022

49.02
YEARS

STAFF OVER 56 YRS

2017

35

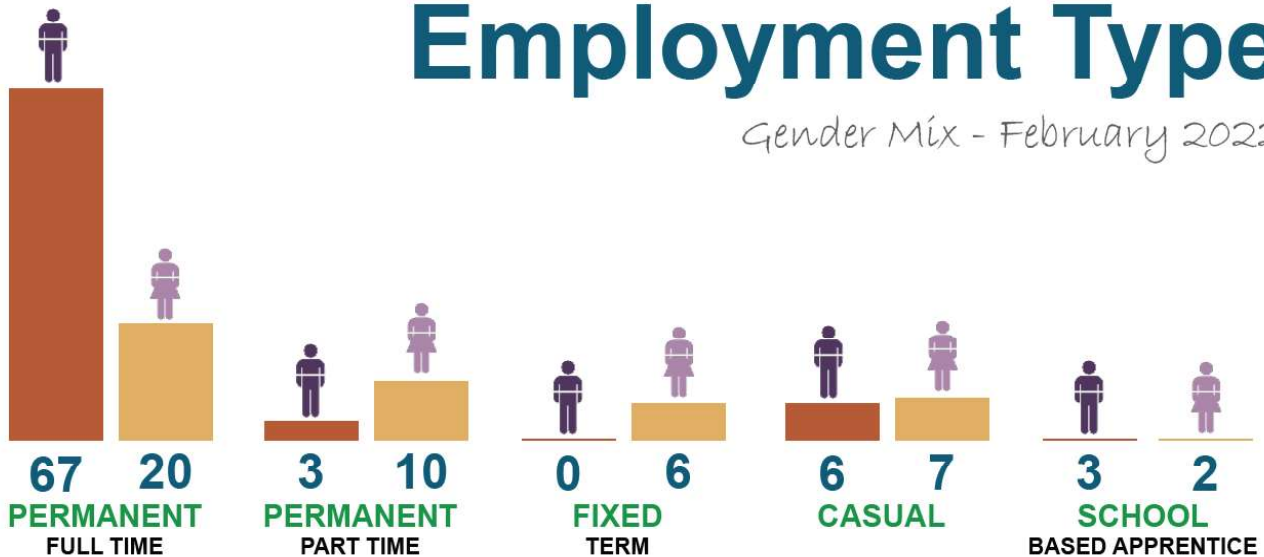


2022

45

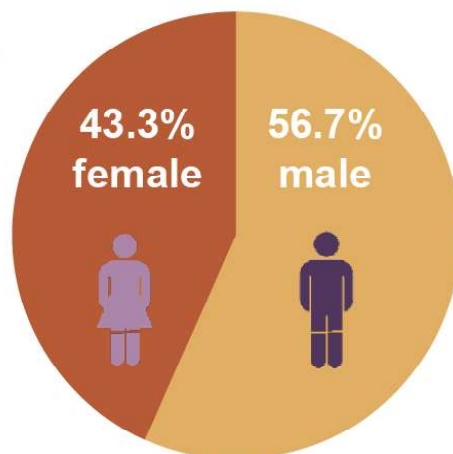
Employment Type

Gender Mix - February 2022

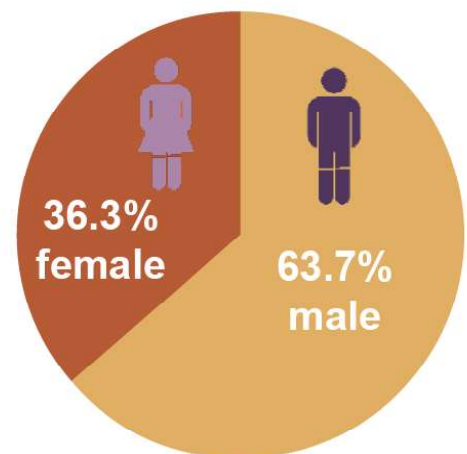


Gender Mix

Whole Organisation
February 2022



2017



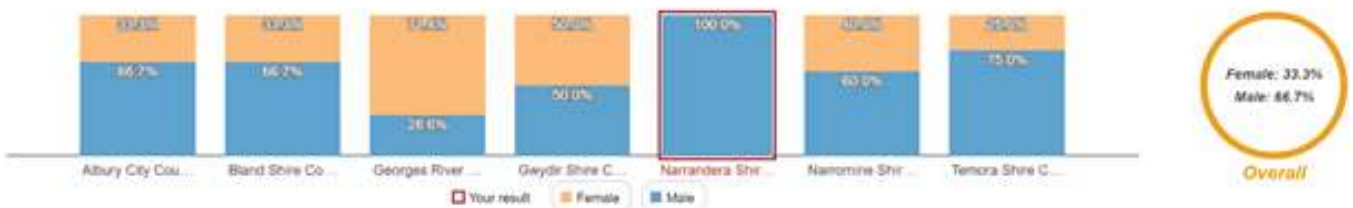
2022

Women made up almost half the paid workforce in Australia in 2020. Narrandera Shire council statistics are slightly less than this figure.

Analysis of Narrandera Shire Council employee demographic indicates that in 2017 women made up 43.3% of employees. This has decreased to 36.3% in 2022. Of these women the majority are in traditional roles, a significant number of these employees fill part time fixed term and casual roles.

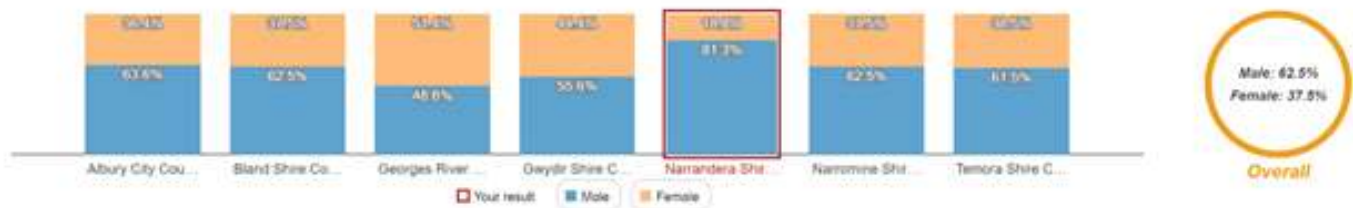
One current female employee is working in a non-traditional role in a casual capacity. Historically Council has had a larger number of females in non-traditional occupations. Council has three females in management roles these are all situated in Corporate and Community Services. Graphs provided by Price Waterhouse Cooper show that females are underrepresented in all employment categories including Executive, Management, and other staff (see below).

Headcount - CEO and Director gender diversity



Source: Local Government Performance Excellence Program on the Data 89 Platform. (Disseminated by Michael Power on 23 May 2022 11:30:31). Please note that PSC does not provide assistance on the data provided.

Headcount - CEO, Director and Manager gender diversity



Source: Local Government Performance Excellence Program on the Data 89 Platform. (Disseminated by Michael Power on 23 May 2022 11:30:31). Please note that PSC does not provide assistance on the data provided.

Headcount - Manager gender diversity



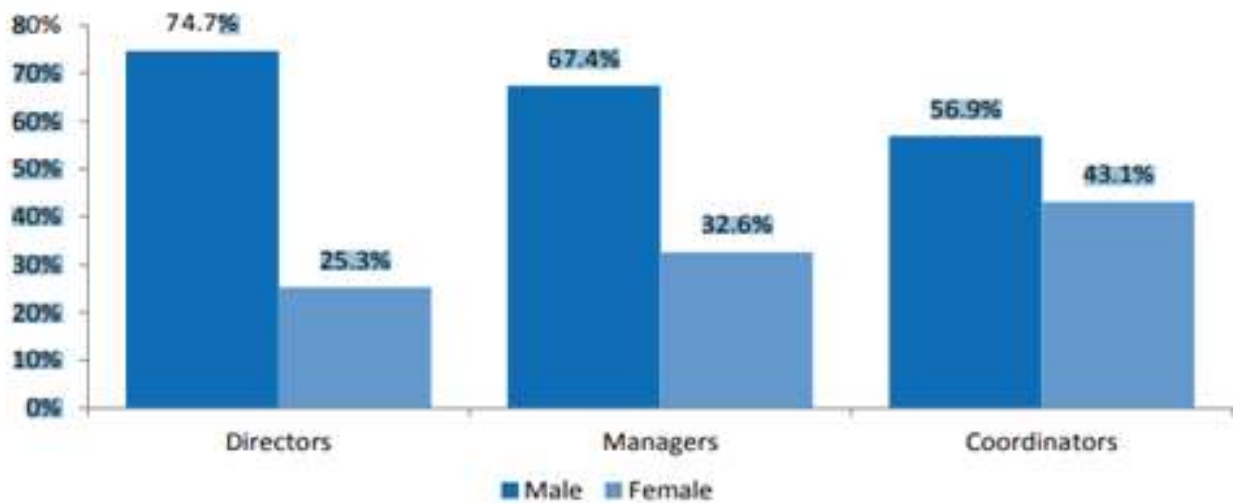
Source: Local Government Performance Excellence Program on the Data 89 Platform. (Disseminated by Michael Power on 23 May 2022 11:30:31). Please note that PSC does not provide assistance on the data provided.

Headcount - 'Other staff' gender diversity



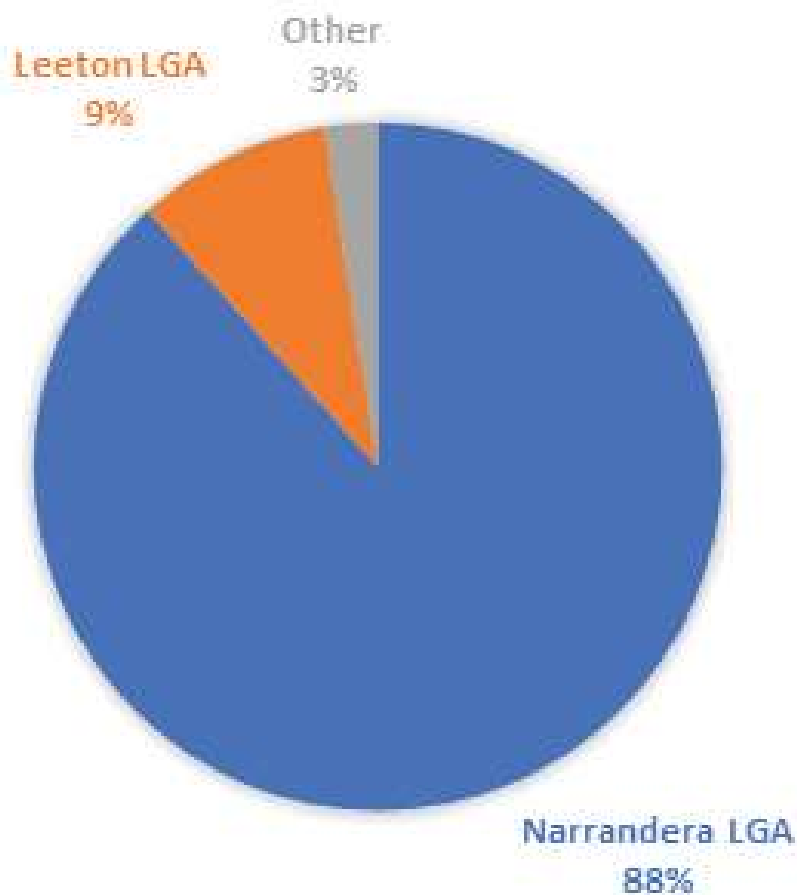
Source: Local Government Performance Excellence Program on the Data 89 Platform. (Disseminated by Michael Power on 23 May 2022 11:30:31). Please note that PSC does not provide assistance on the data provided.

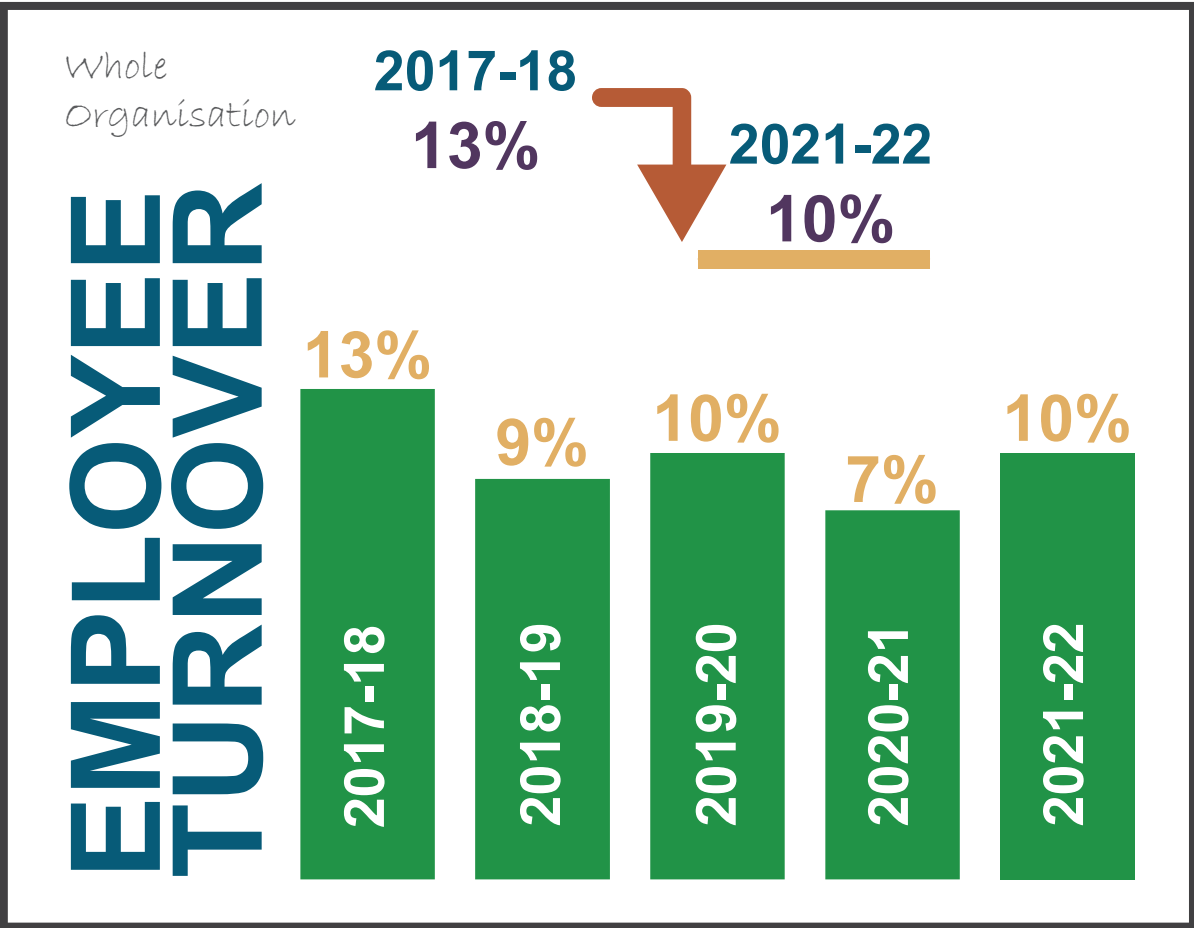
Three quarters (75%) of local government directors, CEOs and managing directors are male and only 25% are female. The proportion of women in leadership roles increases for managers (33%) and coordinators (43%) as can be seen in Figure 12 (ACLEG Survey).



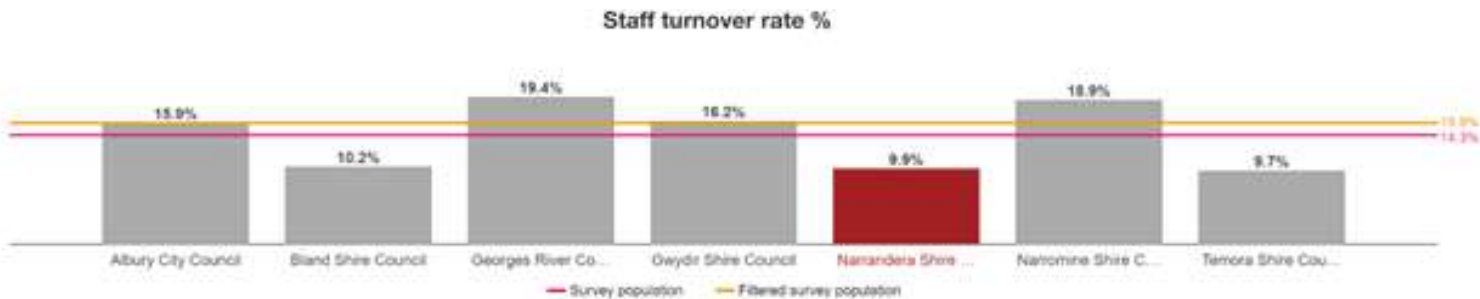
Where do our employees live?

WHERE DO OUR EMPLOYEES LIVE?

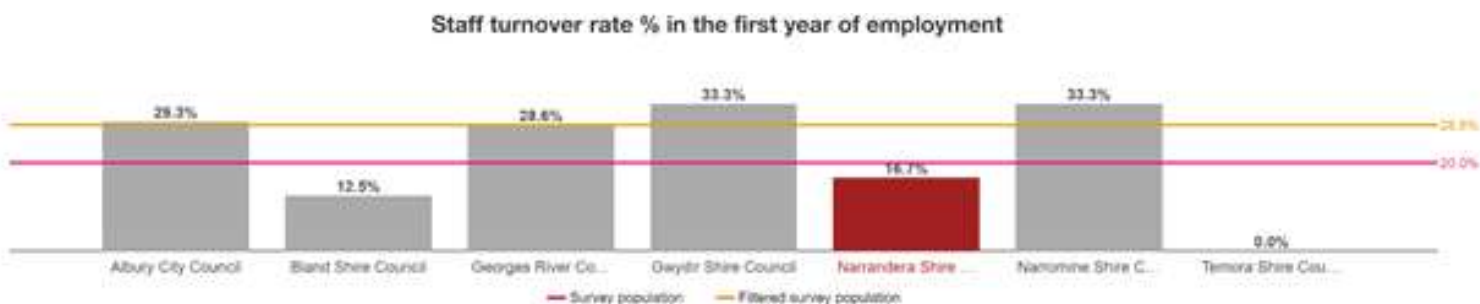




Narrandera shire Council has maintained a consistently low turnover rate during the four-year period from 2017-2021. Comparing Council's turnover figures to that of other Councils in Group 10, statistics provided by the Price Waterhouse Cooper survey indicate that Council's turnover is significantly lower than other Councils in the group.



Source: Local Government Performance Excellence Program via the Data 49 Platform. Downloaded by Michael Pepler on 22/04/2022 11:00:01. Please note that PwC does not provide assurance on the data provided.



Source: Local Government Performance Excellence Program via the Data 49 Platform. Downloaded by Michael Pepler on 22/04/2022 11:00:01. Please note that PwC does not provide assurance on the data provided.

EMPLOYEES

Diversity

2022

13.6%

4.86%


4.86%

ABORIGINAL AND/OR
TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER

PEOPLE

EMPLOYEES BORN
OVERSEAS

SPEAK ANOTHER
LANGUAGE



LANGUAGES INCLUDE

SPANISH ITALIAN
GERMAN MANDARIN
MALAYALAM

COMMUNITY

ABORIGINAL AND/OR
TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER

PEOPLE

COMMUNITY BORN
OVERSEAS

SPEAK ANOTHER
LANGUAGE

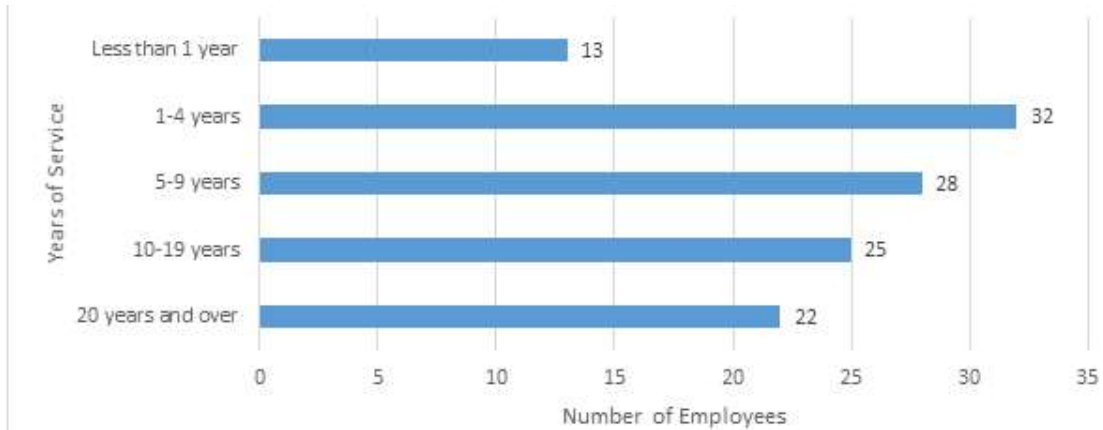
9.7%

16.9%

1%

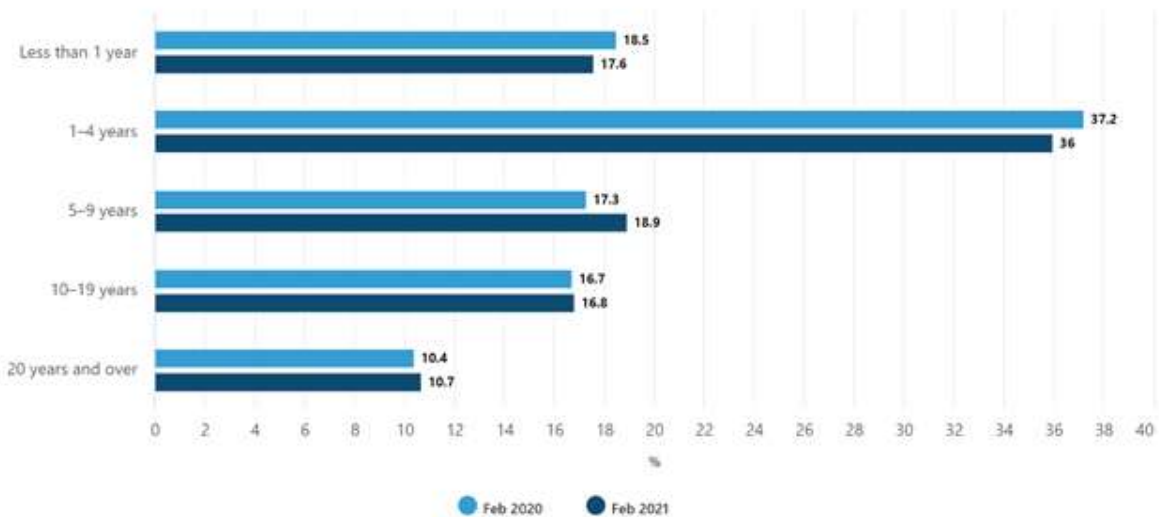
2016

DURATION OF EMPLOYMENT WITH NARRANDERA SHIRE COUNCIL



	Nationally 2021	NSC 2022
No/ Employed	13 million	120
Employed 5 years +	46%	62.5%
Employed 20 years +	23%	18.33%
Less than a year	17.6%	10.83%
Between 1 to 4 years	36%	26.66%

Chart 1: Duration of employment in current job



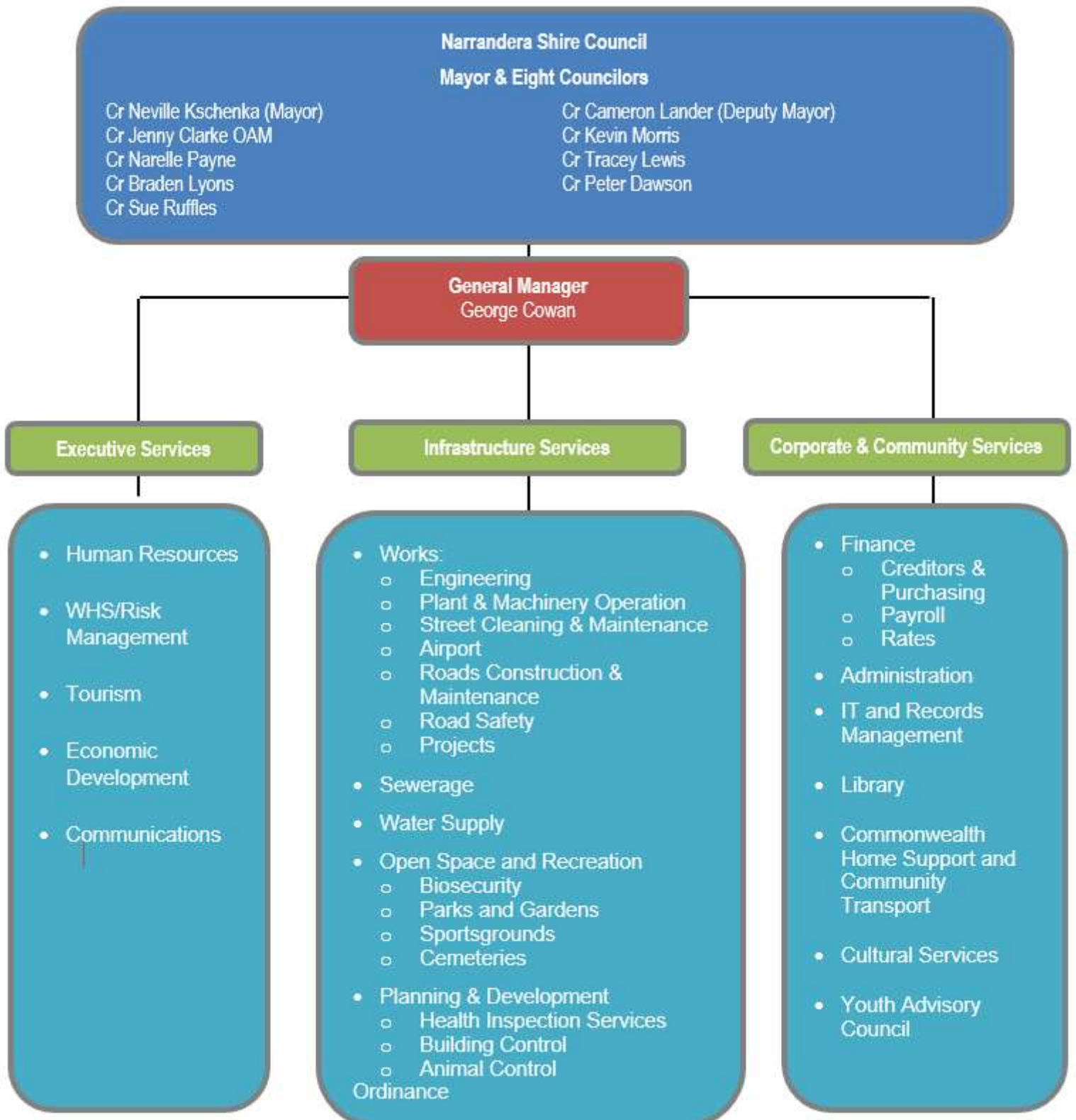
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Job mobility February 2021

Structure and Functions of Council

The General Manager, appointed by Council, is responsible for the efficient and effective operation of the Council on a day-to-day basis and may delegate responsibility to Deputy General Managers to ensure that decisions of Council are put into effect.

Narrandera Shire Council is divided into three (3) Departments:-

- Executive Services
- Infrastructure Services
- Corporate and Community Services



CHALLENGES

Narrandera Shire Council faced several challenges in relation to sustainable workforce planning in the 2017 – 2021 Workforce Management Plan. Some challenges relate specifically to the implementation of Council's delivery program others are long term, for example while Council's has a low turnover, continual monitoring is required to ensure the low rate remains the status quo any spikes in this trend would need to be investigated and solutions implemented to avoid the implications this could present. The key challenges that Narrandera Shire Council face in relation to workforce management now, and in the future are:

- Gender equality particularly in Management positions.
- Employee turnover.
- Ageing workforce.
- Attracting and retaining young people.
- Attracting and retaining employees with the required skills.
- Meeting diverse community expectations with limited resources.
- Adapting to modern technologies and innovation in work practices.
- Ensuring supervisors and managers have leadership and management skills.
- Ensuring the workforce reflects the community profile including Aboriginal community and people with disabilities.
- Competing Labour Markets.
- Changing skill requirements.
- Local Government Act and modern recruitment practices do not align.
- Some resistance of employees willing to engage in higher positions as part of temporary relief arrangements, secondments, or permanent vacancies for example Skills shortage plant operator.
- COVID related issues.
- Encouraging a culture that promotes role flexibility and mobility.
- Lack of workforce trend data.
- Lack of cultural diversity.
- Lack of skills and experience in workforce planning.

What steps is Narrandera Shire Council taking to address these challenges?

This section explores the local challenges and outlines the responses that Narrandera Shire Council will take to support the implementation of the Delivery Program.

GENDER EQUALITY

Women continue to be under-represented in the local government workforce. The 2016 NSW census found that women make up 46% of the local government workforce in NSW, whereas according to a May 2012 research article, nationally the figure is 43%. However, preliminary analysis from the ALGWE Census suggests that the numbers are even lower, with women making up just 39.2% of all employees in local government. Of these, women were the majority (62.75%) in the human and community services category but a significant minority (only 15.4%) in the engineering and infrastructure category.

STAFF TURNOVER

Narrandera Shire Council has an employee turnover rate that is lower than other group 10 Councils. Figures indicate that the group average for employee turnover is 15.3% compared to Narrandera Shire Council at 9.9%. This has contributed to highly knowledgeable and committed employees within the organisation.

Narrandera Shire Council is also seen as an employer of choice, while this may be by default as Council is one of, if not the largest employer in the Local Government Area, Council has significant programs in place to make it a desirable place to work.

The current pandemic may have influenced the low turnover rate in recent years as the number of employees seeking to change jobs may have been placed on hold due to issues around restricted mobility in place because of the pandemic.

Strategies in place to promote Narrandera Shire Council as an employer of choice and therefore reduce employee turnover include:

- The introduction of a web-based Employee Performance Management System.
- Detailed Position Descriptions and competency statements.
- Generous award conditions.
- Great career opportunities through study, professional development, higher duties, and secondment opportunities.
- Bi-annual employee survey – conducted independently provides Council with a clear picture of the organisation's health. Action plans that have resulted from this process have shown improvement in how employees feel about Narrandera Shire Council as an employer.
- Celebration of employee achievements at Council's yearly awards breakfast where long service awards and education achievements are acknowledged.
- Employee appreciation/ thank you gift presented to each staff member annually.
- Twice yearly employee breakfast to promote teambuilding and morale.
- Work areas are well maintained.
- Regular upgrade of computer systems.
- Council maintains a modern fleet including construction equipment, vehicles, and miscellaneous plant.

AGEING WORKFORCE

Statistics available indicate that Narrandera Shire Council has a significantly older workforce than both the National and State average. The percentage of employees over 45 nationally and at state level is currently 38%. Narrandera Shire currently has 58.3% of its workforce over 45. 35 employees can retire in the next decade.

An ageing workforce poses several challenges for Council in the medium and long term. These include:

- Increased reliance of machinery and technology to replace manual labour – responding to the decreasing physical capacity of an ageing workforce.
- High proportion of the workforce planning for retirement within a relatively short time – requiring significant recruitment focus now and in the future.
- Increased need for a health focus to ensure the health and wellbeing needs of the workforce are met.
- Retaining intellectual property is another concern. One strategy to counter this to some degree is the promotion of phased retirement where an employee can plan for a gradual retirement by working part time and possibly utilising superannuation entitlements or leave balances to supplement their salary. During this time, they are able to impart their knowledge through extended on the job training and mentoring.

Headcount - Generational diversity



Source: Local Government Performance Excellence Program for the Data 49 Practice (distributed by Mutual Place on 22 Nov 2022 11:52:01) Please note that this chart does not provide assurance of the data provided.

Potential retirements in the next 10 years



Source: Local Government Performance Excellence Program for the Data 49 Practice (distributed by Mutual Place on 22 Nov 2022 11:52:01) Please note that this chart does not provide assurance of the data provided.

ATTRACTING AND RETAINING YOUNG PEOPLE

The population of the shire has been declining with a particular movement out of the shire by young people. This is resulting in a smaller pool of young people to fill vacant positions. Council needs to plan long term for their capacity to recruit employees. For this trend to be reversed, Council needs to focus on being an employer of choice with particular emphasis on young people. This will also assist in combating the issues surrounding our ageing workforce.

Council will need to consider policies that encompass working conditions that will appeal to the next generation. Councils' salary system needs to be reviewed to ensure that remuneration offered of vacant roles is competitive. Some other suggestions would include flexible working conditions in addition to those already available. Short term contractual agreements replacing existing ridged locked in employment contracts. Recruitment practices need to be reviewed to allow more flexibility around building our own employees to fill expected vacancies through programs such as apprenticeships, gradual retirement plans and secondments and retaining these employees when a vacancy is available. Council needs to continue strong relationships with local high schools to promote councils' program of supporting work experience and School based apprenticeships.

ATTRACTING AND RETAINING EMPLOYEES WITH THE SKILLS NEEDED

Like many rural councils, Narrandera Shire Council faces ongoing challenges in meeting the requirements of services with a declining skill base within the LGA. Narrandera Shire competes with other employers within the region for several key skills.

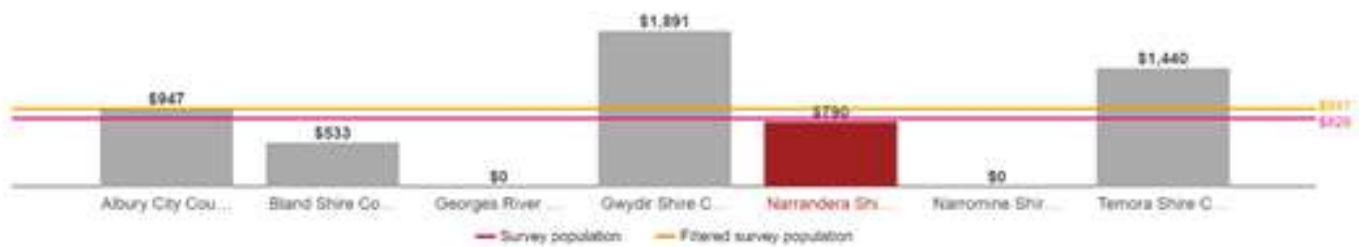
There are key positions within Council that have posed recruitment challenges. These include town planners, building surveyors, employees that have the right mix of supervisory/management skills and the technical skills required for the role eg. Open Space and Recreation Team Leader. Like employees has been challenging.

Local government's skill shortages will be exacerbated over the next decade by the retirement of mature age workers. This poses an extreme risk for Narrandera Shire as 58.3% of employees are over 45 this has increased by just over 4% in the last four years with an estimated 35 employees (29.1%) able to retire in the next decade. Seven employees belong to a defined benefit superannuation scheme. Typically, staff members in defined benefit scheme retire four to five years earlier than those in accumulation schemes.

The challenge for Narrandera Shire Council will therefore be to:

- retain mature talent to ensure business continuity and service delivery.
- attract young people.
- Implement a range of workforce practices and investment in systems that will support succession planning and achieve transfer of skills and knowledge.
- minimise the risk of mass loss of intellectual property is to further embrace already available award arrangements such as phased retirement.
- Provide succession plans.
- Provide training and development.

Training spend per FTE



Source: Local Government Performance Evaluation Program via the Data Hub Platform. Administered by Victorian Public Sector Unit 2022/23. Please note that this data is for general information only and is not intended to be used for any other purpose.

MEETING DIVERSE COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS WITH LIMITED RESOURCES

Strong partnerships between employees, a commitment to the community and a growing sense of innovation are attributes of the Narrandera Shire Council team that contribute to their ability to effectively respond to community expectations and organisational requirements. Council has a small and loyal workforce which needs to focus on open communication to foster an environment that supports the development of an efficient and productive workforce.

Council has a continued focus on ensuring that all employees are actively involved in planning for the future of their career path the organisation and the community. This continues to result in a team that is engaged in its work and committed to providing effective services and support to the community.

As a multi-skilled team, Narrandera Shire Council employees implement a range of functions and services with small numbers of employees. This is effective because of the diverse skill set those employees within the organisation have.

ADAPTING TO MODERN TECHNOLOGIES AND INNOVATION IN WORK PRACTICES

As the world changes, and technology advances work forces are required to update their skills and knowledge to keep pace with the impact of technological growth. For Narrandera Shire Council this is an area that poses a challenge to ensure that a stable and older work force can provide the technology focus.

The current pandemic has required Council to respond quickly to changes needed to allow staff to be able to work from remotely. Council also needs to respond to the advancement in machinery that is needed for the organisation to be productive considering the ageing workforce by minimising the need for labour intensive manual tasks where possible.

Council also needs to provide an adequate budget for training in technological innovation.

ENSURING SUPERVISORS AND MANAGERS HAVE LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Council over several years has made a concerted effort to ensure that supervisory employees have the necessary skills to undertake their role. Existing employees who have supervisory responsibilities have been required to undertake at minimum a Certificate IV in Leadership and Management. Supervisors are also required to undertake ad hoc training to increase their

knowledge in areas such as performance management and report writing. Mentoring by senior staff should be imbedded as normal practice.

ENSURING THE WORKFORCE REFLECTS THE COMMUNITY PROFILE INCLUDING ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.

The 2016 Census data indicates that Indigenous people currently comprise 2.8% of Australia's population and their numbers are growing at a faster rate than the non-Indigenous population.

The percentage of aboriginal people that reside in the Narrandera LGA is 9.7% (ABS 2016) Current statistics held in human Resources indicates that Indigenous employees, employed by Narrandera Shire Council comprises 13.6% of the total workforce.

Narrandera Shire Council currently employs two employees from culturally and logistically diverse backgrounds this equates to 1.66% of our total workforce

Council needs to continue the Implement Councils Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Diversity Management Plan.

Council will implement its disability inclusion action plan where persons with a disability are encouraged to participate in all operations of Council.

COMPETING LABOUR MARKETS

Narrandera Shire Council is entering into an era of unprecedented competition in the labour market. It is envisaged that development of businesses with in the LGA such as, but not limited to, solar farms will require operational employee numbers that will outweigh supply. The offer of higher wages may entice existing Council employees to consider changing employment. Council is currently not able to match market trends in relation to salary without a complete overhaul of the organisation structure.

Continuing to provide non-wage benefits such as flexible working arrangements and advancement opportunities are just some ways of attracting and retaining staff.

CHANGING SKILL REQUIREMENTS

As councils becomes more accountable across all facets of the organisation, skills required also need to be of a higher level. One example of this is the increase in reporting requirements in relation to the ARIC committee. Skill levels including the requirement for additional training and the development of position descriptions and possible changes to the Council organisational structure are all possibilities.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT AND MODERN RECRUITMENT PRACTICES DON'T ALIGN

Council has developed a succession planning policy and a succession plan as part of the 2017-2021 Workforce plan requirements. The view is to promote employees into those positions they have been selected and trained for. However, the Local Government Act requires all vacancies to be advertised and therefore could hinder this process.

Research shows that high performing organisations consistently fill at least 60% of top management roles with internal candidates compared to around 10-15% in low performing organisations.

RESISTANCE OF EMPLOYEES WILLING TO UNDERTAKE RELIEF IN HIGHER POSITIONS

Some resistance has been noted recently where some employees are not willing to engage in higher positions as part of temporary relief arrangements, secondments, or permanent vacancies. The reasons for this are unclear and requires further investigation. Council is currently

experiencing skills shortage in relation to plant operators even though there are employees that are qualified to undertake these roles.

COVID RELATED ISSUES

No one could have predicted the pandemic four years ago and forced changes that have been required to be made to combat the issues that faced organisations and the workforce. The effects of the pandemic will be felt for some time to come.

While issues around the pandemic had mainly negative impacts on both employees and organisations in relation to interruptions to productivity and the time required to solve issues as they arose. There have been some positive outcomes including the ability for employees to work remotely when required, this was very rare prior to the pandemic however now it is almost commonplace. There is still a need to seek solutions to issues that caused concern for example continuous improvement of technology to make working remotely seamless.

ENCOURAGING A CULTURE THAT PROMOTES FLEXIBLE WORK ENVIRONMENTS

Flexible work environments assist employees by stripping away rigid rules and replacing them with general guidelines. There's a sense of freedom and autonomy inherent to flexible work environments, alongside the structure and support of a traditional workplace.

The requirement for flexible work environments will be more important with the employment of Millennial and Gen-Z employees. Younger workers demand work-life balance and are proving that given autonomy and freedom they perform best.

Council has proved that relaxing rigid rules is possible while still maintaining productivity. This was seen during the events of the pandemic however further improvements to technology, policy and the way we envisage the workplace needs to take place before there is a level of comfort around implementation on a wider scale.

LACK OF WORKFORCE TREND DATA

While available workforce profile data has improved significantly over the past four years the data is captured, in the most part, manually which can be time consuming. The data is currently maintained outside the record management systems Council has available via excel spreadsheets. There is room for error when processing data in this manner. When sourcing a new financial software package data collection should be considered.

LACK OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY

While the indigenous population is fairly represented in Council's workforce, ethnic minorities are not. Reasons for this need to be investigated as part of the 2022-2026 Workforce Management Plan and where possible solutions implemented

LACK OF SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE IN WORKFORCE PLANNING

While workforce planning is often considered to be the domain of Human Resources, it should be seen as a 'whole of Council' challenge.

At this stage no formal training has been provided across the organisation on workforce planning other than a small number of short information sessions which the Human Resources Manager attended over four years ago. The lack of available training needs to be addressed as part of the outcomes of this plan.

The training needs to be provided to all executive, senior management, and supervisors as workforce planning is not solely the responsibility of Human Resources but requires ongoing contribution from across the organisation.

WORKFORCE RESOURCING

Key area	Goal	Specific outcomes
Workforce planning	An understanding of our current and future workforce needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to record human resource data to enable analysis of workplace issues and trends including employee profile data (age, gender, aboriginality, disability, cultural), skills, qualifications, grievances, incidents) all exiting staff provided an exit interview Participate in the Price Waterhouse Cooper survey each year Investigate systems to source accurate workforce profiling data that is less time consuming and error free
Meet organisational needs	A workforce with the required skills and expertise to implement the Council's Delivery Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to engage suitably qualified contractors, consultants, fixed term, and casual staff to support the permanent workforce in the delivery of projects in Council's Delivery Program Investigate new or potential skills required to meet the delivery plan for example specialised skills that will be required by employees to meet Councils ARIC obligations.
Recruitment and selection	Attract and retain qualified and skilled people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit younger people through innovative and dynamic recruitment processes – including the continued use of social media Promotion of Council's family friendly policies and staff development approach Continue to investigate innovative work/life policies for example a four-day week Continue to implement the Recruitment Strategy that focuses on attracting skilled and qualified staff to the organisation. This includes innovative recruitment advertising processes, secondment and job share opportunities, and partnerships. Position Descriptions have a Competency Statement providing a career and skill development path. Promote Local Government as an attractive industry to work for, Continue to provide opportunities for youth through work placement and School based apprenticeships Investigate what will attract millennial and Gen Z prospective employees to Narrandera Shire Council as an employer of choice Investigate ways to compete in a competitive job market with the focus on non-monetary benefits for example job security, work/life balance Make representations to have the Local Government Act reviewed to align recruitment requirements with modern recruitment methods.
Workplace diversity	Value difference and have a workforce that reflects the community's profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Council's EEO and Diversity Management Plan Investigate ways of encouraging applications for employment for minority groups Continue to monitor the number of indigenous employees to ensure the number reflects the community profile.
Placements	Provide opportunities for young people to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with local high school careers advisers and tertiary education institutes within the region to offer work placement to students Offer at least three School based Apprentice positions each year

EMPLOYEE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Key area	Goal	Specific outcomes
Trainees and apprentices	Grow our own	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council has three trainees / apprentices on staff at any one time. This will mean that some skilled positions will need to be replaced with a trainee when the position becomes vacant. • Foster relationships with key training providers and the Australian Apprenticeship Centres • Each trainee / apprentice has a nominated mentor • Foster relationships with secondary schools within the shire and neighbouring shires, to encourage local young people to fill traineeship and apprenticeship positions
Employee orientation	New employees feel welcome and supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to implement an induction program that suits the position level creating a strong first impression of Narrandera Shire Council, makes new employees feel welcome and ensures they have all the required information • Ensure that Narrandera Shire Council's values are promulgated through the induction, position descriptions, employee appraisal process, posters and team meetings. • Review the induction process to ensure different levels of induction are suitable for the audience • Investigate the implementation of an electronic onboarding process that will supplement the current process and track compliance of the new employee
Succession planning	Key roles are planned for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to monitor the critical roles in the organisation • Ensure positions have a competency statement for each step in the grade, giving a development process to ensure staff are ready to be promoted to the next job in their career path if they choose to. • Fill gaps in key roles through staged retirement, external mentoring programs, intensive training opportunities, shared services • Investigate the reason some employees do not wish to undertake higher duties and provide strategies to encourage participation.
Learning and development	Relevant development opportunities are provided to all employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to identify development needs for each employee at the annual appraisal and provide appropriate budget for training each year • Continue to develop an annual corporate training calendar to ensure training opportunities are provided to all employees • To support the implementation of Council's Delivery Program, training should include a focus on skills in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ information technology, ○ plant, ○ economic development. ○ community development, ○ plain English writing, ○ WHS, ○ Risk Management ○ Asset management ○ Works

Key area	Goal	Specific outcomes
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to register suitable employees for all available free / subsidised training and qualifications • Continue to register suitable employees for all available free TAFE courses • Continue to promote the Study Assistance policy with Council subsidising employees who wish to undertake further study on their own time • Ensure that employees are trained to be able to provide skills in future position requirements for example the evolving requirements of the ARIC committee. • Continue to develop staff by providing resources and training in the production of IP&R documents. These documents are the responsibility of the wider Council community and require input from each Manager.

REWARD AND RECOGNITION

Key area	Goal	Specific outcomes
Employee reviews	Recognise employees' efforts, capabilities and performance and address performance issues in a timely manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to use the EPM System module to establish the annual performance plan for each employee at the beginning of each financial year. This includes links to all the Delivery Program actions, the position's PD and Competency Statement, and the Council values. Continue to use the EPM System module for the Annual Performance Review process at the end of each financial year. Ensure that supervisors and managers provide opportunity for open and ongoing two-way feedback with employees
Fixed pay	Grade levels reflect the role and the broader market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and implement an updated Job Evaluation system that reflects the contemporary local government industry Pay rates are reviewed against industry benchmarks every two years
Recognition scheme	Commitment, loyalty and continued service to Narrandera Shire Council is recognised and valued	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to recognise and celebrate key service milestones with long term staff members at employee breakfasts, with Council and where appropriate in the media Celebrate and acknowledge qualification achievements made by employees at employee breakfasts Profile employees in the weekly Communiqué Enter employees and their innovations into Awards such as the Ministers Awards for women in local government and the IPWEA Engineering Awards Formally recognise the issues caused by the pandemic and ensure employees efforts are noted.

WORKPLACE RELATIONS

Key area	Goal	Specific outcomes
Work/life balance	Our staff enjoy work and meet their family / personal obligations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the Flexible Work Arrangements Policy as required to ensure it remains relevant for supporting work/life balance. Promote the policy to all employees through the Consultative Committee and weekly Communiqué and at Team Meetings When reviewing flexible work arrangements consideration needs to be given to relaxing ridged rules for example Councils Working from Home Policy, for this to be successful Council's technology may need to be upgraded. Implementation of further flexible work arrangement may also encourage millennial and Gen Z prospective employees to see Council as an employer of choice Investigate further innovative flexible work arrangements for example a four-day working week.
Equal Employment Opportunity	A workplace free of discrimination/ harassment/ bullying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Council's EEO and Diversity Management Plan Regular promulgation of Council's Harassment and Bullying policy and conduct refresher training every three years
Employee assistance	Employees have access to professional, independent counseling support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to provide free confidential counselling services for employees & families Promote the counselling service at Employee Breakfasts, through the weekly Communiqué and when employees may require assistance for example involvement in a grievance or life changing event
Work environment	A consistent, productive, and positive work environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct Code of Conduct refresher training for all employees every 3 years Promote the Code of Conduct and other policies through all relevant mediums and forums Senior management and HR to support managers in addressing poor behaviour promptly and in accordance with Council's policies Promote the Council's Values (ECLAIRS) through each employee's annual performance plan, assessed at the annual performance appraisal, being in position descriptions, on posters and at team meetings. Conduct an employee opinion survey (Voice Project) every 2 years.

WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY AND WELLBEING

Key area	Goal	Specific outcomes
Safe work environment	A workplace that is safe and healthy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All WHS processes are reviewed in consultation with employees through the WHS Committee, at team meetings and by displaying policy for 28 days for employee comment Provide refresher training on WHS every 2 years Develop and implement annual WHS Action Plan WHS and risk management is on the agenda at SMT, toolbox and team meetings WHS and risk is on the ELT agenda each month Proactively and in a timely manner investigate all workplace incidents and grievances
Risk management	Risk management is an embedded business practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain and review the Enterprise Risk Management Policy and framework Continue to review and implement an annual Corporate Enterprise Risk Management Plan with department plans underneath Train all staff in risk management concepts so they can undertake required risk identification and management tasks Ensure all required Council services, events and programs have appropriate risk management plans developed and implemented WHS and risk management is an agenda item at ELT, SMT, toolbox and team meetings
Injury management	Injured employees are returned to their pre- injury role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the injury management policy as required to strengthen incident investigation, early injury management and allocation of alternate duties All injured staff are provided with alternate duties until they return to their full pre-injury duties
Employee health and wellbeing	A fit and healthy workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workplace Health Safety Risk Officer (WHSRO) in conjunction with the WHS Committee implement an Employee Well Being Program using the funding reserved from the one-off yearly insurance payment. Continue to subscribe and promote the “Well at Work” magazine for employees

Key area	Goal	Specific outcomes
Strong leadership	A strong and committed leadership approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All supervisors to leadership training at certificate VI level or higher • All leadership staff to be given an opportunity to participate in development opportunities such as the annual Rural Management Challenge and the Local Government Mentor program. • Regularly update employees on key issues, projects and decisions through the Weekly Communique, team meetings, executive staff being seen regularly in the field, staff presentations • Provide higher duties and secondment opportunities so people can try leadership roles • Continue to provide opportunity for managers to attend ELT meetings on a rotation basis
Organisational culture	A positive, vibrant, and responsive organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct an employee opinion survey (Voice Project) every 2 years, • Include the leadership values in each supervisor's annual performance plan and assess them at the annual performance appraisal for each supervisor.
Change management	Employees actively participate in new initiatives and improved approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each project has a change management strategy • Each project is to have a Communications Plan to ensure all employees are informed and engaged • Each project is to identify the training required for staff in order for the project to be effective • Foster information sharing between staff – both formally and informally – through project plans, stakeholder engagement strategies and change management strategies
Employee engagement	The staff are engaged and empowered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All teams have regular team and toolbox meetings where two-way communication is fostered • Provide employees with necessary tools to succeed • Advise employees through employee breakfast of council's successes • Recognise employees for their achievements at employee breakfasts and the communique • Provide delegation that reflects their role • Actively involve all staff in reviews of all Integrated Planning and Reporting documents including the Community Strategic Plan



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