



# Bathurst Regional Council

## WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

JULY 2022 – JUNE 2026

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## 1. Background Bathurst Regional Council

Bathurst is a unique heritage city, Australia's oldest inland European settlement, proclaimed by Governor Lachlan Macquarie in 1815. It is also the traditional home to the Wiradjuri people.

Our challenge, as a Council, and as a community, is to balance the legacy of the past, our history and our heritage with our desire to succeed, the desire to grow and offer new opportunities, creating a vibrant regional community.

Council plays an important role in setting the future direction for our community, especially as we have responsibility for water supply and sewerage infrastructure for our region. Among our many roles is to identify opportunities, plan for the future and deliver facilities and services for residents both now and for decades to come. The Workforce Management Plan is one of the key documents underpinning our Community Strategic Plan (CSP). The CSP reflects the community's aspirations for the next two decades. Where we would like to see our community positioned, and what we would like to see our community look like, form the basis of the Plan.

Council plays a key role in delivering on these aspirations. Our investment in major capital works programs from our current Smart Cities program to planning for a fourth Macquarie River crossing and new water infrastructure will help set the foundations for future growth and development in our city.

Our community has identified the following infrastructure projects as their top 15:

1. Water security
2. Roads maintenance or upgrade
3. Footpaths in subdivisions
4. Renewable energy projects
5. Basketball stadium/Multipurpose centre
6. Public amenities (e.g. public toilets, BBQ's, seating)
7. Parking (including multi level)
8. Hereford St upgrade
9. Tree planting activities
10. Bathurst museum (The shared history of Bathurst story)
11. More parks & open spaces
12. Street trees
13. Free sporting facilities (e.g basketball courts, pump track)
14. Security of air services / upgrades
15. Open space maintenance

We are planning and investing to meet the needs of our community today and ensuring that we are putting resources into what will be required into the future to support the changing requirements of a vibrant region. To achieve this, Council will continue to work with a variety of stakeholders, our community, and other tiers of government to lay the foundations to deliver on the objectives of the CSP.

Bathurst Regional Council's Workforce Management Plan forms a critical part of Council's Resourcing Strategy, providing a framework for aligning decisions around our human resources to ensure the CSP objectives can be achieved.





## 2. Executive Summary

This Workforce Management Plan should be read in conjunction with the Resourcing Strategy and Community Strategic Plan. This document supports the long-term workforce strategies for Council's workforce and human resource needs over the next four years.

Changes to community priorities and the local government industry require the Workforce Management Plan to be reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

Bathurst Regional Council aims to have the right people, with the right skills, doing the right jobs, at the right time working within a supportive and safe environment.

Key workforce challenges for Council include:

- meeting increasing community expectations around service-delivery and scope,
- improving alignment between our culture and strategy,
- supporting employees to transition to the future of work and the future workplace,
- attracting and retaining skills and talent in a more competitive labour market by becoming an employer of choice.
- catering for our aging workforce,
- addressing skills shortages, and
- improving productivity and organisational systems to ensure community value for money.

Workforce planning enables Council to respond to these changes in a deliberate and strategic manner. A high-level review of Council's workforce needs, both now and into the future has been considered as part of the development of this Plan. Council has a workforce of ~500 people and provides a range of traditional and non-traditional local government services. Our workforce ranges in age from under 20 to over 70 years. Council aims to have a supportive and inclusive workplace culture.

The components of this strategy and supporting action plan set out our ongoing commitment to deliver on:

- Supportive & Inclusive Workplace Culture
- Attraction, Retention and engagement of our people
- Equal Employment Opportunity through the employee lifecycle
- Fostering Leadership and strong Internal Communication
- Ongoing Employee Learning and Development
- Employee Recognition
- Employee Health and Wellbeing

While many actions arising in this document identify the People, Culture & Safety team as responsible for system development & implementation, all employees have a role to play in ensuring that outcomes are realised.

As part of our consultation process the Workforce Management Plan has been reviewed by Council's Consultative Committee and the feedback is incorporated. I endorse this Plan and encourage all to read the Workforce Management Plan and engage where possible in its implementation.

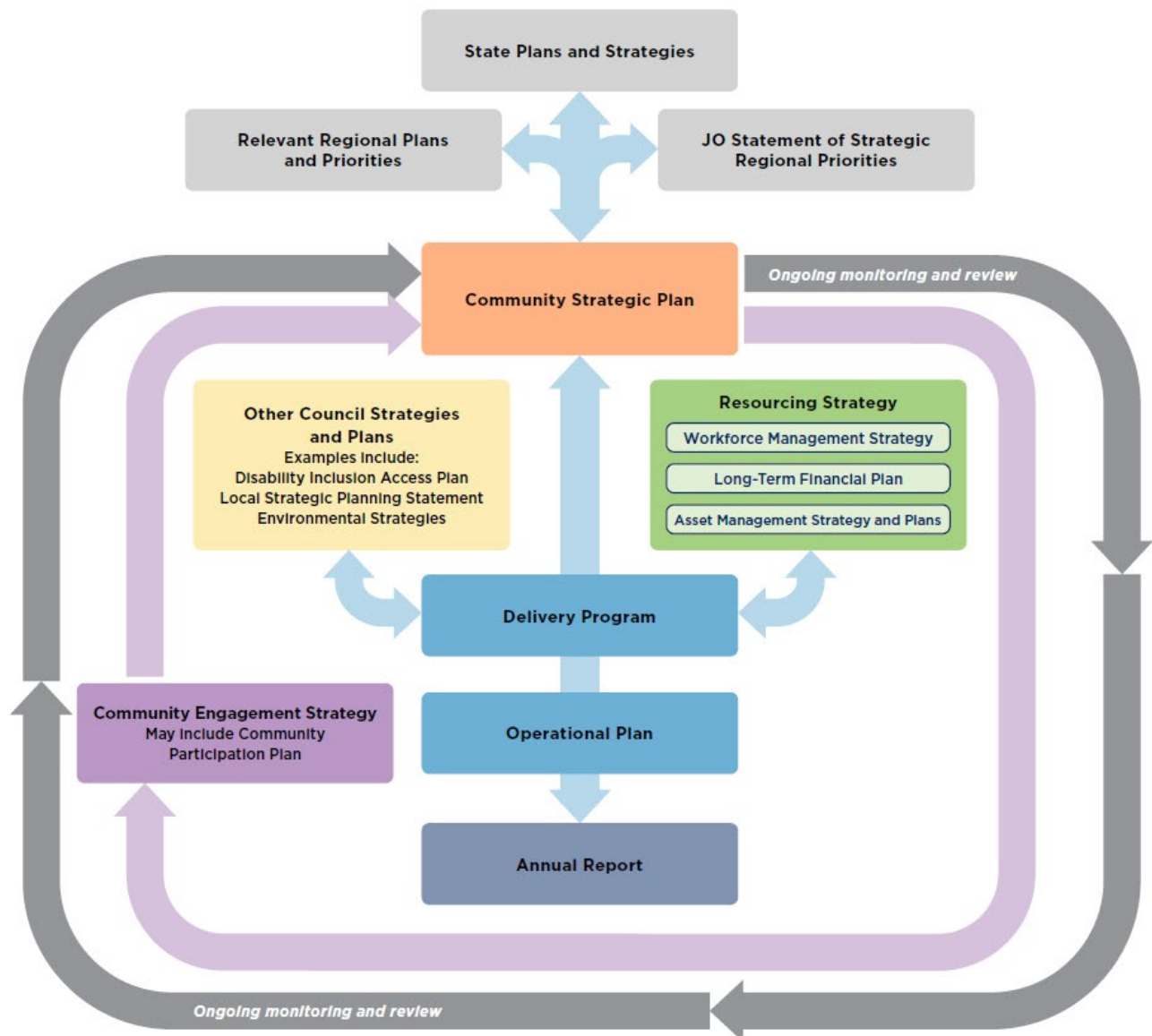


David Sherley  
General Manager

### 3. Integrated planning and reporting

The NSW Government requires all councils to prepare a suite of documents to satisfy the reporting outcomes within the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Framework.

The framework is shown in the diagram below.



Workforce Planning refers to effectively managing workforce demand and supply. It is the process used to align business needs by identifying current and future human resource needs.

Workforce planning must consider future needs of our workforce in accordance with the service delivery expectations for the community. Workforce planning also assists Council to develop solutions to potential challenges such as skill shortages, an ageing workforce, succession planning, managing work and family considerations, as well as equity and diversity issues.

The Workforce Management Plan aims to realise a culture which not only attracts and retains talented employees but provides a productive and harmonious working environment which will lead to greater efficiencies and outcomes for the community.

Effective workforce planning ensures that the community's strategic goals – as expressed in the CSP– will be achieved. The development of an effective workforce strategy will enable Council to focus on the medium and long term, while providing a framework for dealing with immediate challenges in a consistent way.

The workforce strategy aims to provide Council with the people best able to inform its strategic direction, develop innovative approaches and deliver appropriate services effectively and efficiently. The approach taken to develop the Workforce Management Plan has been based on the Office of Local Government's "Steps for Workforce Management Planning."

#### **4. Bathurst Regional Council Workforce Planning and Development Process**

The Workforce Management Plan (WMP) focuses on retaining and developing existing employees, as well as attracting new employees, to ensure an organisation has the right number of people, with the right skills and attitudes, in the right jobs, at the right time. The WMP details Council's strategic approach to workforce development, whilst the outcomes of our workforce planning are detailed in the resourcing strategy.

The WMP defines the matters, evidence and strategies required to deliver a sustainable workforce, capable of supporting the challenges set out in the CSP, whilst maintaining high quality services for our community into the future.

In summary, Bathurst Regional Council's Workforce Management Plan will:

- enable leaders to effectively deliver required outcomes;
- identify skills needed now and in the future;
- organise the workforce for efficient and effective service delivery;
- establish fair and equitable governance arrangements for the workforce;
- provide a framework for workforce support and development (training/learning & development and employee assistance programs); and,
- align with the four-year timeframe of the Council's Delivery Program.

Changing needs of the community, increased responsibilities of Local Government and cost-shifting from the Federal & NSW Government's mean that services currently provided and expected by the community are different to those provided 10 years ago. It is likely that the services provided and expected in 50 years' time will be different again to those the Council is presently delivering. Workforce planning enables Council to respond to these changes in a planned, strategic manner, to ensure Council continues to deliver levels of service consistent with community expectations.

The Workforce Management Plan addresses areas such as:

- creating a supportive and safe workplace culture;
- identifying & developing future leaders;
- managing our ageing workforce;
- succession planning;
- how to provide opportunities to create and retain positions for local young people;
- incentives and other programs that will support Council to be an employer of choice;
- learning and professional development;
- performance management of staff;
- recruitment strategies to fill skills gaps; and,
- workforce equity, diversity and inclusion.



## 5. Organisational Context

NSW councils are diverse in geographical size, population and cultural mix, rates of growth and functions performed. Many are significant local employers in their regions, offering jobs in a wide range of occupations. Most councils face similar workforce challenges as they compete for labour drawn from within and outside their local areas.

Within the local government industry there continues to be strong competition for key professional appointments such as qualified trades people, building surveyors, town planners, engineers and early childhood teachers.

Future workforce challenges facing NSW Councils, including Bathurst Regional Council, are as follows:

- Ageing Workforce;
- Uncertainty surrounding local government reform;
- Skills shortages across a number of professional areas;
- Sustainability of local government;
- Limitations in leadership capability;
- Gender imbalance in senior roles;
- Lack of skills and experience in workforce planning;
- Lack of workforce trend data;
- Difficulty in recruiting employees;
- Lack of cultural diversity.

In addition to the above, other challenges and opportunities that need to be considered are:

- Employee expectations around more flexible work practices;
- Increasing demand for better work life balance;
- Differing generational expectations;
- Reduced expiration time of knowledge and skills;
- Trends towards limited tenure (i.e. time limited contracts).



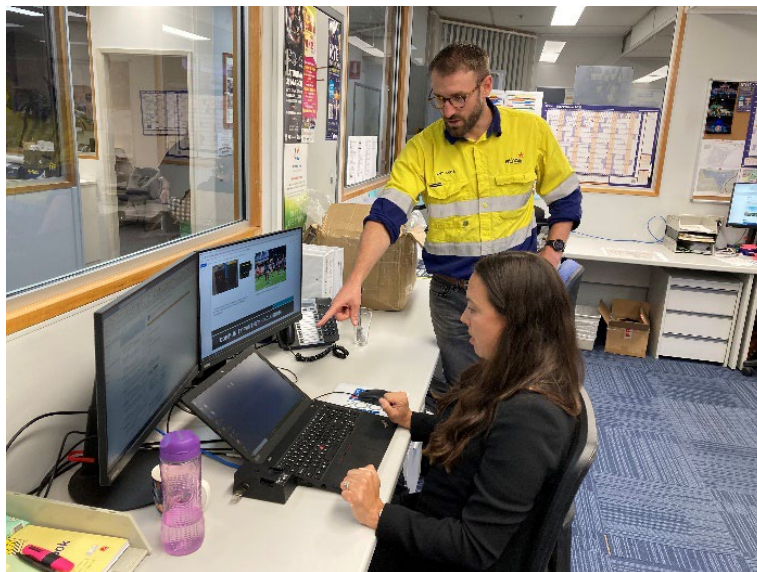
## 6. Local Government Environment

The NSW Local Government Workforce Strategy 2021-2031 is designed to futureproof the challenges faced by NSW based local government, and to move the sector towards a more sustainable workforce through retention, attraction and development at a time when Australia is confronted by decreasing supply and an increasing demand for skilled workers.

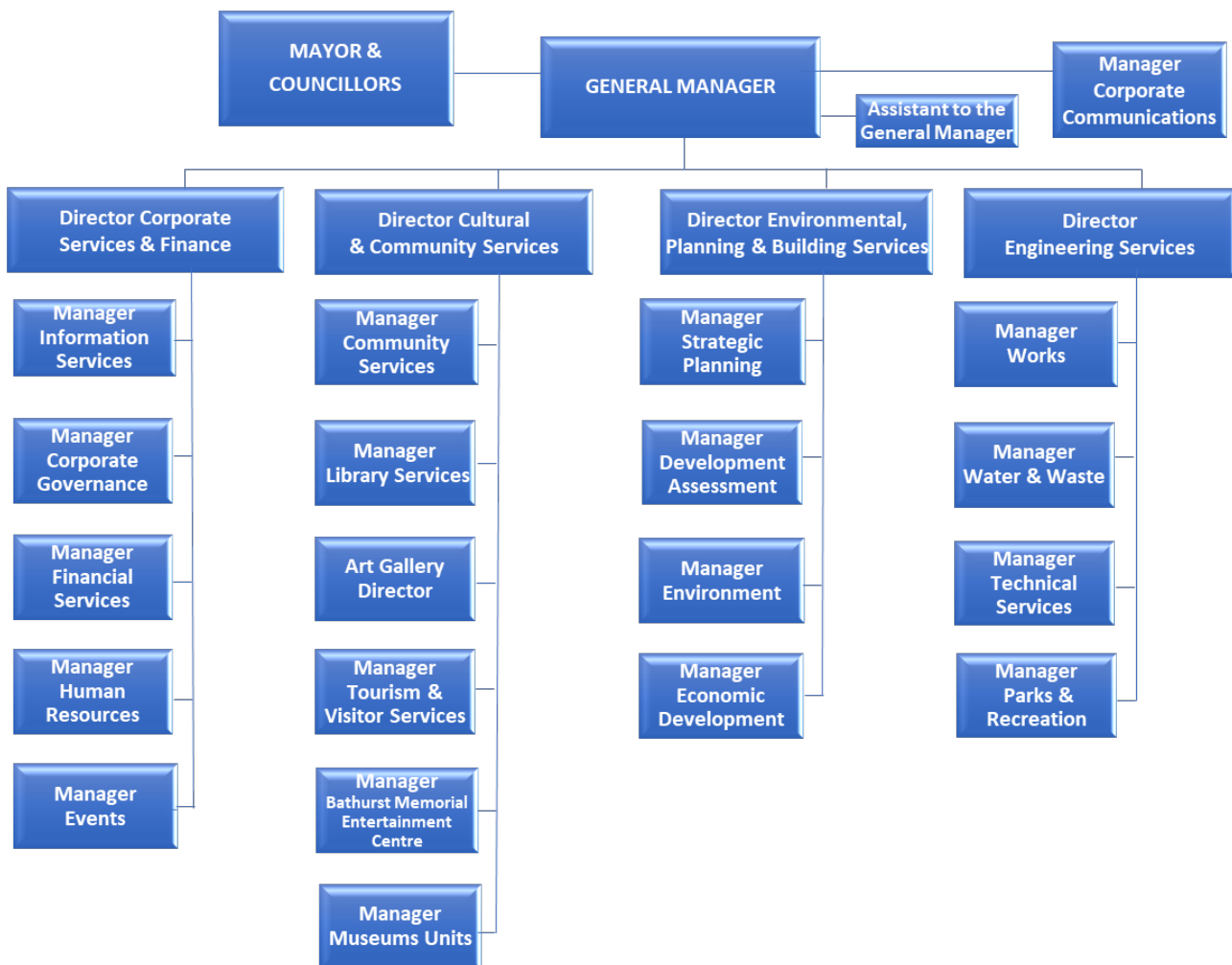
Local governments are often significant local employers in their region and require a diverse workforce that encompasses a wide range of occupations. Without effective local governments, local economies and communities struggle to operate, especially in regional Australia. In addition, as the functions of local government increase and expand, workforce capacity, capability and innovation become even more critical.

Eight (8) key themes are identified within the NSW Strategy. They are also of relevance to Council's Workforce Management Plan.

1. Improving workforce planning and development
2. Promoting Local Government as a Place-Based Employer of Choice
3. Retaining and Attracting a Diverse Workforce
4. Creating a Contemporary Workplace
5. Investing in Skills
6. Improving Productivity and Leveraging Technology
7. Maximising Management and Leadership
8. Implementation and Collaboration



## 7. Bathurst Regional Council Organisation Structure and Diversity of roles



### COUNCIL FUNCTIONS

- Business Services
- Communications
- Cultural & Community Services
- Engineering & Civil Construction
- Asset Management
- Environmental & Regulatory Services
- Finance
- People, Culture & Safety
- Information Technology
- Civic Leadership & Governance

- Parks & Recreation
- Strategic Planning
- Development Assessment
- Early Childhood
- Property Services
- Tourism
- Economic Development
- Events
- Water & Waste

## 8. Bathurst Regional Council Vision, Mission & Values

Council's vision is for, A vibrant and innovative region that values our heritage, environment, culture, diversity and strong economy

Council's mission being for equitable development and maintenance of services provided for the general health and well-being of the citizens of the Bathurst Region and the adjustment of these services to meet changing needs.

In order to achieve our Vision and Mission we strive to adhere to the key principles of our Code of Conduct, as follows:

1. Integrity
2. Leadership
3. Selflessness
4. Objectivity
5. Accountability
6. Openness
7. Honesty
8. Respect

All employees at Bathurst Regional Council are accountable to conduct themselves appropriately.

Our values are critical in driving our Council forward in the right direction, building our culture and empowering and engaging our people.





## 9. Workplace Culture

Council is committed to building a work environment that strives for and rewards high performance, maximises flexibility and fosters employee professional growth and development. In support of its key values Council is developing an Employee Engagement Program (EEP) that will incorporate the following principles:

- a) Clear and Regular Communication – Through regular opportunities for open and constructive communication between employees and management, the EEP provides a basis for building a shared understanding between management and employees regarding the employee's role at Council, and performance expectations.
- b) Effective Work Planning and Employee Training & Development – The EEP acknowledges that planning and employee development are two primary means to improve individual productivity and Council performance.
- c) Feedback, Recognition and Reward – The EEP will guide management in providing constructive feedback regarding performance and give recognition to work that is of a high standard.
- d) Fairness and Transparency – The EEP will guide supervisors and managers in objectively and fairly making recommendations and decisions for rewarding high performance and addressing below standard performance.





## 10. Work/Life Balance

Council recognises the need to create and support a healthy work/life balance for our people. Initiatives such as the Transition to Retirement scheme, Self-funded Leave program, Health & Wellbeing initiatives together with our flexible working arrangements, are key in fostering this approach. A number of initiatives provided are as follows:

- General RDO for employees based on a three-week cycle;
- Flexible working arrangements and variations where practicable e.g. in relation to childcare; phased retirements, part time employment;
- Earlier starting time for the Recreation and Rural teams in summer;
- Employee Assistance program;
- Subsidised Gym Membership program;
- Flu Vaccination program;
- Blood Bank program;
- Employee Health assessment program;
- Lung bus screening service; and,
- Promoting safety and wellbeing initiatives (Posters, Webinars, toolbox talks etc) throughout the year (Anti Bullying, R U OK day etc).



## 11. Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)

Council is committed to equal opportunity in employment and affirmative action through the employee lifecycle. This is achieved by Council:

1. Promoting equal opportunity in all aspects of the Council's activities,
2. Aiming to eliminate unjustified direct and indirect discrimination on the grounds of;
  - race, colour, national or ethnic origin, nationality;
  - sex or gender, sexual preference, marital status, pregnancy, status as a parent or carer;
  - religious or political belief or activity, industrial activity;
  - age, physical features, disability, medical record;
  - personal association with a person who is identified by reference to any of the listed attributes, and
  - on any other ground which the Executive Leadership Team shall, after due consideration, determine to be a basis of improper discriminatory practice,
3. Creating an environment where all employees are able to work effectively, without fear of discrimination or harassment,
4. Using of non-discriminatory, inclusive language in all official documents,
5. Establishing appropriate practices in employment to overcome disadvantage,
6. Ensuring that all employees have reasonable access to benefits and services,
7. Providing effective mechanisms to resolve harassment and other complaints of discriminatory treatment,
8. Providing and maintaining programs and services that reflect fair and reasonable opportunity, and consideration for all customers, participants and employees, regardless of race, colour, religion, gender, physical disability, or the prevailing community values, and
9. Ensuring that legislative obligations imposed from time to time are appropriately addressed by Council.



## 12. Employee Health & Wellbeing

Council's focus is to establish, promote and maintain the physical and mental health and wellbeing of all employees through workplace practices, and encourage staff to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing. Council recognises that the mental & physical health and wellbeing of our employees is key to Council's success and sustainability.

A full review of our Work Health Safety (WHS) Management System is currently underway. We have recently further automated our systems and facilitated the use of mobile computing technology which will provide employee 'instant' access to safety documents, data and systems through the introduction of the innovative Safety Vault. Council have also implemented the Zoleo system to provide safer work environments for employees required to work in remote areas.

Restructuring of our Human Resources team to provide dedicated resource to Training & Development and increased proactive support to the WHS and Recover at Work programs has enabled forward planning around renewal/recertification of mandatory qualifications. This in turn increases the cost effectiveness of the training and lessens the impact on productivity.

In an effort to improve employee health and wellbeing, Council promotes a number of key events and initiatives throughout the year. Employees are invited to join group activities which are coordinated by the Human Resources team. Council has an ongoing commitment to its employees' wellbeing at work which is supported by the Health & Wellbeing Policy.

As part of our Health & Wellbeing Program Council also offers annual flu injections, lung screening, medical health assessments with a proactive approach taken to health & wellbeing education, active participation in RUOK and other Mental Health initiatives which have yielded a positive take up by employees.

A proactive and supportive approach has been implemented to support injured workers recover at work.



### **13. Bathurst Regional Council Workforce Opportunities and Challenges**

Council employees work across a number of locations within the Bathurst Region and in a diverse range of occupations. Our workforce reflects a mix of new and old knowledge and the smooth transition of ideas, knowledge and practices as Council continues with ongoing organisational renewal. Given Council's ageing workforce, the effective sharing of Council's existing knowledge, continuous learning, and cultural exchange to enhance operational efficiency through the proper use of knowledge assets intellectual capital, is imperative.

#### **Influences**

In developing an effective Workforce Management Plan, it is critical to identify and understand current and future internal and external factors that may have an impact on the workforce. The 'influences' identified below will be monitored as part of the annual review of this plan to ensure our response to workforce planning remains effective.

#### **External**

- Current and future labour market
- Current and future economic environment
- Operational and strategic workings of the Local Government environment
- Local Government reform
- The demographics within our Local Government Area
- Legislation and regulatory requirements
- NSW Local Government Workforce Strategy 2021-2031
- Community expectations of service delivery
- Cost shifting
- Industry trends & benchmarks
- Work life Balance
- Flexible working arrangements
- Pandemics

#### **Internal**

- Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program & Operational Plans
- Resourcing Strategy
- Learning & Development Plan
- Equal Employment Opportunity Policy
- Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP)
- Aboriginal Commitment Strategy (ACS)
- Ageing Workforce Strategy
- Succession Planning
- Recover at work program
- WHS Management System
- Organisational Risk management
- Corporate Sustainability Action Plan
- Employee Engagement Program
- Employee facilities
- Workforce metrics



## Key Challenges

Council is facing a number of challenges, both now and into the future. These are predominantly related to the nature of Local Government, the diversity of our organisation and expectations of the community.

Many of these challenges will have an impact on this Plan with the current key issues identified below:

1. *Ageing workforce* – As identified by an analysis of Council's current workforce, approximately one half of our employees are aged 45 years or older with a significant number indicating their intention to leave Council within the next 5-year period. The biggest risk to Council is therefore associated with the underutilisation or loss of knowledge critical to organisational performance. Knowledge loss; impairs performance and results, achievement of plans and objectives. It is therefore imperative that we are vigilant in addressing issues associated with our ageing workforce in order to minimise its impact on our business and operational requirements.
2. *Leadership* – Leadership has been identified as an opportunity for improvement, particularly in regard to communication, consistency in decision making and accountability. In order to achieve and maintain an engaged workforce it is important that appropriate strategies are implemented in order to further develop our leaders. In addition to this, it is acknowledged that there is a notable gender imbalance of employees occupying key leadership roles.
3. *Skill shortages* – The ageing workforce continues to expand, especially in areas that are already significantly impacted. Existing areas of skill shortages and tight labour supply in jobs such as civil engineering, accountants, information technology, early childhood, qualified trades (plumbing, mechanics, electricians) are likely to become even more constricted.
4. *Multigenerational workforce* – Council's workforce is currently made up of four distinct and unique generations requiring a thorough understanding of intergenerational differences to ensure effective employee attraction, retention, engagement and management, whilst being mindful that generational workgroup cohorts create the culture of an organisation.
5. *Employee Engagement & Workforce sustainability* – A highly skilled and sustainable workforce is critical to the effective delivery of Council services. Current and future limitations on Council's financial resources, together with issues surrounding ageing assets and infrastructure, create a significant challenge with respect to the development and maintenance of our workforce, so as to ensure the expectations of the community continue to be achieved. Recruitment and retention is forecast to become more competitive in areas critical to our business. Council must ensure it is primarily positioned in the employment market. Innovating in key areas to attract the right people into the business and retain critical talent, with a greater focus on how we value, lead and develop our workforce will be paramount. Ensuring our workforce is able to meet core business activities and community expectations for service delivery.
6. *Continuous Improvement* – Increasing community expectations and the complexity of community needs result in an added emphasis on strategy and management of resources. Council's workforce faces increasing demands to deliver results and the need to make sound decisions based on guiding priorities.



## **Recruitment in the Bathurst Region**

Our people are the key to providing superior service levels to the community now and into the future. As such, a major focus is employee attraction and retention strategies. Although Council operates under a prescribed salary system, it offers many other benefits including lifestyle changes and the opportunity for flexible working arrangements.

There are several skills shortage areas for Council which will form part of our attraction strategies including attracting suitably skilled and qualified employees in the areas of engineering, building inspection, environmental health, trades and planning. This has been particularly difficult in a market driven economy primarily by salary competition in these areas e.g. between city and regional salaries and between the public and private sectors.

Council's Equal Employment Opportunity Policy, in accordance with equity and diversity standards, promotes equal employment opportunity principles through its workplaces and operations, throughout the employee lifecycle.

## **Skill Gap Shortages**

Many councils are grappling with a shortage of key occupations with engineers and town planners, building surveyors, environmental health officers, accountants, human resources professionals and project managers topping the list of most in-demand occupations. In regional areas, qualified tradespeople and other professional staff are also proving a challenge to attract and retain, with the competition from State Government and the mining Industry.

A significant shortage of apprentices to meet future skill needs must also be addressed. Primary reasons for the skills shortage identified are:

1. Inability to compete with the private sector (in regional areas also State Government) on remuneration
2. Lack of suitably qualified and experienced applicants
3. High demand across the labour market for specific occupations
4. Shortage of skilled locals – limited talent pool
5. Remoteness – hard to recruit skilled and experienced employee
6. Lack of opportunity for career progression particularly in small councils
7. Regional/remote location – lack of facilities/housing.

Challenges around training have also been identified:

- Unmet training needs arising from the high cost of training and lack of training available locally.
- Insufficient analysis or forecasting of changing roles/skills requirements arising from digital disruption and technology changes.

Competition for skilled employees is expected to increase as the Bathurst Region grows, requiring a stronger focus on attraction and retention. Accordingly, there is a need to review Council's salary structure for some positions in order to be competitive in the open market.

## 14. Workforce Analysis

In planning our workforce needs for the future, it is critical to identify and understand factors influencing our external environment, and therefore, impacting on Council's workforce. Scanning the external environment entails obtaining information on the business environments in which Council is operating. It is a process of considering what will affect Council's ability to provide services to meet community needs.

Additional information about Bathurst's community profile and lifestyle facts can also be found in Council's Community Strategic Plan.

### Coronavirus (COVID-19)

The current coronavirus pandemic has had a major impact on our workforce and operations. While it is too early to determine its full impact on our workforce the following impacts are already occurring:

- Employee expectations where they can be supported operationally to work from home and the need to be more agile
- High level of resources, especially in Management, Information Technology and Human Resources, focused on supporting employee and supervisors on Coronavirus workforce matters to ensure delivery of essential services to the community continue
- Impact on employee mental health and greater use of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
- Social distancing impacts on changes to work activities and employee facilities. (including the office environment)
- Technology impacts with more people working remotely
- Increase in use of sick leave and special leave
- Impact on revenue where some workplaces have been required to be closed and additional costs associated with hygiene.

Medium term impacts may also include reduced employee turnover and more applications for job vacancies with an expected increase in unemployment.

### Local Labour Market

The Bathurst Region has a broad economic base, comprising manufacturing, construction, health & social services, education, service industries, finance and agriculture industries, and additionally provides services at the Federal, State and Local Government levels.

A key challenge for the Bathurst Region moving forward, will be managing its rapid growth particularly given Council's role as one of the major land developers within this region. The population growth has been further escalated as a result of the COVID -19 pandemic.

An increase in employment in construction, manufacturing and the mining sector, as well as in public administration roles in government, health and education services has increased competition for skilled employees. \*The Department of Working and Business regional employment projections estimate that employment in government, education, health, administration and professional and scientific roles will continue to increase across Central NSW.

Coupled with increasing retirements due to our ageing workforce, Council will need to ensure that it is be able to effectively compete with other industries to successfully attract and retain talent.

\*[nsw.gov.au/working-and-business](https://nsw.gov.au/working-and-business)

## Future of Work

Traditional models of business will continue to be disrupted due to the COVID-19 pandemic for some time. The speed at which our residents will consume new technology, and their expectations about the way we provide services, will also continue to grow.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development estimates that as a result of these technological changes 13 percent of existing jobs will not exist in 15-20 years time, and 32 percent will be significantly changed.

The types of technologies being rolled-out across government, or in the pipeline, include:

- Planning e-portal
- Virtual assistants that can answer most basic inquiries
- Smart water meters and lighting
- Autonomous equipment such as lawn mowers
- Cloud computing
- Virtual library initiatives
- GPS tracking of animals

Council needs to continue to review and implement new forms of technology and support our employees with training and confidence building in the use of these technologies to improve employee engagement and service delivery and efficiency in response to community expectation.

Council has an obligation to support and grow employee's skills for the future, as the nature of their work changes. In the context of increased competition for skilled labour, Council must ensure that we identify those roles that are likely to be impacted, identify the new capabilities employees will need and develop training and development programs to ensure employees are equipped to thrive in a changing workplace. This includes evaluating new organisational models and team-based approaches that allow employees to build experience and knowledge outside their traditional areas of expertise.

## Diversity

A high proportion of the Bathurst Region's population (91.4%) is Australian born; this is higher than the regional NSW and NSW proportions (88.8% and 72.4% respectively).\*

The majority of overseas born persons within the Bathurst Region are from England, New Zealand, India, Philippines and China (in order).\*

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population of the Bathurst Regional Council area comprises 5.4% of the population; this is significantly higher than the NSW and Australia rates (2.9 and 2.8% respectively). School participation, completions and employment in the Indigenous community all remain significantly below the rate for non-Indigenous people.\*

5.0% of the population in the Bathurst Regional Council area reported needing help in their day-to-day lives due to disability.\*

The proportion of Indigenous people, people with disabilities, people from non-English speaking backgrounds, migrant and LGBTQI residents is expected to grow reflecting the changing environment of industry and workforce composition. There is a potential risk that the Bathurst Regional Council is not realising the benefits of full economic participation of all its residents.

- <https://profile.id.com.au> 2016

Policies and action plans to encourage population distribution to regions and de-centralisation of services, in addition to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic will all drive increasing diversity within our region. Council is committed to both a DIAP, ACS and Ageing Community programs and where appropriate, these initiatives are also implemented as part of the Council workforce planning approaches. Council is committed to further develop and improve our inclusion strategies as well as to support a more diverse workforce and community.

## Climate Change

Climate change has had and will continue to have a significant impact on the Bathurst Region by increased costs for maintenance of infrastructure and the construction of new infrastructure. This is particularly important for Council given our significant role in the provision of water to our growing community, ensuring ongoing sustainability and productivity.

New emission reduction targets will be introduced, and price increases for energy will have a significant impact on Council's financial capacity. A strong focus on responsible energy management practices has already been implemented by Council and will continue as a Council priority.

To support our Region Council will need to be proactive in identifying new skills, technologies and innovations that will help the Council to improve the way we manage our water, waste, energy, finances and other responsibilities.



## **15. Capability Gap Analysis and supporting planned actions**

### **Capacity Gaps**

Over the life of this Plan, required staffing levels are anticipated to grow, as well as the changing of skills required.

### **Capability Gaps**

In addition to the capacity gaps, a number of capability gaps have been identified including; increase in tertiary qualified staff, increase in qualified trades staff, improved requirements in numeracy, literacy and technological skills and retention of knowledge.

### **Culture and Values**

Employee feedback identifies that longer term employees' awareness of the existing Council mission, vision and values is lower compared to those recently employed. Newer staff have a good understanding and awareness, as this is now promoted through the on-boarding and induction processes. Plans to better promote this across Council have now been initiated. It has also been identified that behaviours such as perceived lack of accountability, focus on improvement and an 'us and them' mentality that is inconsistent with those values needs to be addressed.

To ensure that Council fosters and promotes an organisational culture that aligns with Council's strategic objectives, and reflects best practice in contemporary leadership and management, a number of activities are being developed and implemented as outlined in the attached Action Plan.

### **Attraction and Retention**

The attraction and retention of Council's workforce is vital to the success of Council to satisfy Community expectations. Without suitable employees, particularly the right employees in terms of skills and aptitudes, Council would not be able to meet required business outcomes. It is imperative to attract, select and recruit appropriate employees, as well as retain and develop high performing employees.

The separation of employees, particularly employees with short periods of service, comes at a significant cost to Council, particularly considering recruitment, advertisement, on-boarding, induction and training costs (including the investment of employee hours to coordinate these activities).

When employees with considerable tenure leave the organisation there is additional risk surrounding the loss of corporate knowledge, the gap left behind and potential expectations on replacement employees.

This must be effectively managed across all Council departments, with the support of the Human Resources team. Improvements to the recruitment and on-boarding processes, performance appraisal process, learning & development planning, succession planning and the off-boarding interview process, including use of trend data are now being effectively used to improve Council's standing as an employer of choice within the Region.



## Leadership

The Bathurst Region has evolved over recent years into a major centre of excellence for education, food manufacturing and services. The management and leadership approaches that worked in a smaller Council organisation are no longer appropriate for a larger, regional, more complex and sophisticated Council. Employees expect to be engaged, they want better communication to understand the big picture, to work across multiple fields and have opportunities for structured career advancement.

To ensure that Council leaders of the future have the skills required for these responsibilities, Council is investing in its people to ensure that the leaders are supported to develop the capabilities and knowledge required for managing a modern workforce and organisation.



## Learning & Development

Council is committed to ensuring that all of their employees are trained and resourced to achieve the Council's vision, mission, purpose and objectives, as well as uphold Council's values in accordance with the position they occupy.

Succession Planning is an ongoing process that identifies necessary competencies, and then works to assess, develop, and retain a talent pool of employees, in order to ensure a continuity of leadership for all critical positions. Council's Employee Learning & Development Policy and Succession planning policies outlines Council's approach to this area.

Learning and development goals for each employee are assessed and consulted on each year as part of the annual performance appraisal process and linked to the Council Training Plan. This assists in ensuring compliance and improved WHS, Human Resources planning for the future needs, budgeting, career planning and succession planning to support development of our people as well.

The Council Training Plan details Council's approach and plans in relation to ongoing employee education, learning & development commitments. Training needs are identified, linked to role and responsibilities, with inputs related to career development identified through the annual performance appraisal process. This plan is reviewed and updated every two years.

Council is also working to improve tolerance and understanding, at all levels, to support diversity and inclusion within its workforce, as well as to develop mentoring programs and other learning & development initiatives for Managers, women into leadership roles, Indigenous people and others.

These actions are required to support future leaders to acquire the exposure, knowledge and skills to advance their careers within the Council. The need to better define career paths by introducing intermediate roles that bridge the gaps between management and leadership has also been identified.



## Recognition

Recognition is an important element of successful work practices and is known to have a strong positive influence on the engagement and satisfaction level of employees. Council is committed to employee recognition.

Employees respond positively to appreciation and recognition of not only their good work but the recognition of others good work. It reinforces that good work is valued, not only by immediate management but also publicly. When employees and their work are valued, satisfaction and productivity rise, and all employees are motivated to maintain or improve their good work.

As part of the Employee Engagement Program to be developed and rolled out across Council, the area of reward and recognition is being improved, with an emphasis on ongoing recognition outside the standard review process and length of services awards.



## 16. Strategy

### Strategy Development and Plans

The process of developing strategies and actions is as a result of the identification of issues, risks and gaps throughout the analysis stage. All of these considerations inform our approach to workforce management and in particular, ensuring we have the right number of people with the right capabilities and aptitudes to deliver effective operations and services to our community.

Strategies being developed and implemented to support the areas identified are detailed in specific policies and supporting action plans that continue to be developed as a part of this review process:

1. Appropriate Organisational Structure & Resourcing
2. WHS-Health & Wellbeing
3. Workplace Culture & Employee Engagement
4. Learning & Development
5. Workforce Diversity & Inclusion

**Note: This is a working document in line with a focus on ongoing continuous improvement.**

### Strategy Implementation

While many actions identify the Human Resources team as responsible for development and implementation, all employees have a role to play in ensuring that outcomes of Council's Workforce Management Plans and supporting initiatives are successfully developed and implemented.

### Monitor, Evaluate and Review

Detailed project plans identifying key milestones and completion timeframes have been developed (refer Appendix) for each Strategy defined within this document. These plans will be closely monitored, and progress reports will be provided to the Executive Leadership Team on a quarterly basis.

The monitoring, evaluation and review process is embedded into the annual workforce planning cycle. In the development of new actions, the actions from the previous year are reviewed and re included/improved if relevant. This stage also includes measuring effectiveness, determining success and reporting on key performance indicators.

Workforce Management Strategies are reviewed by the Human Resources Team during the annual budget preparation and amended to recognise any change in organisational needs and / or resources available to implement the annual actions.

The Workforce Management Plan will be reviewed by the Employee Consultative Committee on an annual basis to validate ongoing relevance and progress towards objectives and timeframes.