

# **Goulburn Mulwaree Council**

## **Workforce Management Plan**

**2022-2026**

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# Executive Summary

The Workforce Management Plan 2022-2026 forecasts Council’s Human Resource requirements for the next four-year period and develops the framework and strategies to ensure the outcomes required from the current four-year Delivery Program are met.

The Long-Term Financial Plan is linked with the Workforce Management Plan ensuring the financial availability of resources to achieve Council’s Community Strategic Plan outcomes.

### Purpose of the Workforce Management Plan

*To plan a strategic ongoing process which seeks to match Council’s workforce requirements to its business objectives and assist in achieving the Council’s vision.*

This Workforce Management Plan is presented in four parts:

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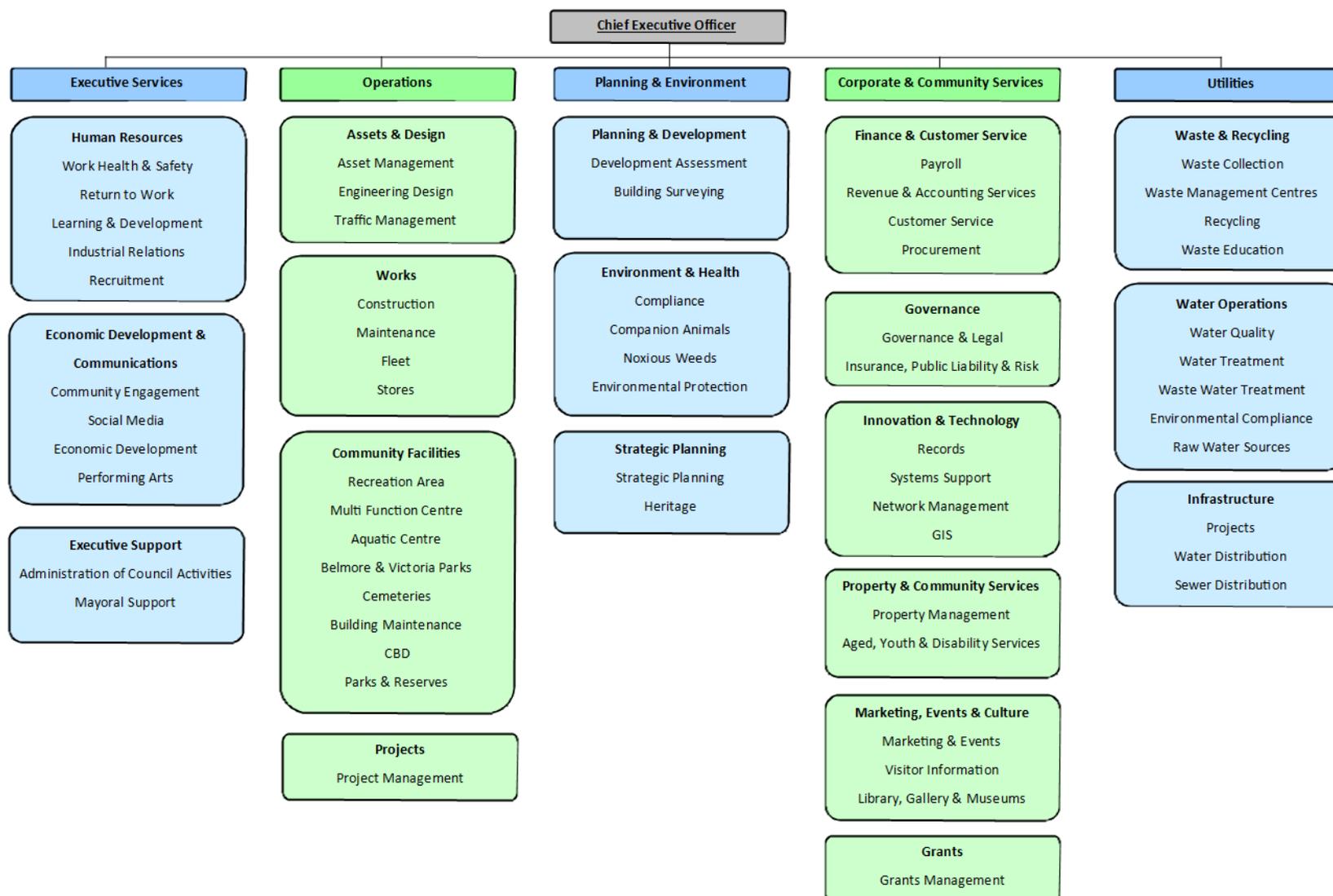
Part 1	The Current Workforce Profile
Part 2	Key Challenges 2022-2026
Part 3	Proposed Workforce 2022-2026
Part 4	Strategies to Address Key Challenges 2022-2026
Part 5	Monitoring Progress

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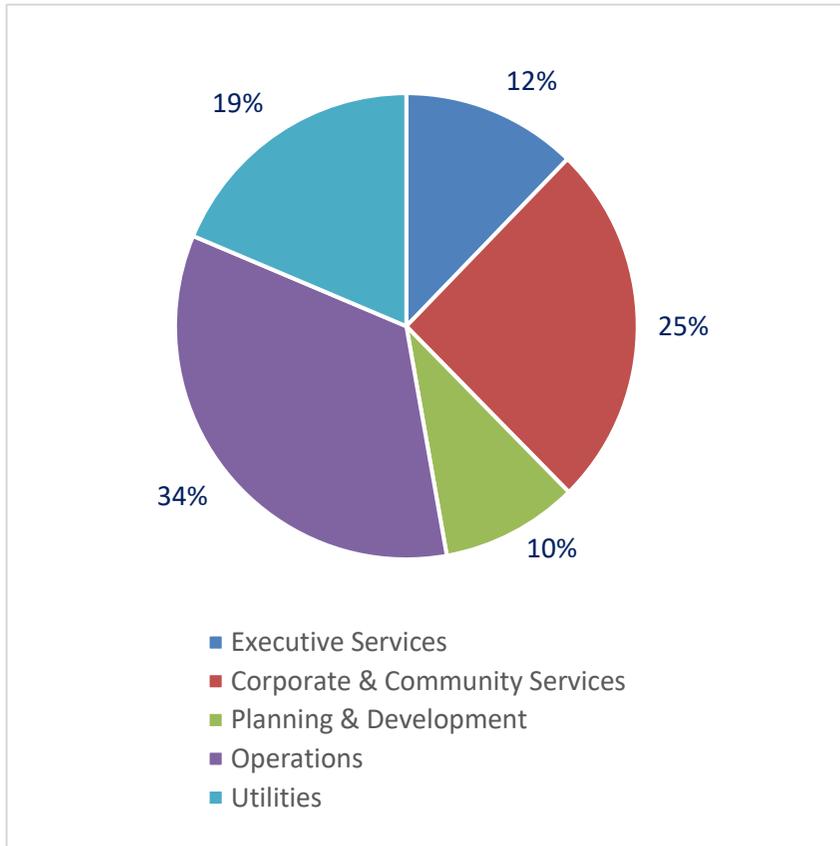


## Part 1 – Current Workforce Profile

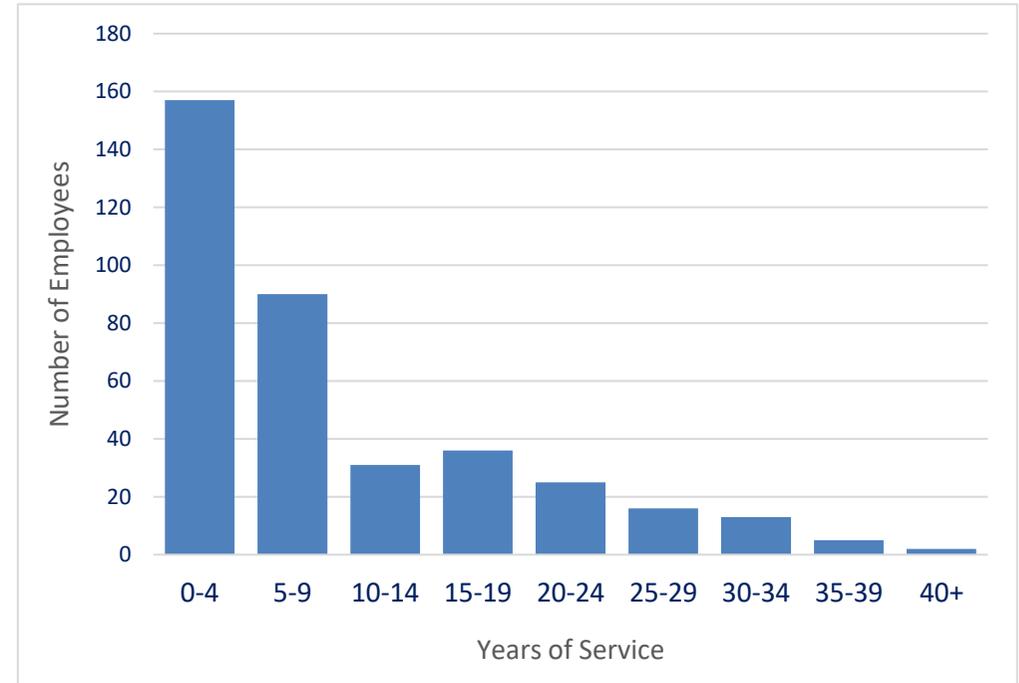
The current structure of the Council is outlined in the following diagram. The structure contains business units to undertake certain functions, projects and provide services in line with the key themes identified in the Community Strategic Plan.



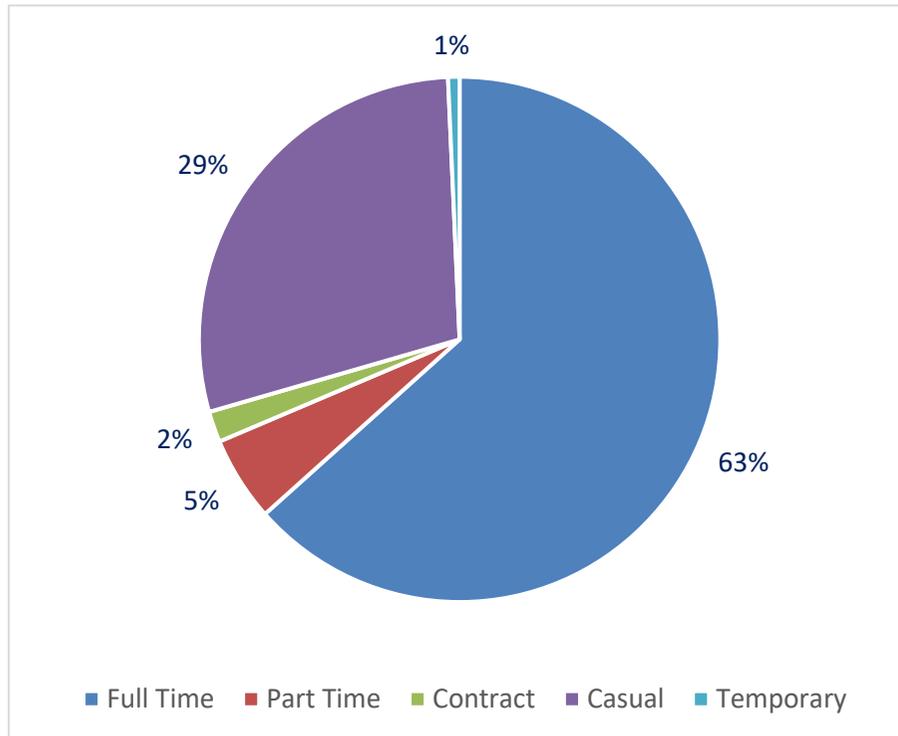
## Employees by Directorate



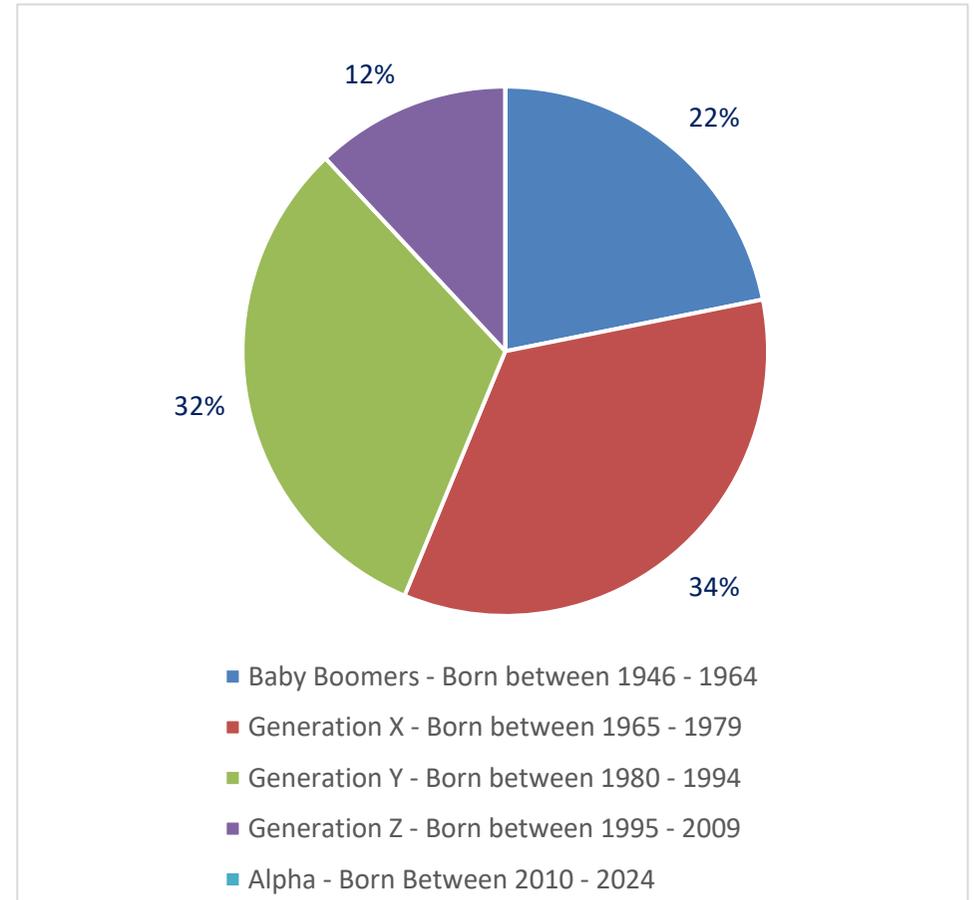
## Length of Service



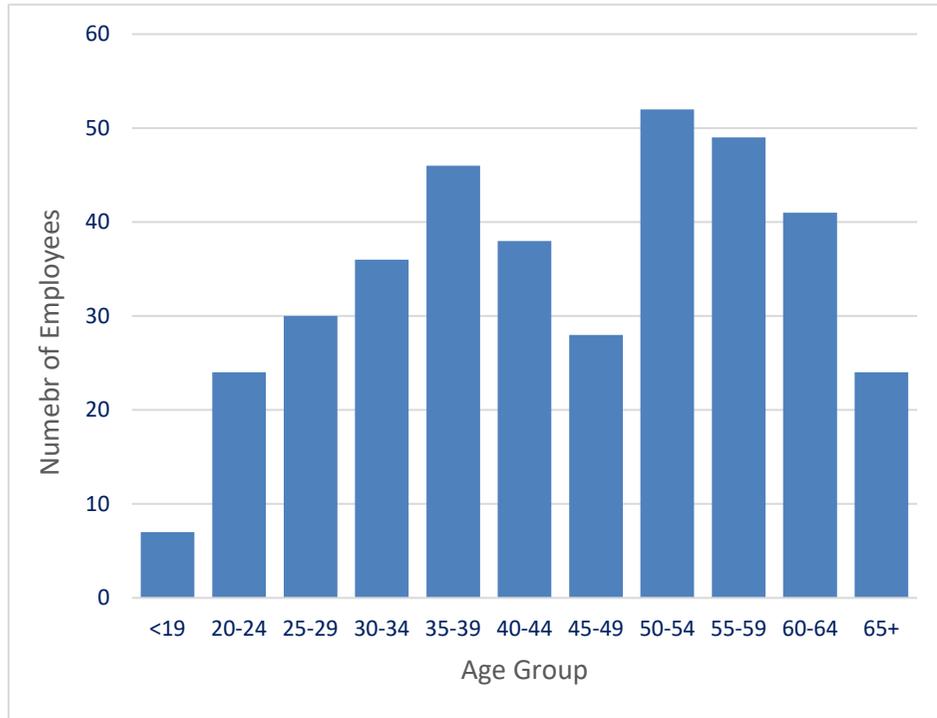
## Full Time, Part Time, Contract, Temporary & Casual Employees



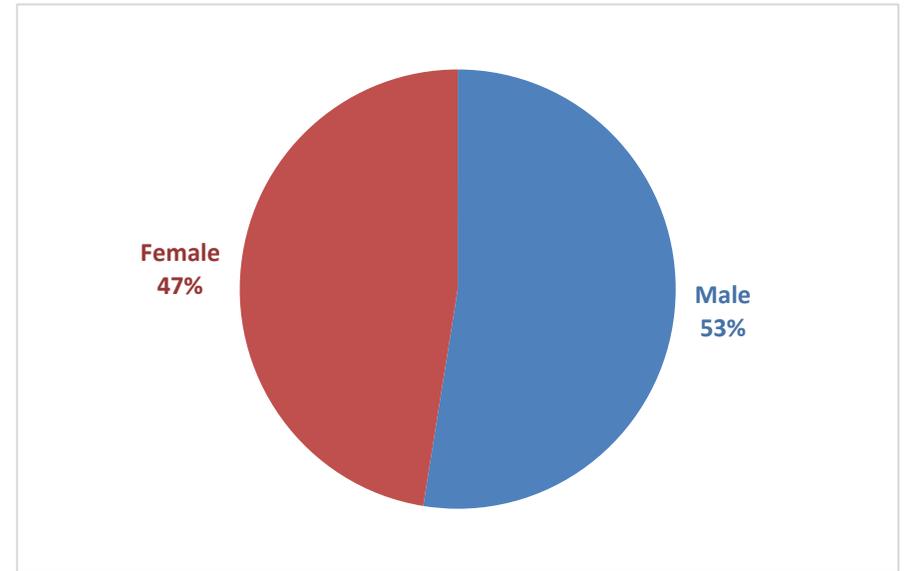
## Headcount by Generation



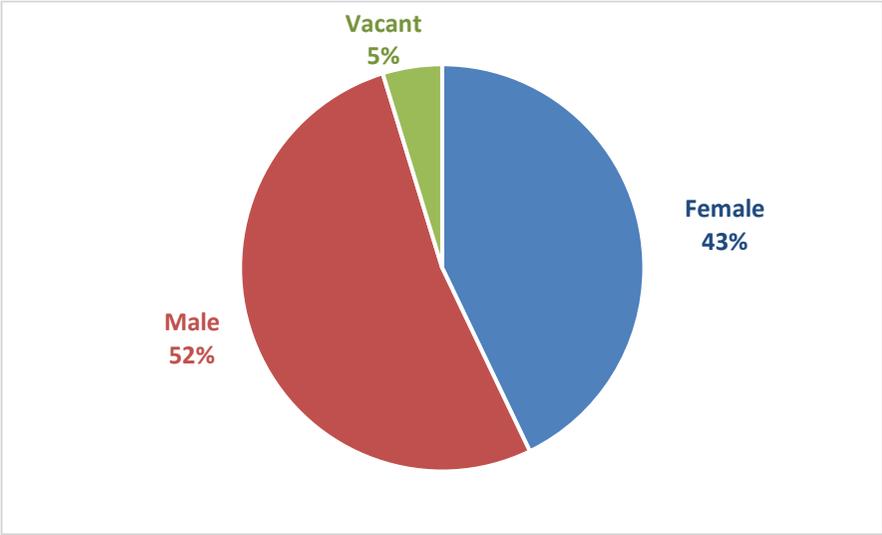
## Age Profile



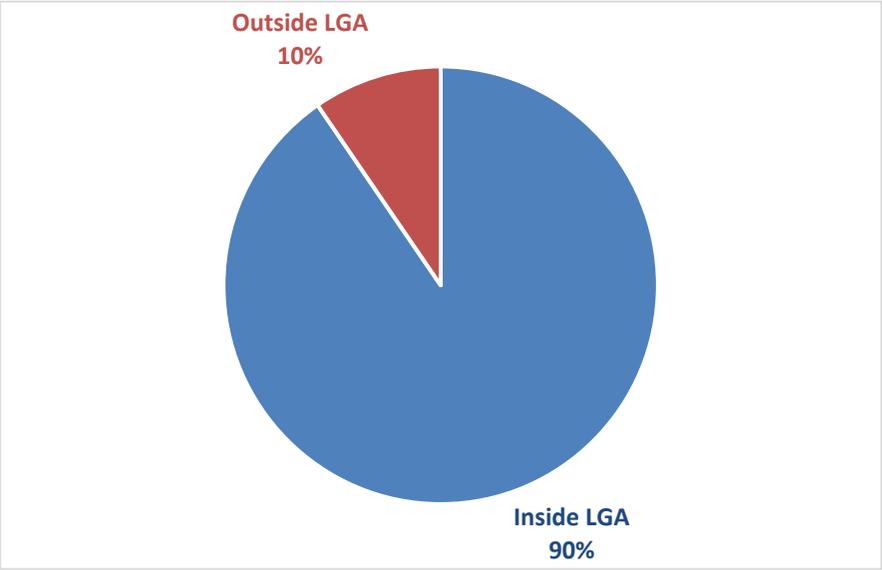
## Gender Profile



# Management Gender Profile



# Residential Profile



## Workforce Profile

Total Number of Employees (headcount inc casuals)	375
Full Time Positions	267
Part Time Positions	22
Temporary Positions	23
Contract Positions	8

Average Age of Employees	45.13
Percentage of Employees over 55 years old	30.40%
Average Length of Service	9.37 years
Total Full Time Equivalent	315
Staff Turnover Rate	8.00%

## Part 2 – Key Challenges 2022-2026

### 1. Business Resilience

#### 1.1 Rising Employment Costs

Increases in employee salary and wages costs consist of two components: the annual Local Government (State) Award increases and movements within Council's salary system as part of the competency review process. The increases in these areas are rising at a greater rate than Council's revenue is increasing.

The Workforce Management Plan integrates with the Long-Term Financial Plan ensuring adequate human resources can be sustained through the current four year delivery program. The Long-Term Financial Plan forecasts no major change in workforce numbers. Employment costs also rely on data from the Asset Management Strategy and the current four-year delivery program. The Long-Term Financial Plan uses this information together with the Workforce Management Plan to forecast planned increases in employment costs that include annual Award increases.

In recent years, increases to Council's rates, have failed to cover the Local Government annual Award increases. In addition to these increases, Council projects an additional increase of 0.25% per annum as staff move through the competency progression system. Therefore, Council's employment costs will increase at a higher rate than our revenue from general rates.

#### 1.2 COVID-19 and the Great Resignation

Covid-19 has brought with it many employment related challenges including the requirement to almost instantly create a mobile and remote workforce and significant staff shortages due to illness and isolation requirements as well as managing stress levels and wellbeing in the industry. As we move to the recovery phase of the pandemic, new and emerging challenges are now impacting Local Government. The 'Great Resignation' as it has been coined, suggests that up to 38% of employees are looking at leaving their current employer in the next 12 months<sup>1</sup>. Factors suggested by PWC research<sup>2</sup> that have influenced the great resignation include restlessness, looking to regain control and a build-up of people being introspective due to the pandemic.

#### 1.3 Natural Disasters

Many Local Government areas have been significantly impacted by bushfires and/or flood events in the recent years. Goulburn Mulwaree Council has experienced six flood and one bush fire event since 2020 resulting in approximately \$25 million being spent on repairs. These events cause great strain on employee resources with staff needing to be redeployed from scheduled works to carry out repairs and technical assessments as well as being under resourced due to accessibility issues.

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<sup>1</sup> Price Waterhouse Cooper, *What Workers Want*, 2021

<sup>2</sup> Price Waterhouse Cooper, *What Workers Want*, 2021

## 2. Ageing Workforce

As indicated in the graph above, more than 30% of our workforce is over the age of 55 years. In the Goulburn Mulwaree Local Government Area, 32.7% of people are aged over 55.<sup>3</sup> This indicates that the Council employment figures are generally reflective of our community figures.

It is not anticipated that there will be any significant change to the age demographics over the period 2022-2026.

The increasing ageing workforce brings financial and social implications for the workplace. In addition, corporate knowledge retention requires a planned approach over the next four year period. The ageing workforce also bring a number of additional muscular skeletal risks due the nature of the physical work performed by our outdoor staff.

## 3. Changing Work Environments

### 3.1 Legislative Requirements

Remaining abreast of and ensuring Council is adhering to increased and continual changing legislative requirements poses a challenge for Council given that Local Government continues to be one of the most highly regulated sections of government.

More broadly, the suite of legislative reforms being implemented by the State Government imposes further responsibilities on Local Councils. An example for 2022 includes Local Government being assigned responsibility for a full range of reforms related to contaminated land.

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<sup>3</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Goulburn Mulwaree, Census Community Profiles <https://www.abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/community-profiles/2021/LGA13310>

This issue in particular, is creating greater strain on resources particularly in the Environment and Building area.

### 3.2. Technological Changes

The introduction of improved and emerging technologies will have an impact on the Council's workforce. The structure of work will continue to evolve with new information and communication technologies used to deliver services and products. These influences create a requirement for a workforce that is multi skilled, flexible, agile and technologically savvy with the increasing ability to work effectively in online environments.

### 3.3. Hybrid and Flexible Working

A further development following the COVID-19 pandemic is a shift in many industries to allow for a hybrid and/or more flexible working environment. This poses a challenge for Local Government to remain competitive in this space given that many roles are unable to have a working from home or flexible component as well as the technological improvements to be made to allow this to occur.

## 4. Skill Requirements

Over the past 20 years, the greatest growth in employment in Australia has been in highly skilled areas usually requiring a degree.<sup>4</sup> Goulburn Mulwaree Council's increase in skill requirements is indicative of this trend and therefore the skills shortage in these areas. The most notable skills shortages for Local Government include Engineers, Town Planners, Building Surveyors, Project Managers and Environmental Health Officers.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> National Skills Commission, The State of Australia's Skills, 2021

<sup>5</sup> Local Government Workforce and Future Skills Report, September 2018

Leadership in Local Government also continues to be an area of great focus which is also indicated in Council's staff surveys as an areas requiring improvement in skills.<sup>6</sup> Comparatively with other challenges faced by Local Government in relation to workforce requirements, the ability to compete with private sector remuneration rates and the decline in participation rates in the workforce combined with very specific training requirements for Local Government continues to be a challenge in this area.

## 5. Talent Acquisition

The ability of Local Government to attract and retain professionals that meet the requirements of the industry continues to be a key challenge. Private employers generally offer higher rates of pay and often can offer faster avenues for progression without the requirement to apply for roles<sup>7</sup>. Some of the skills required for Local Government professionals are very specific to the industry and the talent pool for the industry continues to shrink.

Council's overall emerging work environment is producing stronger demand for graduates and highly skilled staff, predominately in the professional fields. Clear demographic changes are accelerating the challenge, such as the ageing population and the halt in the growth of the labour force. Regional areas find it the most difficult to attract and retain skilled workers.

Local government as an industry finds it difficult to attract and retain the younger generations as Councils are generally not perceived to be fun

and exciting workplaces for young people nor have adequate career paths.

## 6. Diversity in the Workplace

Workforce diversity and inclusion refers to the diverse skill and perspectives that people may bring to the workplace due to their gender, age, language, ethnicity, cultural background, disability, religious beliefs etc. Having a diverse workplace creates new, broader ranges of thinking and fosters innovation and creativity whilst recognising the value of individual differences. It is about removing barriers to ensure all employees can perform at their highest ability<sup>8</sup>. Goulburn Mulwaree Council's demographic data indicates that the Local Government Area has 5.05% of the population identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders and 6.5% who speak a language other than English at home<sup>9</sup>.

When comparing the demographic data with Council's employment statistics, Council currently employs 2.67% Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders and 2.4% people from non-English speaking backgrounds. Council's employment figures do not currently reflect the diversity within our region.

Other target areas to increase diversity in our workplace include people with a disability, youth and women in managerial roles. Currently 1.6% of Council employees identify as having a disability, 12% of staff are categorised as generation Z and 40% of people in our managerial roles are women. Council would also like to continue to increase the representation in these categories.

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<sup>6</sup> Goulburn Mulwaree Council staff survey 2021

<sup>7</sup> Local Government Workforce Strategy 2016-2020

<sup>8</sup> Local Government Workforce Strategy 2016-2020

<sup>9</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) *Goulburn Mulwaree, Census Community Profiles* <https://www.abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/community-profiles/2021/LGA13310>

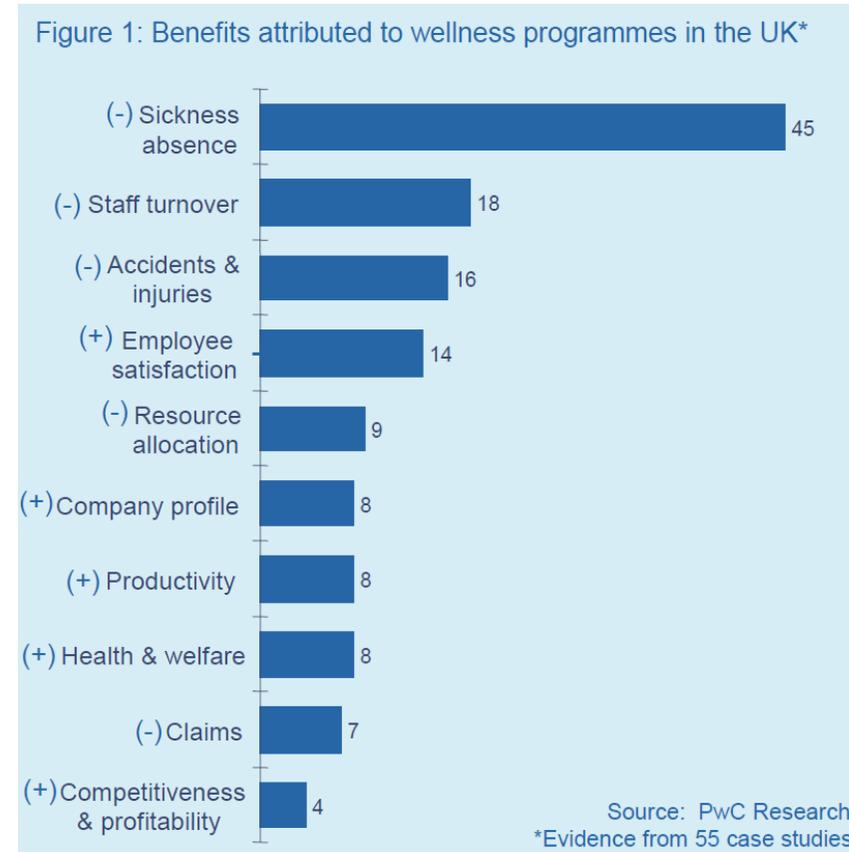
## 7. Healthy Employees

Assisting our employees in maintaining positive health and wellbeing is challenging for Council. The ageing workforce brings physical health related challenges as well as the COVID-19 pandemic negatively impacting people's mental health in a significant way.<sup>10</sup> The participation rate for people over 55 in the workforce has grown over recent years.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, our employees are remaining in their roles for longer than ever before which indicates that we need to find a way to support mature age health in the workplace.

Assisting our employees to remain healthy through carefully planned health and wellbeing initiatives has a positive effect on employees and the organisation as a whole. The graph below presented by Price Waterhouse Cooper identifies the positive impacts of wellness programmes<sup>12</sup>

Employee health levels can also be related to injuries. Council had 24 claims for the 2020/21 financial year and of these, 67% were attributed to strains and sprains. Council's workers compensation costs are linked to industry classification performance, the cost of claims, salary and wages costs and legislative changes. Council's workforce has a significant number of employees in manual labour and/or high-risk roles; therefore, there is a reasonable expectation for claims to continue at a similar rate into the future. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the mental health of employees in Australia was very strained. Our industry workers compensation insurer reported a 56% increase in psychological claims following the commencement of the pandemic in 2020. Council is committed to creating a mentally health working environment for our

employees and this is viewed as equally important as creating a physically healthy one.



<sup>10</sup> Akin et al. 2021

<sup>11</sup> National Skills Commission, The State of Australia's Skills, 2021

<sup>12</sup> PwC, Building the Case for Wellness, February 2008

## Part 3 – Proposed Workforce 2022-2026

The current organisation structure adopted by Council is broadly capable of executing the Delivery Program and this Workforce Plan has been developed on this basis. However, staffing levels will need to be evaluated during this four year period due to the continuation of expanding roles for Councils from the State Government, greater legislative compliance requirements, and a significant increase in assets and service delivery following the completion of major projects. At this point, there is insufficient information relating to the impact of the increase in Council assets, for example the upgrade to the Aquatic Centre and Performing Arts Centre as they opened in May 2022. Once sufficient data can be obtained in relation to the expansion of assets, then review of staffing levels can be undertaken.

Council will maintain the essential staff numbers and positions currently in the workforce to match the Council priorities and available resources. Where required, it may also be necessary to increase resource numbers for specific tasks or projects and this may be done on a fixed term basis or undertaken by contractors or consultants.

Council's Business Managers have completed a departmental forecasting plan for each business unit. This plan has identified any additional requirements to the current structure which will be presented to the Executive team with a business case in support of these increased resources including a detailed funding arrangement. The funding arrangements will include increasing revenue streams, alternate identified funding arrangements or reducing costs.

The departmental forecasting plans include a business unit overview, four-year department focus, skill gaps and development needs, succession plans, flight risks, individual resourcing challenges and action plans to address the identified challenges for each individual department. The departmental forecasting plan is a sub plan of this workforce plan and it is critical to the workforce planning of Council as it identifies the individual requirements, challenges and action plans for each business unit.

# Part 4 – Strategies to Address Key Challenges 2022-2026

## 1. Business Resilience

### 1.1. Rising Employment Costs

There is unlikely to be additional funding for the Local Government sector in the short to medium term. The focus is therefore going to be on continuing to work within our means. Council will manage productivity levels and costs by:

- Actively managing staff numbers through natural attrition and the review of vacancies ensuring that workforce numbers and skills match the essential functions of Council.
- Providing systems and programs to motivate and engage employees to assist in maintaining high productivity levels.
- Building a workforce that ensures the organisation has adequate staff to meet current and future needs.
- Continue to explore avenues for further grant funding and/or income where resources need to be increased.
- Forecasting Council's future workforce and developing a plan for maintaining financial sustainability.

### 1.2 COVID-19 and the Great Resignation

Goulburn Mulwaree Council is in the fortunate position that the *'Great Resignation'* is yet to impact on our organisation in the way that it has in

other Local Government entities and private enterprise. Goulburn Mulwaree Council's turnover rate for the 21/21 financial year was 8% which is a decrease from 9% listed in the 2017-2021 workforce plan. When compared with the median turnover rate of 14% for all NSW Councils that participated in the Local Government NSW HR Metrics survey,<sup>13</sup> Goulburn Mulwaree Council is performing well in this area. The focus of this four-year plan relative to the great resignation will be to continue with programs aimed at retaining our workforce. These programs include but are not limited to:

- Irresistible Workplace Strategy
- Coaching and mentoring programs
- Flexible Working Arrangements procedure which is currently under review to propose even greater flexibility in the workforce
- Hybrid working arrangements
- Opportunities for career and operational development
- Continuing our cultural program for all staff and leaders
- Extensive health and wellbeing initiatives
- Promoting our mentally healthy workplace initiatives
- Outstanding conditions for staff including rostered day off provisions for staff and discretionary leave for business managers
- Demonstrating how we value employees through our extensive reward and recognition programs, staff survey and working party initiatives and employee 'check in' meetings.

### 1.3 Natural Disasters

The strategy to offset the strain on Council's employee resources is to apply for Natural Disaster assistance for declared events with more than \$250,000 damage. These funds are allocated to contract assistance to

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<sup>13</sup> Local Government NSW, HR Metrics Report, all Councils 2020/2021

elevate pressure on internal resources to administer the funding allocations for the damage to be repaired. Future requirements include funding to be allocated on a four yearly basis to obtain the most recent asset condition data of our sealed road network and to have the appropriate technological resources to enable accurate logging of the damage that has occurred to the network.

## 2. Ageing Workforce

Addressing the key challenge of the ageing workforce will include implementing programs to retain corporate knowledge, replacement of skilled workers and retain effective and valued ageing workers longer. The following strategies have been put in place to achieve the above goals:

- Transition to retirement programs
- Flexible working arrangements
- Succession planning
- Coaching and mentoring
- Career development cross training
- Ongoing training and education
- Traineeships, apprenticeships, cadetships and our career sponsorship pathway program
- Determining Council's workforce strengths, weaknesses current and future needs through analysis of a Workforce Training Plan

A significant challenge of the ageing workforce is the increased number of muscular skeletal injuries that occur.

SafeWork NSW are currently auditing all Local Government Council's as part of their Musculoskeletal Disorder (MSD) program. This is due to Council's ranking in the top five industries with injuries resulting from

MSD's. A desktop audit and site visits were conducted by SafeWork with the following trends and areas of improvement identified;

1. Keeping up to date with new and emerging equipment and technology that will more greatly assist in reducing MSD
2. Workload/staffing assessments required to ensure areas are adequately resources to meet the workload expectation
3. Job rotation – Develop and implement a system to ensure rotation for heavy repetitive manual roles
4. Expansion of the review of MSD hazards during the procurement process
5. Mandatory implementation of stretching and wellness programs

Actions have been reviewed and approved by the Executive to help further minimise MSD injuries at Council. These actions are tracked in Council's incident management system, Vault.

Whilst the actions contained within the review apply to and will benefit all Council employees', assisting to reduce MSD within Council will greatly reduce the incident rate for the ageing workforce.

## 3. Changing Work Environments

### 3.1. Legislative Requirements

Over the past several years, there has been great expansion in legislative compliance requirements for Council's across all departments. To ensure our people are notified of and can respond to these changes, we will continue to offer professional development training to attend conferences, seminars and other training relating to changes in legislation. Employees will also have access to appropriate publications and subscriptions that inform subscribers to amendments in legislation. Experts will continue to be employed in areas that are highly regulated with key outcomes linked to ensuring Council's compliance with all relevant legislative requirements. Consultants will continue to be

engaged on a term basis where high-level specialised expertise are required to ensure compliance and probity.

A further strategy that Council is developing is the Legislative Compliance Database. The Legislative Compliance Database (LCD), provides a list of the most relevant State and Commonwealth Acts which govern the exercise of Council's functions and therefore identifies Council's legislative compliance obligations. The LCD is intended to be used in association with an adopted legislative compliance policy and procedure which is also currently under development.

The functionality of the LCD is operated via the Delegations Database which is used currently to issue instruments of sub-delegation. The Delegations Database can be amended to also perform the following functions:

- Relevant staff will receive notifications for updates and/or changes to legislation. The notifications would be related to the staff member's current sub-delegation and/or appointment.
- Relevant staff can search the database for specific sub-delegation and appointments.

It is expected that the setup of the above functions will be conducted during the delegations review commencing in August-September 2022.

### 3.2. Technological Changes

Council has an Information Technology strategy (ICT Strategic Plan) which outlines the future needs of the organisation in relation to innovation and technology. The current strategy includes two significant actions that will assist staff in their day to day work.

The first is an action to move to a "Cloud First" environment. The aim of this action is to ensure Council has access to the latest and most up to date computer systems. This process is well under way and by the end of

2022 it is expected that 60 % of the software systems used by Council will reside in the cloud which will include our major items being Microsoft Office 365 and Technology 1.

The second action is a "work from anywhere" environment. This action is aimed at providing all staff the ability as needed to access any Council system from any location. This is an extension from the current work from home option, but will include new functions including the ability to connect any Council device (Laptop, Ipad etc) to any available internet connection in a safe and secure way. This will also allow staff to connect to Council systems using their personal devices if they wish to.

It is anticipated with the above changes, several new and improved system will be rolled out to staff, these include online time sheets, online leave forms, ability to approved orders from anywhere to name a few. To achieve this, it is important that all staff have access to this new capability. By the end of 2023, Council is aiming for all full-time staff to be issued with at least one or more individual devices to better enable connectivity of our workforce.

One of the positive outcomes from the COVID-19 pandemic was the rapid and immediate need to provide mobility for the organisation. This crisis informed the evolvement of our working from home processes and practices. Council now provides greater flexibility for staff who have not been able attend the workplace due to isolation requirements and has opened the door to expanded work from home arrangements.

Council provides ongoing training and support for all online systems and consistently explores options for advancement in these areas. Council staff are encouraged to remain abreast of changes in technology and advancements in their industry.

Council's training room has recently been upgraded to include a kiosk of iPads for staff to utilise to conduct online training as well as training in basic online forums to upskill workers in the utilisation of technology. All

staff now have access to Council's online training platform 'WANDA'. Each staff member is assigned a unique log in and is required to undertake several online courses throughout the year. Council's Learning and Development Coordinator attends this kiosk once per week to continue to give instruction, training, and guidance in this online portal.

Council will continue to employ experts in the Innovation and Technology department to lead Council towards new developments in the industry. Council has recently approved additional resources for this team to ensure we can continue to provide outstanding guidance and support in technology.

As the information technology requirements of Council employees continues to grow, this is being more highly reflected in our recruitment practices, procedures, and position descriptions as base level requirements for all Council staff.

### 3.3 Hybrid and Flexible Working

As outlined above, Council currently operates under a flexible working arrangement procedure which offers flexibility outside the Local Government (State) Award. This procedure provides the ability for all staff to request an assessment of a flexible working arrangement, not only employees that fall into the categories outlined in the Local Government (State) Award. In the 20/21 financial year, Council had 55 employees operating under a formal flexible working arrangement which equates to over 20% of our permanent workforce. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, this procedure was also updated to include the flexibility to include hybrid working for certain positions which had not been available to employees previously.

Council is currently in the process of expanding this procedure and a modernised 'Flex First' procedure has been developed and is currently under review. The expanded procedure includes additional rostered day off provisions, additional ad hoc flexibility, and the ability to enter into an

individualised hours agreement which expands the ability to perform work hours in a more flexible manner across the week.

## 4. Skill Requirements

Goulburn Mulwaree Council is facing significant current and future skills shortages in professional, technical, and para-professional roles including Planners, Surveyors, Accountants, Engineers, and Environmental Health Officers. A model is under development to help address these gaps, which is titled our *Career Sponsorship Pathway Program*. The aim of this program is to provide a pathway whereby an outstanding candidate is offered an entry level role where they are supported to obtain an undergraduate university degree and on the job training and development whilst progressing through multiple levels of Council's salary system until they reach the competence level and pay component of a fully qualified professional in their field.

The model proposes that people obtain an entry level para-professional role providing basic support in the professional area and be enrolled in an undergraduate degree relevant to their professional field. Once enrolled in their studies, the employee progresses through a series of salary system levels with progression linked to units within the degree as well as on the job competency. Each level the employee progresses through in the salary system then attracts more responsibility and duties as their skills develop. This progression continues until the conclusion of the degree and the on-the-job training. At this point, the employee is then fully qualified and also appropriately compensated for the skill level acquired over the (generally) four year period. Position Descriptions are clearly written to reflect the requirements at each step of the grade progression and outline the increased responsibilities for the role at each grade.

The benefit to employees is a pathway whereby they are paid while they study, have their degree paid for by their employer, have significant

monetary incentives via increased pay levels to motivate them to complete the degree and a guaranteed professional and appropriately compensated role at the conclusion of their study. This pathway is a shift away from traditional cadet type roles where the employee is generally paid at a very low rate with minimal progression and no guaranteed role at the conclusion of their cadetship.

The significant benefit to Council in undertaking this program is built in succession planning for all critical professional senior positions as well as significantly reducing the reliance on the labour market to provide qualified candidates for skills shortage roles. There are many additional benefits to Council including

- Building capability for employees who have a sound understanding of local government and Council specific policies, procedures, and values
- Improved retention and reduced turnover as employees feel valued and supported
- Improved team morale as workloads ease
- Improved customer experiences as more fully qualified and experienced people are available to process various applications and answer enquiries
- Council being an employer of choice by providing yet another career avenue for the wide community.

This program is already embedded in the Council framework in our Planning and Development Directorate. Council's plan is to review this framework and expand the program parameters further as well as include all directorates in the program as junior roles become vacant.

In relation to leadership skills, derived from an adaptive leadership framework, Council's Lead, Engage, Apply, Perform (LEAP) Initiative relies on a set of tools, principles and language for use in our everyday workspaces to mindfully build both self-awareness and high performing teams across the organisation. The principles on which the tools are

based enhance the ways in which 'having each other's backs' becomes a greater reality and where holding each other to account in healthy and positive ways increases. Recognition for this overall program is strong and broad, where early in its implementation our custom program received a commendation in the Innovation in Leadership category of the 2020 NSW Business Excellence Awards. The program consists of a two-day induction workshop for all staff and includes a third day for employees in a leadership roles. The annual program also includes quarterly LEAP Leader Program initiatives aimed at continuing the development of Council's Team Leaders, Supervisors and Business Managers to continue to build Council's leadership capability.

Council's additional strategies to close skill gaps include formal and informal cross training and mentoring programs, career development and operational development programs and assistance, Council's training needs analysis and training plan and the continued utilisation of trainees and apprentices.

## 5. Talent Acquisition

Goulburn Mulwaree Council has extensive attractive workplace offerings for prospective employees; however, this currently is not well promoted to the marketplace. The strategy identified to address the gap in our recruitment promotion is to revamp Council's Employer Value Proposition (EVP). The revision of our EVP will include creating a specific page on Council's website dedicated to our EVP. This will include an employment-based video of what it is like to work at Goulburn Mulwaree Council as well as outlining all the employment offerings Goulburn Mulwaree Council can provide to employment market. Some of the offerings include:

- Flexible working conditions including compressed work month, hybrid working and Council’s flexible working arrangements procedure
- 12 days discretionary leave per year for Business Managers
- 2 days health and wellbeing leave per year for all employees
- Work/life balance
- Extensive health and wellbeing initiatives
- Generous maternity and sick leave provisions
- 35 hour working week for indoor staff
- Promoting our inclusive and engaged culture through our cultural program – LEAP
- Council sponsored education and development
- Coaching and mentoring opportunities
- Promoting Goulburn Mulwaree as an attractive place to live and work by linking to our Goulburn Australia information
- Developing confidence in consultation and feedback by using a range of communication tools that support employee involvement
- Opportunities for apprentices and trainees
- Career sponsorship pathway roles
- Promote our ‘irresistible workplace’ strategy
- Demonstrating how we value employees through our extensive reward and recognition programs, staff survey and working party initiatives and employee ‘check in’ meetings.

Goulburn Mulwaree Council will continue to work with the Canberra Regional Joint Organisation to promote Local Government as a place to work (in particular the CBRJO region) and we will continue to ensure the principles of Equal Employment Opportunity are applied within the

requirements of the Act and regulations. Council has an Equal Employment Opportunity Plan to assist in the application of these principles and is reviewed annually.

In competing for talent, Council must continually commit to building skills and expertise across the organisation. By supporting Council staff in their development, Council is building and retaining knowledge for the organisation.

Offering support for tertiary education and in particular our career sponsorship pathway roles as outlined above, creates an opportunity to employ qualified professionals who are prepared to stay with the organisation over an extended period of time. This investment is seen as ‘*growing Council’s own*’ and has the potential to fill vacancies well into the future and provide solid succession planning in the critical professional roles. These programs will assist in mitigating the current shrinking labour market. In 2021, Goulburn Mulwaree Council spent \$903 per full time equivalent on training and development. This is well above the NSW average \$668 for all NSW Council’s who participated in the Local Government NSW HR Metrics survey<sup>14</sup> and demonstrates our commitment to investing in the development of our people.

Attractiveness of Local Government as a career is particularly difficult when recruiting generation Y employees. Council has recently undertaken campaigns in relation to trainees and appreciates, work experience and attending schools and career expos to generate interest in Local Government for the younger generations. Council’s career sponsorship pathway roles are critical to this endeavour and offer a very attractive pathway for young people. As Council continues to expand the program,

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<sup>14</sup> Local Government NSW, HR Metrics Report, all Councils 2020/2021

this will also expand the employment participation of young people in Council.

## 6. Diversity in the workplace

Currently, Council employs 40% percent women in managerial roles. The statistics for the 2017-2021 Workforce Plan outlined that, at the time Council employed 36% women in managerial roles, these figures indicate positive progress has been made in this area. Goulburn Mulwaree Council is also performing well in this area when compared with the median of 38% women in managerial role for all NSW Councils that participated in the Local Government NSW HR Metrics survey,<sup>15</sup> however we would like to continue to improve this figure.

During 2021, Council ran a campaign specific to supporting women in the workplace. The campaign consisted of several initiatives which included:

- Five sponsored places in a course titled ‘*Women Leaders*’ offered by the Australian Institute of Management (AIM) with travel and accommodation expenses included.
- A series of digital training resources targeted at women in leadership which were curated and compiled by Human Resources and disseminated to the whole organisation.
- A mentoring program for women was also established and promoted across the organisation
- A series of guest speakers including were organised to speak to and inspire our women.

Council will continue to target women in managerial roles by maintaining our investment in women specific conferences, training courses and seminars especially where these courses are targeting leadership capability. We will also continue to promote women leaders through the promotion of our mentoring and cross training programs.

As outlined in the diversity statistics,<sup>16</sup> Council must strive for greater representation for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders, people with a disability and people from a non-English speaking background identified by using a language other than English at home.

Council has an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) plan to ensure that people of all backgrounds have equal access to our recruitment practices. Council ensures to advertise on all major recruitment platforms to capture the broadest range of applicants possible.

The strategy to improve representation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and people with a disability is to designate a trainee position each year to these diversity categories. Around 90% of Council’s trainees and apprentices are retained by Council at the conclusion of their training which provides a continuous pathway for representation of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and people with a disability in our workforce. Council is also investigating a partnership with NSW Health to provide a cadetship as an Environmental Health Officer for a person from an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background.

A further strategy to increase representation of people with a disability, Council has partnered with ‘*Right to Work*’ which is a local company that provides young adults with intellectual disabilities the opportunity to

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<sup>15</sup> Local Government NSW, HR Metrics Report, all Councils 2020/2021

<sup>16</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) *Goulburn Mulwaree, Census Community Profiles* <https://www.abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/community-profiles/2021/LGA13310>

undertake work placements with local businesses to gain employability skills. Council provides placement opportunities for the program learners to assist them in obtaining valuable workplace skills and enable them to have an understanding of Council so that they will be better placed to apply for our roles.

In the area of diversity relating to employees of non-English speaking background, Council will target recruitment sites with a broader client base including overseas advertising, look at opportunities to partner with the Goulburn Multicultural Centre and continue to utilise the strategy in our Equal Employment Opportunity plan and offer interpreters where appropriate to assist prospective employees in the recruitment process.

The strategy to increase youth participation in our workforce is to continue our work with trainees and apprentices. As outlined above, Council retrains around 90% of our trainees ensuring a continued stream of young people entering our workforce.

## 7. Healthy Employees

Council has committed significant resources to creating a healthy workplace and to assist employees to improve their health at home and in the workplace. Council has created a Health and Wellbeing Committee who meet on a regular basis to identify and deliver Health and Wellbeing initiatives for the organisation. Council also has a Health and Wellbeing framework which is reviewed annually. Following COVID-19 and the introduction of the Safe Work code of practice *Managing Psychosocial Hazards at Work*, Council has also significantly increased the emphasis on mental health in the workplace. The regular programs related to physical and mental health issued via the framework include:

### Physical Health

- Health Screening including lung screening, eye checks, skin checks, flu shots and audiometric testing
- Health monitoring including hepatitis A and B, Que fever and tetanus vaccinations
- Ergonomic assessments
- Ongoing safety training including manual handling, bullying and harassment, verification of competency, inductions to plant and equipment, updating of all mandatory training requirements, tickets and licences and daily risk assessments and toolbox talks.
- Introduction of mechanical devices to assist in manual tasks
- Two days of Health and Wellbeing leave per year
- Fruit boxes
- Massage vouchers
- Ongoing participation activities such as walking challenges, push up challenge and bring your dog to work day
- Organisation wide toolbox talks related to health and wellbeing
- Goulburn Mulwaree Council healthy eating cookbook
- Monthly health and wellbeing newsletter to all staff
- Coffee van vouchers
- Muscular skeletal action plan

### Mental Health

Council has introduced a '*Mentally Healthy Workplace*' procedure, a '*Dealing with Difficult and Threatening People*' procedure, online training courses and a number of other prevention techniques to assist in creating a mentally healthy workplace. Additional, strategies currently being implemented include:

- Internal mental health champions who have been trained in Accidental Counselling as well as Council's procedures.
- Mental Health App; Smiling Mind

- Stress Management Action Plans available to staff
- Employee Assistance Program
- Post traumatic incident debriefs
- Regular team Counselling session and individual safe operating procedures for areas at high risk
- Additional business unit counselling sessions where high stress levels have been identified
- Business Unit Culture assessments and strategies where team disharmony has been identified
- Mental health awareness sessions which, this year included online sessions titled ‘Protecting our Wellbeing’ and ‘adapting to our new normal’ workshops for all staff and the leadership team which was run over a 3 month period
- Council’s bullying and harassment processes include opportunities for alternate dispute resolution to encourage more employees to come forward to have issues resolved.
- During the COVID-19 lock down period the Human Resources team contacted each employee individually to check in on their wellbeing.

Council will continue the critical work undertaken in the area of health and wellbeing with consistent assessment of strategies and consultation with the workforce regarding the need, accessibility and assistance we can provide in this space with continuous improvement at the forefront of the programs.

## Part 5 – Monitoring Progress

On an annual basis this Workforce Management Plan will be reviewed to assess what progress has been made, what targets have/have not been met, and what changes need to be made.

Council has adopted and implemented the expanded 'Flex First' procedure.

### 5.1 – Monitoring Progress 30 June 2023

#### Strategies Review

The strategies contained within the workforce plan are still current in relation to the labour market constraints and industry trends. Council has made significant progress during the 2022/23 financial year in relation to the identified strategies as outlined above.

The key challenge that is escalating faster than anticipated in the 2022 Workforce Plan is rising employment costs. The Award increases are significantly greater than rate pegging being 4.5%, 3.5% and 3%. This challenge combined with high CPI costs for Council and expansion in growth of the region is requiring a greater focus on resource requirements. A full review of resourcing requirements was undertaken in August 2023 and this information is currently under review with the Executive team. Council is currently undertaking consultation regarding a special rate variation. Should the variation be accepted or rejected, the resourcing review will be updated to reflect additional resources required or services that will no longer be undertaken.

#### Strategy Update and Progress

Council has completed a number of the strategies contained in the workforce plan including 60% of software residing in the cloud, completed and actioned muscular skeletal review and action plan and

Strategy	Task	Responsible Officer	Completion date	Progress 1 July 2023
Changing Work Environments	Finalise review of Council's <i>Flexible Working Arrangements</i> procedure to a <i>Flex First</i> procedure	Executive team upon recruitment of Council's CEO	December 2022	Completed
Ageing Workforce	Complete action plan for Muscular Skeletal Review	Designated Business Managers	January 2023	completed
Skill requirements	Expand the Career Sponsorship Pathway program	Business Managers identifying opportunities	Ongoing	1 new role introduced
Talent Acquisition	Revamp Council's Employer Value Proposition	Business Manager Human Resources	May 2024	Engaged provider, work has commenced.
Changing Work Environments	Create Legislative Compliance Database	Business Manager Governance	May 2023	Commenced
Changing Work Environments	60 % of the software systems used by Council will reside in the cloud	Business Manager Innovation and Technology	December 2022	Completed
Proposed Workforce 2022-2026	Undertake review of staffing levels following accurate data of new assets	Executive with assistance of all Business Managers	Ongoing – fully reviewed each area by May 2023	Full review undertaken in August 2023. Budget implications being reviewed.
Changing Work Environments	Council is aiming for all full time staff to be issued with at least 1 or more individual devices to better enable connectivity of our workforce.	Business Manager Innovation and Technology	December 2024	90% achieved.

## Workforce Profile Update

### General Statistics

	2022	2023
Number of Employees (headcount inc cas.)	375	405
Average Age of Employees	45.13	44.4
Percentage of Employees over 55 years old	30.40%	29.63%
Average Length of Service	9.3 years	7.5 years
Total Full Time Equivalent	315.00	315.57
Staff Turnover Rate	8%	11%

### Employees by Directorate

	2022	2023
Executive Services	12.27%	5.93%
Corporate & Community Services	25.33%	30.62%
Planning & Development	9.60%	9.38%
Operations	34.13%	38.77%
Utilities	18.67%	15.31%

### Gender Profile

	2022	2023
Male	52.53%	48.15%
Female	47.47%	51.85%

## Age Profile

	2022	2023
<19 years	1.87%	3.70%
20-24 years	6.40%	5.93%
25-29 years	8.00%	7.90%
30-34 years	9.60%	9.38%
35-39 years	12.27%	11.85%
40-44 years	10.13%	10.12%
45-49 years	7.47%	8.89%
50-54 years	13.87%	12.59%
55-59 years	13.07%	14.32%
60-64 years	10.93%	11.11%
65+ years	6.40%	4.20%

### Generation Profile

	2022	2023
Baby Boomers - Born between 1946 - 1964	21.87%	18.52%
Generation X - Born between 1965 - 1979	34.40%	35.56%
Generation Y - Born between 1980 - 1994	31.73%	31.36%
Generation Z - Born between 1995 - 2009	12.00%	14.57%
Alpha - Born Between 2010 - 2024	0.00%	0.00%

## Length of Service

	2022	2023
0-4 years	41.87%	54.57%
5-9 years	24.00%	18.77%
10-14 years	8.27%	5.43%
15-19 years	9.60%	6.67%
20-24 years	6.67%	5.93%
25-29 years	4.27%	3.21%
30-34 years	3.47%	3.70%
35-39 years	1.33%	1.23%
40+ years	0.53%	0.49%

## Position Types

	2022	2023
Full Time	63.42%	57.27%
Part Time	5.23%	12.08%
Contract	1.90%	2.01%
Temporary	0.71%	1.12%
Casual	28.74%	27.52%

## Location Profile

	2022	2023
Staff living in LGA	90.40%	91.11%
Staff living outside of LGA	9.60%	8.89%

## Management Gender Profile

	2022	2023
Males in management roles	42.86%	38.10%
Females in management roles	52.38%	52.38%
Vacant management roles	4.76%	9.52%

## Diversity Profile

	2022	2023
Staff identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	2.67%	1.73%
Staff from a non-English speaking background	2.40%	3.21%
Staff identifying as having a disability	1.60%	1.48%

# Organisational Structure

