Workforce Plan

2013

Bathurst Regional Council
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revision</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Approved</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>November 2011</td>
<td>Human Resource Project Officer</td>
<td>General Manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>April 2013</td>
<td>Human Resources Project Officer</td>
<td>General Manager</td>
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Executive Summary

Council is a significant employer within the Bathurst Regional Local Government Area, employing 379 permanent staff members, and an extensive casual pool of employees.

Skill shortages nation wide combined with Council’s regional location has resulted in Council experiencing difficulties in securing professional, technical and specialist staff across a range of Council occupations.

Council recognises the challenge to not only attract employees, but to retain those employees in an increasingly tight labour market. Therefore the Workforce Plan must be able to cater for employee’ needs at various stages of their life and career.

Our employees play a vital role in enabling Council to carry out its responsibilities on behalf of residents and ratepayers from the Bathurst Region. Council appreciates and is committed to developing a highly skilled and dedicated workforce. Developing a framework to reinforce this commitment, will enable Council to maintain a quality workforce into the future.

The Bathurst Regional Council’s Workforce Plan, sets the business direction and workforce needs to build a sustainable workforce which is capable of ensuring continued delivery of services to the Bathurst Region to the year 2016.

Council’s workforce planning process is ongoing, and is designed to match workforce requirements and organisation objectives. It enables Council to set a direction and determine the future staffing levels required to meet these objectives.

There are a number of initiatives which have been outlined in this document which focus on attracting, retaining and developing a workforce which is able to deliver Council’s strategy over the next four years.
Workforce Plan Framework

The NSW Government recently introduced a new planning and reporting framework for local government in NSW. In order to meet the requirements of the Planning and reporting guidelines for local government in NSW, each Council must have a Resource Strategy. The Resource Strategy includes a Long Term Financial Plan, an Asset Management Plan and the Workforce Management Plan.

Council’s Vision

A vibrant regional centre that enjoys a rural lifestyle, the Bathurst Region achieves health and wellbeing through strengthening economic opportunities, planning for sustainable growth, protecting and enhancing our assets, and encouraging a supportive and inclusive community. A Region full of community spirit and shared prosperity.

Council’s Mission

The equitable development and maintenance of services provided for the general health and wellbeing of the citizens of the Bathurst Region and the adjustment of these services to meet changing needs.

What is Workforce Planning

Workforce planning is about forecasting and predicting trends, it is a process of continuous improvement shaping the workforce to ensure that it is capable of delivering its objectives now and into the future. It aims to identify gaps between present and future requirements and develop solutions to ensure Council can achieve its objectives. It is a crucial element in planning how to get the organisation from where it is now to where it needs to be in the future. It is the process to ensure there are sufficient people to carry out the organisation’s purpose. The objective is often stated as “the right people with the right skills in the right place at the right time”.

Benefits of Workforce Planning

The overall success of workforce planning will depend to a large extent on how effectively it can be integrated into Council. When effectively integrated the main benefits are:

- Appropriate number of staff required to meet future business needs are being recruited and developed
• Improved identification of staff development needs
• Increased job satisfaction
• Reduced skill shortages
• Appropriate staff turnover rates
• Reduced staffing costs by correcting skill imbalances before they become unmanageable and expensive
• Identify potential skill or resource shortfalls and take steps to address these
• Provide improved career development opportunities
• Develop workforce skills that grow over time
• Make staffing decisions to provide services based on strategic priorities

The Workforce Planning Cycle

Developing a Workforce Plan is based on the following model:
Step 1: Workforce analysis

This involves establishing a clear understanding of the organisation’s direction, objectives, activities and the internal and external factors that influence current and future labour demand and supply.

Step 2: Forecast needs

This includes identifying the key skills needed to meet Council’s strategic objectives. It involves, analysing Council’s current organisational capability to meet future requirements.

Step 3: Analysis of gaps

This involves forecasting what the future workforce demand will be and comparing this to the forecasted supply.

Step 4: Develop strategies

Council will develop strategies to move from the current to the forecasted situations. The strategies will look at all aspects of the workforce including: skills gaps, the ageing workforce, recruiting and retaining staff.

Step 5: Implement strategies

When the strategies are determined, Council will implement them according to priority and necessity.

Step 6: Monitor, review and evaluate

The workforce strategy will be reviewed annually.
Population

The population of the Bathurst Region is predicted to grow in the next 20 years. Current predictions estimate the population of Bathurst will increase by more than 5,000 residents in the next 10 years, to 44,000. With a long term estimate of a population of 51,000 by 2030 (Reference 1).

![Forecast population, Bathurst Regional Council](chart)

Age

As the population of Bathurst increases, the number of residents within each age band will also increase. The most significant of these growth areas will be an increase of approximately 2500 residents above the age of 50 by 2020 compared to current figures (Reference 1).
Comparison of the age of BRC staff against the age of the overall workforce in Bathurst
The graph above compares the percentage of residents and Bathurst Council staff who fall into each age band. The graph clearly demonstrates that the number of staff Council employs within each age band is reflective of the number within the wider Bathurst community.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

Residents who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders account for 4.3% of the total population in Bathurst (Reference 2).

Country of birth

The 2011 census identified 8.3% of the Bathurst population as having been born outside of Australia. This rate is low compared to the average Regional NSW rate of 10.8% of residents being born outside of Australia. Bathurst has experienced an increase of 0.5% of the population being born outside Australia between 2006 and 2011, the NSW Regional rate also increased by this same amount. Immigrants from the United Kingdom account for the highest number of residents in Bathurst, with New Zealand coming in second (Reference 2).
Occupations

Bathurst residents are employed in a wide range of industries. The 2006 Census identified the three most popular industry sectors in Bathurst as being: retail trade, manufacturing and education and training. Combined these industries employ 32.6% of the Region’s workforce (Reference 2).

The unemployment rate in Bathurst in May 2012 was 4.7% compared to 4.9% across all of NSW and 5.1% Australia wide.

The following graph shows the employer industries in Bathurst. Council employs staff in a wide range of occupations which fall into a number of the different employer industries listed.
Employer industries in Bathurst

- Inadequately described or Not stated
- Other Services
- Arts and Recreation Services
- Health Care and Social Assistance
- Education and Training
- Public Administration and Safety
- Administrative and Support Services
- Professional, Scientific and Technical Services
- Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services
- Financial and Insurance Services
- Information Media and Telecommunications
- Transport, Postal and Warehousing
- Accommodation and Food Services
- Wholesale Trade
- Retail Trade
- Construction
- Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services
- Manufacturing
- Mining
- Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing

Number of employees (%)
Departmental responsibilities

Council delivers services to the community through four departments reporting to the General Manager. Each of the four departments comprises of sections responsible for particular activities. A summary of these activities is outlined below:

The General Manager’s Unit: provides a communication link between Council, its ratepayers and the senior staff; is responsible for the day to day running of the Council, including the control of all staff; is responsible for the implementation of Council’s adopted budget and management plan. Support is also provided to the Mayoral function in the form of secretarial and mayoral event planning.

Engineering Services: responsible for the maintenance of parks, sporting fields, gardens and playgrounds; Water and waste functions including water filtration and waste water management. waste collection, and sewer and drain maintenance. The construction and maintenance of roads, footpaths, including the technical aspects. Management of Council assets and property development, including Mt Panorama.

Cultural & Community Services: Strategic Planning for community and cultural services. These services are generally the public face of Council, they include the library, art gallery, Australian Fossil and Mineral Museum, National Motor Racing Museum and Kelso Community Centre, as well as children’s services.

Corporate Services & Finance: delivers a wide range of services including, finance, events, information services and GIS, governance, human resources and long term financial planning.

Environmental, Planning & Building Services: Looks after the development applications, strategic planning, the environmental matters, economic development services and regulatory and enforcement functions.
Bathurst Regional Council is classified as an urban regional medium sized council. It has a diverse workforce employing staff in a wide range of occupations, requiring a large range of skill sets.

About our staff

As can be seen in the figures below, Council has a substantial workforce having a total headcount of 462 which accounts for every staff member, whether they be full-time, part-time or casual as of 6 November 2012. Council’s staff numbers have remained reasonably static for a number of years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Headcount</td>
<td>462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full time equivalent staff</td>
<td>347</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent staff</td>
<td>379</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Employment Status

Council’s workforce is made up of full time, part time and casual employees to meet operational objectives. This combination of employees allows flexibility to meet the changing needs of the community. Staffing levels as of 6 November 2012 were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Number of staff</th>
<th>Percentage of staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full time</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>69.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part time</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated above, 81.9% of Council staff are employed on a permanent basis, whilst casual staff make up the remaining 18.1% of the workforce. A large proportion of our staff are employed in a full time capacity (69.1%), whilst 12.8% are employed on a part time basis.
Gender profile

Currently the gender ratio of our permanent workforce is made up of 37.9% female staff and 62.1% male staff. This in part is reflective of the nature of a large number of Council positions which undertake work that is operational and physically demanding. This type of work tends to attract more males than females and this is demonstrated in our demographic figures. In comparison the gender profile across council’s in NSW is 40% female and 60% male (Reference 10). Conversely, Council’s casual workforce is made up of 64% females and 36% males, this majority is reflective of the ABS statistics on casual staff whereby females dominate, with 55% of casual staff being female, nation wide (Reference 9).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Permanent Length of service</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-5 years</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 years</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15 years</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20 years</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20+ years</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>379</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Casual                      | 53     | 30   | 83    |

In comparison, the gender profile of the general population within the Bathurst Regional Council area is 50% female and 50% male, showing that Council significantly employs more males than the community average (Reference 2).

Age profile

Our permanent workforce is spread across all age ranges, as outlined below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age bracket</th>
<th>Number of staff</th>
<th>Percentage of staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15-19 years</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-29 years</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39 years</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age bracket</td>
<td>Number of staff</td>
<td>Percentage of staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-44 years</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-49 years</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-54 years</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-59 years</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-64 years</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+ years</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
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Looking at these figures, it can be seen that more than one third (37.2%) of our permanent workforce is 50 years old or over, which shows that Council is highly reliant on a large proportion of their staff who will be considering retirement in the next 10 years; comparatively in 2004, 30.1% of Council staff were 50 years old or above increasing to 37.7% in 2010, interestingly this figure decreased to 36.2% in 2012. The increased turnover rate which will result from these staff retiring may result in skills gaps and vacant positions which are difficult to fill, as well as the loss of corporate knowledge.

Council has a good representation of staff in the younger age brackets with 16.1% of staff aged between 15-29 and 46.7% of staff between the ages of 30 and 49 years.
Location

Proximity to work is a big factor of living in regional areas and is an element Council should use as part of the recruitment process in attracting people to the area. 95.5% of Council staff live within the Bathurst Regional Council local government area, with the remaining 4.5% of staff living in the surrounding local government areas of Orange, Lithgow, Blayney and Orange.

Turnover

As can be seen in the graph below Council turnover rates for the past 10 years have remained between 9% and 14% for the most part. Based on current analysis, there appears to be a shift downwards of Council’s turnover rate, averaging over the past 5 years at 9.8%.

Exit interviews are conducted with departing staff members, the information collected reveals a range of reasons why staff leave Council. The Human Resources Section will continue to monitor and analyse reasons for staff exits.
Council turnover rates 2000-2012

Occupations

Council employs staff in a wide range of occupational groups including: professional, technical, operational and administrative, and in a very diverse range of professions.

According to a recent survey undertaken by all Section Managers, there are a number of positions across Council considered critical to the success of ongoing Council operations. This means that we must have the right skills and capabilities available to fill these positions.

Working for Council

Council recognises that there are many factors which make attracting and retaining staff, particularly to areas requiring a specific skill or experience base, difficult in regional areas. Council has experienced periods whereby certain positions have had to remain unfilled for long periods due to this issue.

In an attempt to attract new staff and retain our current and future staff Council, over a period of time, has introduced a range of measures to make working for Bathurst Regional Council more attractive. These measures include:

- Subsidised gym membership
• Free influenza vaccinations
• Red Cross blood bus visits Council 4 times per year
• Rostered day off for full time staff members
• Priority Child Care through Little Scallywags Child Care Centre
• Subsidised uniforms
• Education Assistance Scheme
• Training
• Employee Assistance Program

Trainees & Apprentices

The employment of trainees and apprentices provides Council with the ability to fill skills gaps by providing education and on the job experience to (generally) young people from the Bathurst Region. Council has aimed for 5% of their overall staff levels to be made up of apprentices, cadets and trainees, this level has been maintained for a number of years. Engineers, GIS, administration, accounting and records are areas where a number of trainees/cadets have been employed, whilst apprentices have been utilised in the trade areas of plumbing, mechanical and green keeping. This 5% benchmark is well above the NSW Local Government average of 1% of staff being apprentices and 2% being trainees.

It is anticipated that some permanent positions, which have proven extremely difficult to fill, will in the future be filled by trainees and/or apprentices who have completed their qualifications. This is likely to result in a slight decrease in Council’s trainee and/or apprenticeship numbers, as these skills shortages are addressed. This development of trainees/apprentices to fill position proving difficult to fill has been a deliberate workforce development policy of council in recent years.

Identification of Council’s critical functions

Council has identified a number of functions which are deemed to be critical. These areas have been determined to be critical functions within the context of the Workforce Plan, and have been identified due to them being: critical to the organisation but also which would be difficult to replace should they become vacant, in the short to medium term. The functions identified are:

Corporate Services & Finance
• GIS
• IT Support
• Accountants
Cultural & Community Services
• Collections Curator
• Entertainment Centre Management
• Coordinator Children’s Services

Environmental, Planning & Building Services
• Strategic Planning (Land use and heritage)
• Plumbing and Building
• Health & Building Surveyors

Engineering Services
• Engineers – Water, Civil and Water/Waste
• Wastewater treatment
A number of issues have been identified in terms of Council’s current workforce, these issues were determined via:

Analysis of current workforce profile

Results of staff surveys – One survey was issued to full time, part time and casual staff 50 years and over (147 staff), asking respondents about their plans for the future; when they plan to retire and if they are looking at other options rather than full retirement.

Section Managers – were all asked a series of questions seeking information about their staffing needs into the future, how the ageing workforce would affect their Section and if they predict the skill shortage will affect their ability to recruit skilled staff into the future.

2012 annual employee opinion survey - was reviewed and relevant information used as part of the planning process.

Internal factors

Age profile of our workforce

More than one third of our current workforce is aged 50 and above, of the surveys returned 9.6% are planning to retire in the next 2 years, 28.8% are planning in 2-5 years, 26.9% in 5-10 years and 34.6% in more than 10 years. In 2011/2012, 15% of the staff who left Council’s employment retired. Based on these figures Council can expect that the number of staff leaving Council due to retirement will increase in coming years.

The changing demographics of our workforce as these ‘baby boomers’ retire will have a significant effect on the organisation, particularly over the next ten years or so. One of the main factors will be the loss of many years of experience, corporate knowledge and expertise. Capturing this knowledge in some way is essential to ensuring that the corporate knowledge they hold, does not walk out the door when they do.
Differing needs of a multigenerational workforce

Council currently has three generations engaged in the workforce: the baby boomers, generation X and generation Y. Each generation has unique traits which defines them and influences their attitudes and expectations regarding work. For example, generation X and Y are defined by an increased grasp on technology, mobility and an ideology that sees a balance in life. Baby boomers on the other hand have a deep knowledge base, are fiercely loyal and have traditionally longer working hours. The varying attitudes and expectations towards work of the different generations need to be considered when developing attraction and recruitment strategies.

Critical functions

Council’s Directors and Section Managers have identified a number of functions that are critical to the ongoing functioning of Council’s operations in meeting its future goals. If these functions are not fulfilled for a period of time it could have a detrimental impact on Council operations. Critical functions have been identified at all levels of the organisation, not just at the management or senior levels.

Internal skill gaps

As previously noted, more than one-third of our staff are approaching retirement age and combined with the skill shortages in particular occupations, we are likely to face some challenges in filling skill/employment gaps as the older workers leave the workforce. To enable younger workers with the skills and experience required for promotion to senior or managerial roles, implementation of the strategies within this plan along with a succession plan are necessary.

Managers have identified that they have staff with the potential to move in supervisory/management positions within their Section, who, with the correct support and skill development will be suitably qualified to apply for the more senior position when it becomes available.

Employee Opinion Survey

Council annually, biannually from 2014, undertakes a comprehensive survey of all its staff to assess their opinion of what Council does well as an employer and what it needs to improve on.
What staff like about working for Council:

- Job security
- Hours of work
- Fellow employees
- Work/life balance

What staff dislike about working for Council:

- Poor pay
- Generally happy with the organisation
- Double standards
- Red tape/bureaucratic processes

Over the course of a few years, job security, hours of work and fellow employees have consistently been in the top four factors of what the staff like about working for Council. Conversely, poor pay, generally happy with the organisation and double standards are consistently within the top four things staff identified when asked what they do not like about working for Council.

The 2012 Survey highlights how it is important for employees to be recognised for their ideas, creativity, and hard work. The recognition sought by employees is not just through financial means but other initiatives as well.

Workplace safety

In 2011/2012 48% of the injuries and incidents reported were related to sprains, strains and back injuries, linked to this, is that more than 50% of the staff in physically intensive work areas are over 50 years old. This age-profile impacts the probability of a staff member injuring. The period required to heal and return to work is also extended when older staff members are injured.

Council’s performance in the 2012 StateCover Report indicated that Council ranks better than the StateCover average and the DLG group average in a number of key areas; these include Lost Time Injury Rates (LTIR), Injury Reporting Time and WHS Self Audits.

Whilst LTIR’s have been decreasing, Council’s workers compensation premiums have been displaying an upward trend, action is being undertaken to further increase the safety awareness of our staff in an effort to reduce injuries and with it the workers compensation premium.
External factors

There are three main issues which are a contributing cause to each of the external factors:

- People are living longer,
- We are having less children, and
- Baby boomers are retiring.

Over the last 50 years the life expectancy in Australia has increased by 10 years on the life of both males and females. It is expected to continue to increase into the future. On the other hand fertility rates have decreased over the same period from a peak average of 3.4 children per family in the early 1960’s to the current level of an average of 1.7 children. Combined, the fact that the fertility rate has dropped considerably and the baby boomers (the largest generation at this time) are leaving the workforce is putting a great deal of pressure on the supply and competition for staff now and into the future. (Reference 6).

An ageing workforce

Australia’s population is ageing and this is mainly due to sustained low levels of fertility and increasing life expectancy. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) population projections have predicted that one in four Australian’s will be 65 years or older by 2056. This is in contrast to population figures in the Bathurst Region in 2007 which showed only 13% were 65 years and older, by 2030 this is expected to increase to 16.7%(Reference 4).

In Australia the average age of retirement is 59 years (Reference 5).

The proportional increase of older Australians is coupled with a steady decline in the growth of those entering the workforce. The predicated growth in the working age population will fall from 1.2% p.a. over the past decade to zero by 2050 (appendix 11).

The demographic changes present significant long term implications for you community and our organisation. Over the next decade, a substantial proportion of key workers with critical skills and experience in the public sector will be lost, along with substantial corporate and cultural knowledge as these ‘baby boomers’ move to retirement. Local Government must find a way to retain these skills and experience while at the same time attracting new workers and establishing itself as an attractive career option to young workers.
A shrinking workforce

Australia’s workforce is shrinking. The Australian working population has generally increased by approximately 180,000 people every year. It is predicted that for the whole decade spanning 2020-2030 the workforce will increase by 190,000. This will have a major impact on the entire workforce and therefore Council’s ability to attract and retain staff, during a period of great competitiveness for staff (Reference 6).

Statistics on the Bathurst Region show a predicted decrease in the size of the working population (15-64) over the coming years, with 67.3% of the population currently being of working age this will decrease to 64.9% by 2020 and further drop to 63.6% by 2030 (Reference 1).

Skill shortages

The skills shortage is a major issue facing Australia’s workforce. The salaries being offered by private industry to capture skilled staff are impossible for Council to compete with.

Changes to the availability of university courses have impacted on the number of available graduates in certain professional areas. As well, an increase to the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank for many courses, has resulted in fewer qualified graduates and therefore greater competition for the available graduates.
Skill shortages within Council have been identified in the following areas: environmental health, engineering, accounting, IT and planning.

Increasing competition

There is increasing competition across local government and private industry to attract and recruit employees with the right skills and experience, which means employers need to review their strategies to market and promote themselves as being an employer of choice.

Of particular note is the impact that the increasing production of mining is having on our workforce for both skilled and un-skilled staff, with the continual expansion and new plans for local mines. The issues this raises and our ability to compete, will likely become an issue for the recruitment and retention of staff into the future.
Given the low unemployment rate seen within the Bathurst Region, competition for quality staff will be experienced through the local government area.

Differing needs and expectations of multi-generational workforce

As reflected in our own workforce, the labour market consists of three generations, all of which have varying attitudes and expectations towards work. This means that as employers we need to adopt a variety of workforce strategies to meet the needs to the various workers.

Community perceptions of Council’s workforce

Council’s annual Community Survey reviews the quality of customer service provided by Council staff and the communities overall satisfaction with Council’s performance. The 2011 Survey resulted in an average result of 8.0 out of ten in the areas of being: courteous, helpful, knowledgeable and prompt; and a result of 7.1 for overall community satisfaction.

Other factors

In addition: technological changes, rising expectations from the community, financial reforms, legislative changes could also impact on our future workforce requirements.
Despite the above challenges facing Council now and in the future, there are a number of positive factors that should be highlighted.

- Employees identified: job security, hours of work, fellow employees and work/life balance as the top 4 things about working for Bathurst Council. All of which can be promoted throughout the recruitment process.

- Managers have identified that a number of ‘future leaders’ exist across the organisation.

- There are a number of staff with the potential to fill critical positions in the future (provided ongoing development opportunities and/or educational qualifications are provided).

- By being aware of the ageing workforce we can develop strategies to attract and retain staff from each generation, particularly the Baby Boomers (Reference 6).
Following consultation with Department Heads, Section Managers and Staff a number of issues were identified as being of greatest concern to affect BRC in its ability to attract and retain skilled staff into the future.

Objective 1: Attraction and retention of staff from a wider applicant pool

Council needs to implement strategies that will attract talented staff from sections of the workforce that would not traditionally see local government as a career choice. This is necessary in order to differentiate the industry and the organisation from others in a competitive market. Although it is constrained by the ability to pay, Council offers a suite of attractive working conditions and family friendly policies which benefit all staff.

Council needs to continue to develop strategies to promote itself as an employer within the community. Many within the community are not aware of the breadth of occupations Council has on offer, or the career paths a career in local government can provide.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
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Attract skilled staff by:

- Apprentices in identified positions.
- Advertising in a variety of media relevant to the position i.e. Western Advocate, recruitment websites, industry magazines, social media, especially for positions in short supply.
- Review of all recruitment documentation to create a professional and inviting view of Council and Bathurst.
- Incorporate the bathurstregion.com.au website into our recruitment information pack for potential applicants from outside the Bathurst Region.
- Continued support of university internships, especially in areas of skill shortages.
- Emphasise to talented staff that Council has an open door policy should they wish to apply for a vacancy in the future.
- Continue benchmarking Council’s positions and benefits against other similar sized Councils, and maintain awareness of market forces.
- Development of a Removalist Expenses Policy.
- Regular review of ‘benefits’ provided to staff to determine their continued relevance and examine other possible cost effective benefits which could be introduced.

Recruitment of younger workers by:

- Continue annual recruitment of trainees.
- Ongoing monitoring of the need to increase numbers of trainees or apprentices.
- Promote local government as a career through ongoing support of local work experience and university internships.
- Strengthen links with High Schools to promote the traineeships available, especially those traineeships which require certain HSC subjects and results to gain entry into university.
- Promote local government’s diverse range of occupations, particularly to local high schools.
- Investigate the use of social media to advertise vacant positions.

Recruitment of a diverse workforce:

- Consideration of positions as they become vacant if they are suitable for part-time or other flexible work arrangements.

**Objective 2: Retention of skilled staff**

To retain existing staff at all stages of their careers, by providing; a rewarding career, ongoing development, a good work environment and attractive benefits.

High performing staff thrive when they undertake challenging, rewarding and relevant work. If
Council is progressive in developing and up-skilling its staff it will retain those who; are talented, can learn and grow and can take the organisation forward.

A major strategy is the focus on retaining skilled and high performance staff. This is required in order to protect Council from the loss of corporate knowledge and associated costs involved in staff turnover. This can significantly impact Council’s productivity and its ability to achieve its strategic objectives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retention of mature workers by:</td>
<td>Review the need of a Phased Retirement Policy, to provide mature staff with the range of work options as they near retirement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continuing professional development.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Creating a pool of experienced ex-staff who have retired, who can be called upon during peak periods for specific projects or for leave coverage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retention of young workers by:</td>
<td>Developing and implementing a coaching/mentoring program for emerging talent.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide opportunities to encourage development of their skills i.e. training, professional development, taking on extra responsibilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gain an understanding of Generation Y employees, and what they are looking for from an employer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retention of skilled staff by:</td>
<td>Continued provision of professional development and training opportunities for staff to further develop their skills.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Providing opportunities for staff to work in their supervisors position when their supervisor is on leave (higher duties).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ongoing promotion of the benefits Council provides its staff, benefits to be reviewed and added to as appropriate i.e. review the financial implication of salary packaging.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Encourage staff identified as being ‘future managers’ to undertake postgraduate education in a management discipline.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Explore the introduction of psychometric testing as part of the recruitment process.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Review existing performance appraisal process and salary system.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Objective 3: Enhancing Council’s image as an employer

To promote the benefits of working for Council to current and prospective staff. Council offers a range of excellent working conditions, family friendly policies and initiatives that benefit all staff.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ensure HR policies and practises are up to date and relevant to staff by:</td>
<td>Regular monitoring and reviewing of existing HR policies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Review the need for new Human Resources policies as necessary.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continue to conduct the Employee Opinion Survey, as necessary, so to remain current with staff views on Council as an employer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote Council as an employer of choice by:</td>
<td>Developing marketing material to be included with recruitment documents, promoting the benefits staff at BRC receive.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marketing the benefits of working for Council in the positions vacant section of Council’s website, as appropriate.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Promoting staff benefits to the current staff as a reminder of what is available but also so they can promote Council as an employer to their family and friends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Regularly review how Council is perceived by the community and by staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reviewing services implemented to support staff and adjusting as required.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide technology by:</td>
<td>Ensuring staff have the necessary technologies to undertake the requirements of their position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ensure staff receive adequate training or explanations to effectively operate the technology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain awareness of differing workplace needs of staff:</td>
<td>Review and monitor the workplace needs of the different generations of staff.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop strategies to attract and retain staff within all generations based on their workplace needs and expectations.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Objective 4: Reducing the skills gap**

Being aware of future skill requirements and staffing levels is essential for planning for the future. Reducing the skills gap is seen as being a critical phase to ensure that Council has the appropriate resources to meet service needs. The tailored strategies are intended to address any skills gaps that could prevent Council from meeting service delivery requirements in the future.

By arming staff with knowledge, confidence and expertise, staff will continue to learn, seek new practises, take risks, develop personally and professionally, and be innovative in their role. Benefits can be measured in increased efficiency and service to the organisation and a decreased reliance on external contractors.

Council can add to its training plan and utilise this information to provide some inventive and engaging strategies to rekindle and generate more interest in skills development.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Action</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grow our own leaders by:</strong></td>
<td>Researching and developing a Succession Management Policy which ensures succession plans are developed for all senior and critical positions.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing support to staff electing to undertake further education under the Staff Education and Assistance Scheme (SEAS).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supporting career development by: offering opportunities for staff to act at higher levels, providing necessary training, providing opportunities to take on additional responsibilities and to identify and address skill gaps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grow our own key professionals by:</strong></td>
<td>Identify areas difficult to recruit due to skill shortages and review the possibility of recruiting a trainee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Internally advertise opportunities for further education in specific areas where skill shortages are apparent.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
References

   http://abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/6359.0Main%20Features4November%202011?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=6359.0&issue=November%202011&num=&view=
11. Government Skills Australia 2010 Environmental Scan.