



Strathbogie
shire

Workforce Plan

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PART 1 - INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope and scale of the Workforce Plan

The Strathbogie Workforce Plan 2021-22 to 2025-26 (the Workforce Plan) is a powerful instrument which enables the Strathbogie Shire Council (Council) to clearly define its support for the capacity and capability building of the workforce and to project forward regarding the workforce requirements that will be needed in future years. The Workforce Plan also reiterates the principles and values by which the workforce will operate and engage both internally and externally.

This Workforce Plan sets out the organisational structure and projected staffing requirements to meet Council's service delivery commitments to the community, as defined by the Council Plan 2021-25, for the next 4 years.

The plan covers the full range of Council's activities but will also place an emphasis on those areas where shortages exist or are likely to occur; on areas where new skills and capacity are required; and will include measures to promote gender equality, diversity and inclusiveness.

This overarching document will provide the foundation on which Council will develop its staff, and recruit for specific needs of the organisation in a way that reflects our community's needs while meeting our legislative obligations.

1.2 Engagement and the allocation of resources

The Plan has been formulated with the input of the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and the input of staff from across the organisation.

The People and Culture Department is charged with developing and communicating the Workforce Plan and this work is supported by an Engagement Plan.

The implementation of the Workforce Plan will be given effect through financial support via a dedicated annual budget line item included in the annual budget.

1.3 Alignment with other strategic plans

The Workforce Plan responds to the objectives, strategies and plans described in Council's key strategic documents including the Council Plan 2021-25, the Annual Budget 2021-22, the Strategic Resource Plan 2020-21 to 2024-25, the Financial Plan 2021-22 to 2030-31 and the existing Strathbogie Workforce Strategy and Plan 2019-2022.

Figure 1 provides a context of how Council's strategic documents work as a comprehensive and cohesive strategic framework:



Figure 1 Integrated Strategic Planning Framework

This Workforce Plan describes the people and financial resources, and the planning and training required for the organisation to deliver successfully on these key pieces of work over the next four years.

Council Plan 2021-25

The Community Vision 2040, incorporated into the 2021-25 Council Plan, is a key driver for shaping Council services during that time span. The Vision is:

'The Strathbogie Shire is a region of natural beauty with vibrant communities who are respectful, optimistic and inclusive.

We have a strong sense of belonging and of our collective history. We care deeply for Country and First Nations people.

We are bold. We embrace opportunities. We welcome you.

It is important to note that the development of the Community Vision was left entirely to a Community Panel, consisting of over 35 members from across the Shire and of different age cohorts and backgrounds. Great care was taken to ensure the Panel reflected the diversity of our population.

An eight month community consultation process informed the development of the Vision and the Council Plan, which also ensured that community priorities for Council resources and service provision were identified.

Six Strategic Focus Areas form the basis of the 2021-25 Council Plan, which seeks to progress the Community Vision for the next four years. The strategic focus areas are:

1. Engage. Create. Unite
2. Live. Access. Connect
3. Protect. Enhance. Adapt
4. Inclusive. Productive. Balanced
5. Strong. Healthy. Safe
6. Accountable. Transparent. Responsible.

Strategic Focus Area 6 is essentially an internally focused pillar of the Council Plan that highlights the need to complete the following actions over the life of the Council Plan:

- 6.2 Develop and implement an Information Technology Strategy to ensure the organisation has a suite of fully integrated systems to maximise operational efficiency.
- 6.5 Development and implementation of a comprehensive gender equity framework through policies, training and proactively acting on feedback from staff, Councillors and the community.
- 6.6 Review our Customer Service Charter in partnership with a Community Panel to refine our service standards and response times
- 6.8 Undertake a biannual staff satisfaction survey, supported by an action plan developed by the Executive Leadership Team to address the issues raised.
- 6.9 Explore leadership training program options.

Relevant Actions to the Workforce Plan for 2021-22 are:

- 6.1.1 Review the allocation of human and financial resources across the organisation to deliver the Community Vision and Council Plan, informed by service reviews and benchmarking against like organisations
- 6.1.5 Develop a gender impact assessment tool to allow Council to assess the gendered impacts of policies, programs and services.
- 6.1.8 Develop and implement the response to the People Matters Survey completed in 2021
- 6.1.10 Develop a four-year Workforce Plan.

Quarterly reports will be submitted to the Audit and Risk Committee and Council tracking our performance against the actions and performance indicators outlined in the Council Plan.

Financial Plan 2021/22 – 2030/31

The Financial Plan 2021/22 – 2030/31 summarises the resourcing dedicated to our workforce in the long term:

Staff Expenditure	2021/22 \$'000	2022/23 \$'000	2023/24 \$'000	2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000	2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000
Total Staff expenditure										
Female	4,985	5,047	5,148	5,251	5,356	5,463	5,572	5,684	5,798	5,914
Male	5,281	5,347	5,454	5,563	5,674	5,788	5,903	6,021	6,142	6,265
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vacant Positions	565	572	583	595	607	619	632	644	657	670
Casuals and temporary staff	404	409	417	426	434	443	452	461	470	479
Capitalised labour	-50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Staff expenditure	11,185	11,375	11,603	11,835	12,071	12,313	12,559	12,810	13,066	13,328
Permanent - Full time										
Female	3,559	3,603	3,675	3,749	3,824	3,900	3,978	4,058	4,139	4,222
Male	5,142	5,206	5,310	5,416	5,525	5,635	5,748	5,863	5,980	6,100
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vacant Positions	320	324	330	337	344	351	358	365	372	380
Total	9,021	9,134	9,316	9,503	9,693	9,886	10,084	10,286	10,492	10,701
Permanent - Part time										
Female	1,426	1,444	1,473	1,502	1,532	1,563	1,594	1,626	1,658	1,692
Male	139	141	144	146	149	152	155	158	162	165
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vacant Positions	245	248	253	258	263	269	274	279	285	291
Total	1,810	1,833	1,869	1,907	1,945	1,984	2,023	2,064	2,105	2,147
Other										
Casuals and temporary staff	404	409	417	426	434	443	452	461	470	479
Capitalised labour	-50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	354	409	417	426	434	443	452	461	470	479

Extract from Financial Plan (section 3.6, pg 15)

The Financial Plan also summarises EFT allocation over the next decade, indicating a relatively small increase in EFT of 4.9:

Staff Numbers	2021/22 EFT	2022/23 EFT	2023/24 EFT	2024/25 EFT	2025/26 EFT	2026/27 EFT	2027/28 EFT	2028/29 EFT	2029/30 EFT	2030/31 EFT
Total Staff expenditure										
Female	49.4	49.4	49.6	49.9	50.1	50.3	50.6	50.9	51.1	51.4
Male	58.7	58.7	59.0	59.2	59.5	59.8	60.1	60.4	60.7	61.0
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Vacant Positions	7.0	7.0	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.2	7.2	7.2	7.3	7.3
Casuals and temporary staff	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.7	5.7	5.7	5.8	5.8	5.8
Total Staff expenditure	120.6	120.7	121.2	121.8	122.4	123.0	123.6	124.3	124.9	125.5
Permanent - Full time										
Female	33.0	33.0	33.2	33.3	33.5	33.7	33.8	34.0	34.2	34.3
Male	57.0	57.0	57.3	57.6	57.8	58.1	58.4	58.7	59.0	59.3
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Vacant Positions	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.2
Total	94.0	94.0	94.5	94.9	95.4	95.9	96.3	96.8	97.3	97.8
Permanent - Part time										
Female	16.4	16.4	16.5	16.5	16.6	16.7	16.8	16.9	16.9	17.0
Male	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7
Self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Vacant Positions	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1
Total	21.1	21.1	21.2	21.3	21.4	21.5	21.6	21.7	21.8	21.9
Other										
Casuals and temporary staff	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.7	5.7	5.7	5.8	5.8	5.8

Extract from Financial Plan (section 3.6, pg 15)

1.4 Authority

The Workforce Plan is developed under the auspices of the Chief Executive Officer who is required to prepare such a plan under delegation under the Local Government Act 2020.

Should any significant change in organisational structure be proposed the CEO is required “to

inform the Council before implementing an organisational structure that will affect the capacity of the Council to deliver the Council Plan”.

No significant change in organisational structure is proposed under this plan following the restructure introduced by the then new CEO in April 2020.

1.5 Key stakeholders

The ultimate beneficiaries of a successful Workforce Plan will be the Strathbogie community and the staff whose role it is to deliver Council's services to them. Internally, the Executive Leadership Team, Management Group, Staff Consultative Committee and People and Culture department will form the key decision-making groups.

Further there will be ongoing consultation with the relevant unions, the bulk of the work is internally driven, as those mentioned above are best placed to identify and develop the organisation's capability and priorities.

The elected Council does not have any jurisdiction over the employment or shape of our workforce, aside from the Chief Executive Officer, but will be kept informed of the plan's development and implementation, along with Council's Audit and Risk Committee, who are charged with ensuring that Council resources are effectively managed and our policies/strategic plans are implemented.

Regular reporting to staff, Council, Council's Audit and Risk Committee and the community on the progress of the plan's implementation will occur.

1.6 Data and information sources

The Plan draws on external data for the State and the Shire from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, REMPLAN and other data which describes the characteristics of the Strathbogie community.

Internal employee information such as recruitment and turnover data, age and retirement patterns, staff surveys, consultation with employees, budget, current workloads, expected future changes, capability of current staff, demographic characteristics of employees are all workforce issues that are assessed and used to highlight the proposed future direction.

The results from the People Matters survey conducted in mid 2021, along with the annual Community Satisfaction Survey 2021, have also provided important data to help identify key issues and priorities for Council services in the future.

1.7 Inter- and intra-organisational commitment

The Workforce Plan aims to develop a roadmap for Council's chosen workforce strategies. It will enable employees to see the way forward to improved learning and development opportunities in a well-supported environment for all staff. This work will be done by internal staff as far as possible which helps embed the understanding of links across the organisation and to already existing Council plans and strategies.

1.8 Process for developing the Plan

The Victorian Public Sector workforce planning model is shown in Figure 2 belowⁱⁱ and includes the steps that have been used as the basis for formulating this Workforce Plan.

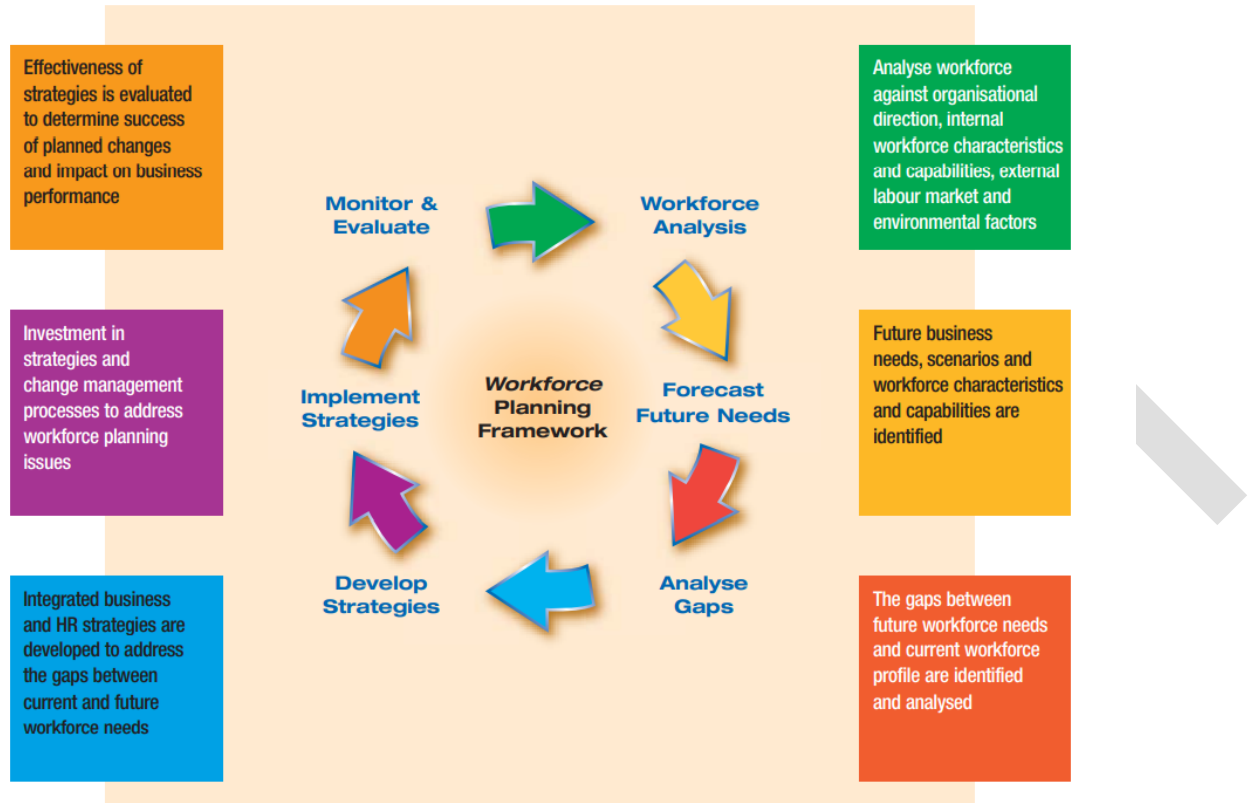


Figure 2 Victorian Public Service Process for Workforce Planning (Source: Workforce Planning Toolkit, State Services Authority 2006)

The Workforce Plan is a living document that will need to be reviewed and updated regularly. Adjustments may be required to reflect significant changes in population, industry and business changes and workforce characteristics, particularly as the older cohort of workers retires.

1.9 Monitoring and Reporting

The Workforce Plan outlines actions for each focus area that will be implemented over the next four years to enable progress to be monitored.

Clear measures will assist in the effective evaluation of the Workforce Plan. Yearly reviews will be conducted to enable the plan to be regularly evaluated.

Annual reports will be provided with the yearly review of the Workforce Plan, similar to the reports currently presented quarterly to the Audit & Risk Committee, Council, ELT, the Management Group, all staff and Unions.

Communication with staff on progress will be provided via regular updates on the work and its progress, so that staff can see the improvements made.

Network meetings with neighbouring local councils allows us to share learnings with one another, garnering extra information and being able to identify potential areas for co- operation.

1.10 Summary

The Workforce Plan describes the number, form and development needs of the people resources we need to meet the future needs of the organisation as described in our current key strategic documents.

It also includes how we build leadership capacity and engage staff to be part of formulating, understanding and committing to developing the necessary skills and capabilities to deliver the goals and services of the organisation, as outlined in the Council Plan 2021-25 and the Community Vision.

A gap analysis has informed the development of a strategies and action plan to drive this Plan's implementation over the next four years.

Regular updates and performance reports will be provided to staff, Council's Audit and Risk Committee and Council to track the progress of the implementation of this Plan.

PART 2 - WHERE ARE WE NOW?

2.1 Workforce Planning

In general terms, workforce planning is about getting the right number of people with the right skills in the right jobs at the right time.

It's importance in assisting local government to plan better for the future and to meet business and social goals has been recognised by the Victorian Government that has required all Councils to have in place a Workforce Plan by 31 December 2021.

Under the Victorian *Local Government Act 2020*, the Chief Executive Officer's functions include, as described in Division 7, Section 46:

"(4) ... a Chief Executive Officer must-

(a) Develop and maintain a Workforce Plan that –

- (i) Describes the organisational structure of the Council: and*
- (ii) Specifies the projected staffing requirements for a period of at least 4 years; and*
- (iii) Sets out measures to seek to ensure gender equality, diversity and inclusiveness; ..."*

It further requires:

"(4A) In developing and maintaining a Workforce Plan, a Chief Executive Officer must have regard to the requirements of the Gender Equality Act 2020".

This Act requires the organisation to prepare a Gender Equality Action Plan that includes undertaking a workplace gender audit and developing strategies and measures for promoting gender equality in the workplace, based on the results of the workplace gender audit.

The objectives of the Victorian Gender Equality Act 2020 are to:

- Promote, encourage and facilitate the achievement of gender equality and improvement in the status of women*
- Support the identification and elimination of system causes of gender inequality in policy, programs and delivery of services in workplaces and communities*
- Recognise that gender inequality may be compounded by other forms of disadvantage or discrimination that a person may experience*

The Gender Equality Action Plan is being separately developed, but links will need to be made to the Workforce Plan, where appropriate.

2.2 The current external context

Strathbogie Shire is well located in terms of attracting visitors from Melbourne and the surrounding region and is also a popular spot for retirees to settle.

Unlike many small rural Shires, Strathbogie has been fortunate to experience a small growth in population that is predicted to continue. We are now seeing an increase in economic development and activity and the flow on effect is that people who have previously grown up and moved out of the Shire can now remain and 'lay roots' and build a family and career without the necessity of moving to larger regional or metropolitan centres.

This trend has been amplified by the impact of COVID-19, which has unexpectedly included a real estate boom with house prices increasing across the country. Many more people are choosing not to move from the country to the city. City residents, weary of lengthy lockdowns in high density housing, are purchasing or leasing homes in regional and rural areas, where they can enjoy a more attractive lifestyle while working from home.

As a result of the change in people movements, the number of planning and building permit applications and the need for strategic planning to effectively manage growth has dramatically increased.

The Census figures from 2016 and 2011 has shown that much of the population growth in that period has occurred in the older persons sector. More recent movements may well show an increase in a slightly younger cohort, once the data becomes available.

The Council workforce needs to adapt and gain further technical skills in order to support a more diverse, growing and mature Shire.

Ideally, the Council workforce should have a similar pattern of diversity to the resident population and this will be tackled in the Workforce Plan.

2.3 Current Employment Environment and Workforce

Strathbogrie Shire is located in North Central Victoria and covers an area of 3,303 square kilometres. Townships include Avenel, Euroa, Longwood, Nagambie, Strathbogrie and Violet Town. The Council is headquartered at Euroa but also runs service centres at Nagambie and Violet Town. It is classified as a small rural Shire. Agriculture is the largest industry although tourism is growing in the region.

Recently, COVID-19, has impacted on the nation and on the community of Strathbogrie, overshadowing normal life and work for millions of people.

In the Strathbogrie Shire it has affected the community, business and Council operations in significant ways. While some sectors experienced growth, tourism and associated industries such as accommodation, attractions and some food services, came to a standstill largely, and facilities for entertainment, the arts and culture, libraries, sport and recreational facilities etc have been closed for extended periods.

The long- lasting nature of this pandemic has had, and will continue to have, impacts on the lives of the community until there is widespread effective protection via vaccines and case numbers decline. The impacts are economic, psychological and social and are still developing. While a suitably vaccinated population will ease this considerably in due course, some of these sectors are likely to remain vulnerable to further outbreaks of COVID-19 going forward.

The pandemic has required additional work and co-ordination by Council to meet the needs of the Strathbogrie community, with support from other levels of government. Council has received additional funding to support Council roles through the Working for Victoria Project (an additional 43 roles over 6 months) and another role for 6 months to assist local businesses.

2.3.1 Demographics of the Shire

Population

Population data from the last (2016) Census is summarised in Table 1 below.

Table 1 Population Overview

Resident Population	Gender Spread	Median age of residents	Median Weekly Household income	Total Number of Private dwellings	Average People per Household	Employment
10,274	Women 50.6% Men 49.4%	52 years	\$962	5,663	2.2	4,587 in workforce Full-time 54.1% Part-time 34.4% Unemployed 4.6%

Age of Residents

The distribution of the ages of residents of Strathbogie Shire, as reported in 2016 Census, is shown in the Table 2 below.

Table 2 Age profile Strathbogie versus Australia

Age	Strathbogie Shire Percentage of population	Australia Percentage of population
0-14 years	14.7	18.7
15-24 years	8.1	12.8
25-34 years	8.1	14.4
35-44 years	9.5	13.5
45-54 years	13.3	13.3
55-64 years	17.9	11.8
65 and over	28.4	15.8

Strathbogie has fewer young people and significantly more older people than the Australia-wide figures, with almost double the percentage of residents in the 65 years and over category. This trend toward an ageing population is highlighted further when the 2016 and 2011 census population figures are compared, showing:

- Strong growth in the number of empty nesters and retirees (60-69 years) which increased by 317 people
- seniors (70-74 years) increased by 251 people
- residents aged over 70 years are predicted to further increase by 1,235 persons by 2036 (REMPPLAN).

In 2016, the largest decline (-85 people) was in the parents and homebuilders (35-49) age group. This is an important age range in terms of contributing to the productivity of the community and to the numbers of children and young people. The other sector to decline was the 0-4 year olds.

Unlike many small rural Shires Strathbogie is fortunate to be showing evidence of population growth. More recent estimates (2019) from REMPLAN show the population is estimated to have increased to 10,781. Further growth of 0.6%pa is projected equating to an additional 1,228 persons by 2036.

These trends have implications for likely workforce characteristics and service demand in future years.

2.3.2 Workforce Characteristics

Employment

In 2016, the employed population was 95.5%. This improved further with the unemployment rate falling to 3.6% in March 2020. COVID-19 has impacted on this positive progress and it is estimated (REMPPLAN) to have resulted in a 7% decrease in employment. Areas affected include accommodation, tourism, hospitality, retail and personal care such as hairdressers and beauticians.

Occupation Roles within the Region

In 2016 the biggest occupations of employment were:

- Managers (960 people or 22.0%)
- Labourers (684 people or 15.7%)
- Professionals (621 people or 14.2%)
- Technicians and trade workers (616 or 14.1%)
- Community and Personal Service workers (440 people or 10%)
- Clerical and Administration workers (397 people or 9.1%)
- Sales workers (305 people or 6.9%)
- Machinery Operators and Drivers (271 people or 6.1%).

The growth areas from 2011-2016 were:

- Community and personal service workers (+67 people)
- Labourers (+67 persons)
- Professionals (+60 persons)

However, machinery operators and drivers declined by 38 persons.

Industry of Employment

While the agriculture, forestry and fishing sector employs 25% of all employed people and health care and social assistance is a large and increasing area of employment, the manufacturing sector, while still significant, is a declining sector in terms of number of

employees. In combination, the above three sectors accounted for 1,510 people (43% of local workers).

More specifically the top responses (ranging from 4.3% to 2.9%) in 2016 were:

- Sheep farming (specialised)
- Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals)
- Aged Care Residential Services
- Supermarket and Grocery Stores.

The largest growing employment sectors between 2011-19, are

- Education and Training (+55 jobs) and
- Accommodation and Food Services (+53 jobs)

This growth reflects an increase in tourism to the region and the associated education and training needed to provide workers to support this growing industry. Between 2015-19 Strathbogie had an average of 344,114 visitors per annum, which was an average increase of 45,225 visitors per annum over the preceding four years. Of these visitors, 60 percent were day visitors and 40% were domestic overnight visitors.

Household type

The size of households has been shrinking with an average household size in 2016 of 2.2 persons per dwelling. The top 3 household types are

- Couples without children (31.9%)
- Lone person (30.3%)
- Couples with children (19.1%) which is less than for regional Victoria (25%).

This shift toward lower density living has continued through to 2019 and has implications for housing demand in the Shire and for changes in service demand for the elderly, particularly for those older persons living alone.

Education Status

In 2016, the Census information for people 15 years and over in Strathbogie Shire showed relatively fewer people with university degrees than their national counterparts, but similar percentages with Diplomas and Certificate IV and III. Strathbogie also has relatively fewer residents with Year 12 as their maximum level of attainment and more in the more junior categories, as shown in Table 3 below

Table 3 Education Status Strathbogie versus Australia

Highest Education Level (People aged 15 years and over)	Strathbogie (%)	Australia (%)
Bachelor degree and above	12.3	22.0
Advanced Diploma and Diploma	9.1	8.9
Certificate IV	3.3	2.9

Highest Education Level (People aged 15 years and over)	Strathbogie (%)	Australia (%)
Certificate III	15.1	12.8
Year 12	10.8	15.7
Year 11	7.7	4.9
Year 10	12.1	10.8
Year 9 or below	12.5	8.0

Ancestry

Strathbogie does not have a highly diverse community in terms of overseas arrivals.

- Of the 8.9% (919 persons) Strathbogie residents that were born overseas, 71.6% arrived before 2001 and 11% arrived during or after 2011.
- Over one third of overseas born residents were born in the United Kingdom, followed by much small numbers from New Zealand, Germany, Philippines, and India.
- Recent arrivals have come principally from India, Philippines, and China, with arrivals from the UK residents dropping by 18 persons.

2.3.3 Diversity Indicators

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) Residents

Table 4 below compares the ATSI statistics of Australia and the Shire as reported in the 2016 census.

Table 4 ATSI Residents Strathbogie versus Australia

Australian and/or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) Peoples	Strathbogie Shire community (2016)	Australian Population (2016)
Total ATSI people	1.1% (113 persons)	2.8% (649,171 persons)
Male	54.3%	49.6%
Female	45.7%	50.4%
Median age	35 years	23 years

Disability

The Australian Bureau of Statistics defines disability as 'any limitation, restriction or impairment which restricts everyday activities and has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least six months'.

According to the ABS, in 2018 there were 4.4 million Australians with a disability, which equates to 17.7% of the population, down from 18.3% in 2015. Prevalence is similar for males and females.

Nationally, of those with a disability living in households:

- One third, aged 15 years and over, had completed Year 12 or equivalent
- 9.2% had an advanced diploma or diploma
- One in six (16.1%) had a Bachelor degree or above
- 37.9% of those aged 15 - 64 years said their main source of personal income was a government pension or allowance
- One in ten (9.6%) had experienced discrimination in the previous 12 months due to their disability
- Labour force participation for those aged 15-64 years had remained stable at 53.4% in contrast to an increase in the participation rate for people without a disability (84.1%)
- Labour force participation is higher amongst men with a disability (56.1%) than women with a disability (50.7%)
- 11.4% of those with a profound or severe disability (aged 15-64 years) were working full time.

There may be restrictions around the type of job or hours of work or a need for special equipment for people with a disability. In 2018 the following groups with disability had an employment restriction:

- Almost half (47.8%) of those working full-time
- Two-thirds (64.5%) of those working part-time.

In the 2016 Census, 696 people (or 6.8% of the population) in Strathbogie Shire reported needing help in their day-to-day lives due to disability. This was a similar percentage to 2011.

Strathbogie Shire's disability statistics relate directly to need for assistance due to a severe or profound disability. The information may be used in the planning of local facilities, services such as day-care and occasional care and in the provision of information and support to carers. Strathbogie Shire's disability statistics help in understanding the prevalence of people who need support in the community, and along with information on Unpaid Care to a person with a disability, how that support is provided.

Analysis of the need for assistance of people in Strathbogie Shire compared to Regional Victoria (VIC) shows that there was a higher proportion of people who reported needing assistance with core activities.

Overall, 6.77% of the population reported needing assistance with core activities, compared with 6.03% for Regional VIC.

The major differences in the age groups reporting a need for assistance in Strathbogie Shire and Regional VIC were:

- A larger percentage of persons aged 80 to 84 (24.7% compared to 22.3%)
- A smaller percentage of persons aged 10 to 19 (2.1% compared to 3.7%)
- A smaller percentage of persons aged 65 to 69 (5.7% compared to 7.3%)
- A smaller percentage of persons aged 5 to 9 (2.8% compared to 3.8%).

Council has an Access and Disability Advisory Committee (ADAC) which works in partnership with the community towards acknowledging and valuing people of all abilities. The Committee also promotes participation in service planning and policy development and raises community awareness of the rights of persons with a disability.

2.3.4 Initiatives to promote diversity

In the next 12 months Council is committed to:

- Improving the range of intersectional data we gather for our staff to better inform our understanding of diversity within our workforce
- Conducting our Gender Impact Assessments to consider the impacts of policy, programs and services on diversity
- Advocacy for greater diversity and tolerance within the community
- Developing training pathways for youth and young parents
- Redesigning Euroa Cinema seating to provide better access
- Participation in International Day for Persons with a Disability (3 December annually)
- Supporting various days of significant and campaigns eg: support to Dementia Australia, Scleroderma Day, Seniors Week.

2.4 Current internal environment and workforce

This section briefly describes the organisation's plans and strategies and how it configured and staffed as it currently exists.

2.4.1 Strategic documents and services provision

The Workforce Plan together with the Council's Integrated Strategic and Reporting Framework is the mechanism by which Council articulates how it will provide the human resources it needs to achieve the organisation's business and community goals and strategies as described in the Council Plan.

The Council Plan 2021-25 is an overarching document that describes the strategic focus of Council in the Strategic and Reporting Framework is illustrated in Figure 3.

Figure 3 Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework

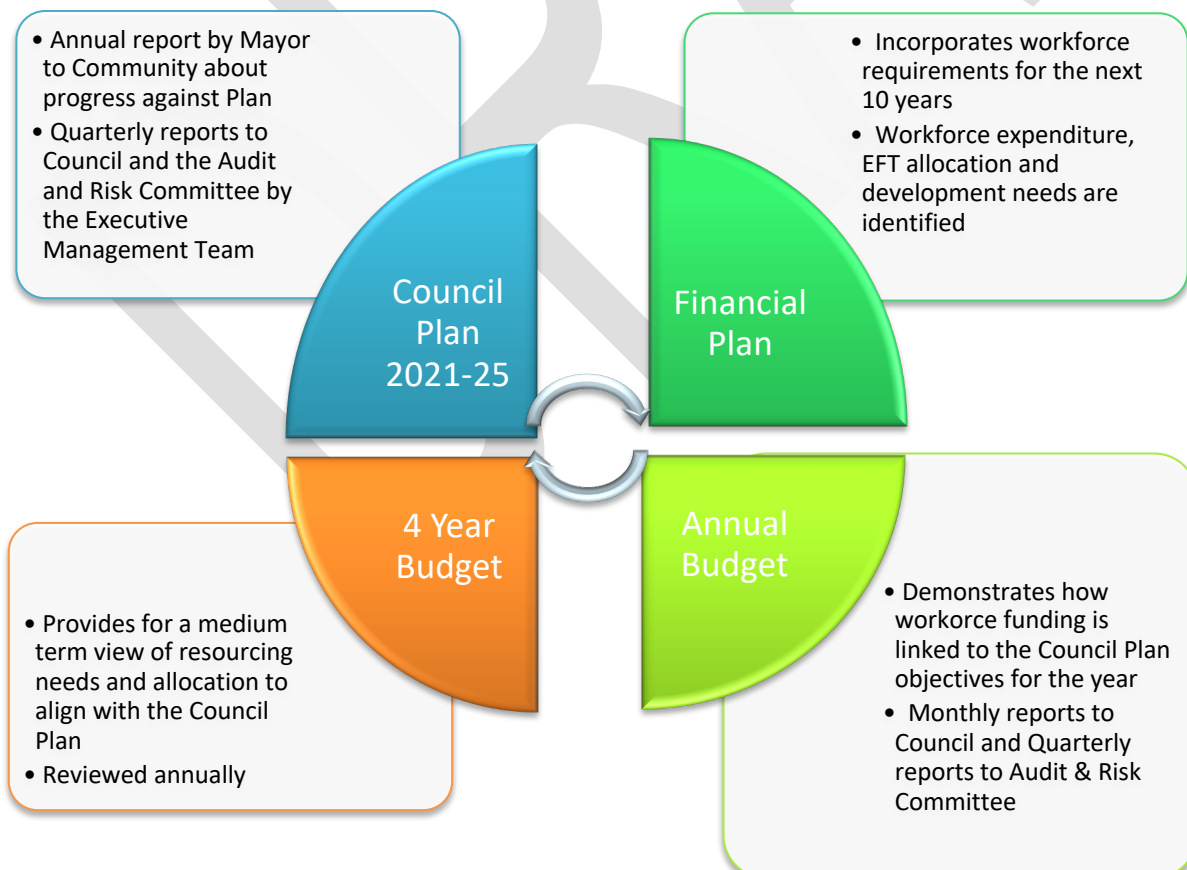


Figure 4 below identifies the other systems, plans, procedures, policies and mechanisms that link to the Workforce Plan including the key documents listed above.

The Workforce Plan has been informed by and will build upon these documents to develop the actions that will be undertaken to give effect to Council's integrated plans, principally the Council Plan, and will identify gaps where further work is required.

Figure 4 Lower level documents and processes that support the Workforce Plan



2.4.2 Current Strathbogie Shire organisational structure

In January 2020, Strathbogie Shire Council appointed a new CEO with an agenda that included an increased focus on customer responsiveness and delivery of projects.

Governance and culture were also identified as areas for further development to strengthen leadership across the organisation. In response, a more strategic approach was developed, supported by the introduction of a new structure.

A six-person Executive Leadership Team (ELT) was put in place in April 2020 comprising the CEO, two Directors and three Executive Managers as shown below. The changes were essentially a realignment (rather than a major change in number of positions) which included:

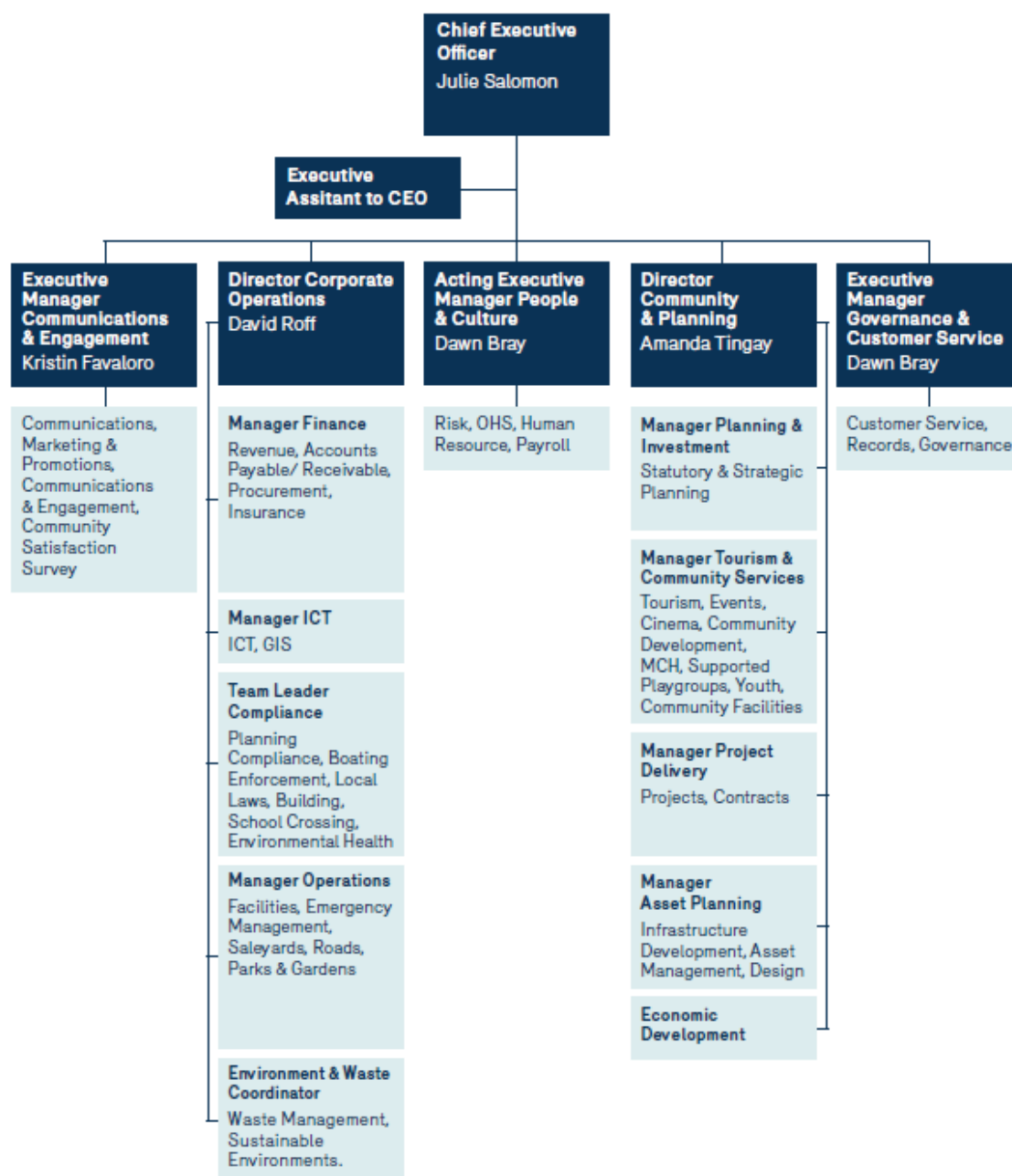
- Creating Executive Manager positions for Communications & Engagement, Governance & Customer Service and People & Culture
- Changing the reporting structures for IT, Communications and Customer Service, removing one Team Leader
- Joining Community Services and Tourism, removing the need for one Manager.

Following the departure of the Executive Manager People & Culture in October 2021, a further

realignment of reporting structures has been undertaken to enable the organisation to deliver on the new Council Plan 2021-25 through:

- Reducing the Executive Leadership Team from six to five, with People & Culture moving into the Governance & Customer Service Team along with IT, and a Manager People & Culture being recruited
- Moving Asset Planning to the Corporate Operations directorate to enable greater coordination between asset management and operations functions and to reduce the breadth of responsibilities for the Director Community & Planning to enable that directorate to focus on community development.

Figure 5 Organisational chart as at November 2021



There are many ways an organisation can be structured to operate successfully. In all cases, isolated silos are not efficient and cross organisational communication is important. Common links exist within and between work structures listed above and a well-functioning Executive Leadership Team needs to put in place a matrix type approach to ensure good cooperation and support can occur across Directorates/work units with different but complementary roles and capacities eg Projects, Asset Planning and Roads.

2.4.3 Current Workforce

There are 120.6 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) persons employed at Strathbogie Shire. Of these, 49% are men and 51% are women. Volunteer support is provided by around 75 persons (the number of volunteers can fluctuate throughout the year and particularly due to Covid 19 and mandatory vaccination requirements).

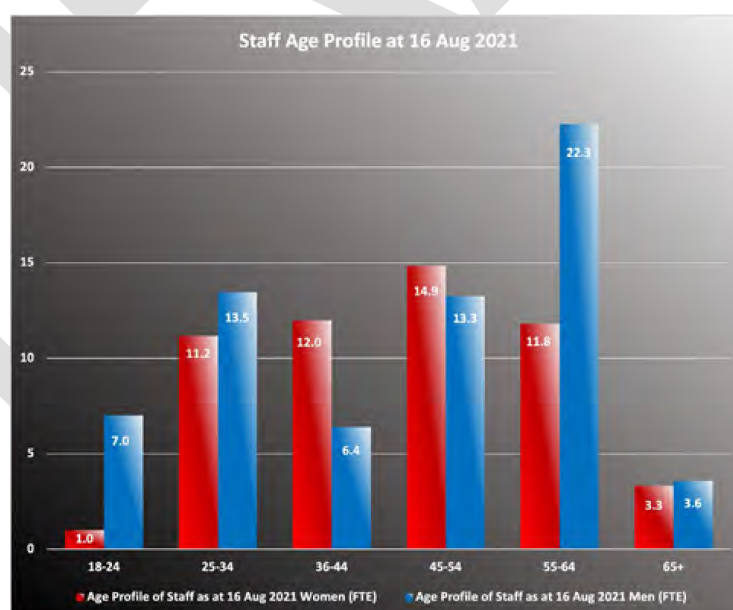
The previous year has seen the reduction of a reliance on external contractors to undertake work in project management, planning and IT which has resulted in cost savings and also the investment in Council staff and the creation of career paths. Our experience is that bringing services back in house delivers greater accountability and transparency, while delivering maximum community benefit. Contractors are now only used on an as needs basis to provide specialist advice and are engaged in competitive procurement processes accordance with Council's Procurement Policy.

Age of Staff by gender

It must be noted that Strathbogie does not currently collect data on the diversity of genders for employees beyond male and female – this is an action that will form part of our Gender Equity Plan to be developed by March 2020 and which has already been identified as a priority through our People Matters 2021 survey responses.

Subject to these data limitations, Figure 6 below shows a large proportion (18.7% of total FTE) are males in the 55-64 years age range but there are relatively few males (5.4% of total FTE) in the 35-44 years age range. This corresponds with the Strathbogie community age profile which shows a downward trend in the 'parents and homebuilders' age range. Women employees are evenly distributed across most of the age spectrum. There are a small and roughly equal number of men and women over 65 years and no staff over 75 years.

Figure 6 Staff Age Profile



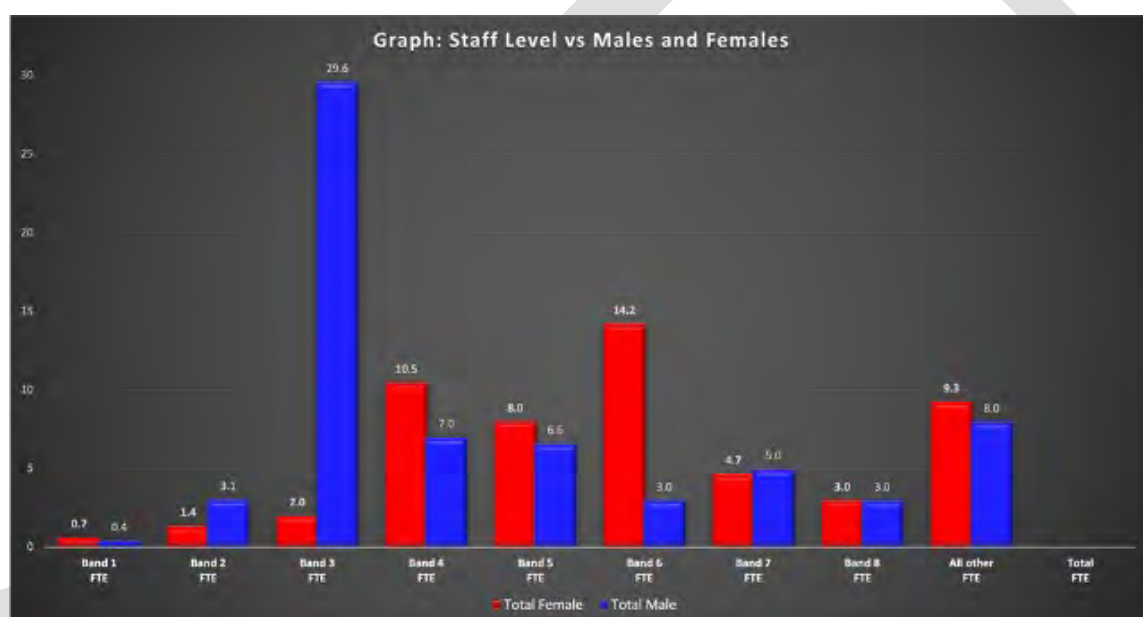
Staffing level by gender – Banded employees

Figure 7 below shows that male staff hold the majority of positions in the Band 1-4 levels, with 29.6 FTE at Band 3 where they comprise a quarter of the total workforce, mainly in the Operations area. However, women FTEs exceed men in the supervisory and manager levels from Band 5 and above, except for Band 7, where there are slightly more males than females.

On the basis of these numbers, it appears that women are competing successfully for supervisory and management positions within the organisation. Further examination of this may be warranted to understand this more clearly.

There are relatively few staff hired at Bands 1 and 2, with relatively high proportions of Band 4 staff (12.5 EFT) and Band 6 staff (17.2 EFT). EFT at the higher bands represent technical specialists and team leaders/coordinators.

Figure 7 Staff level (banded) Males and Females



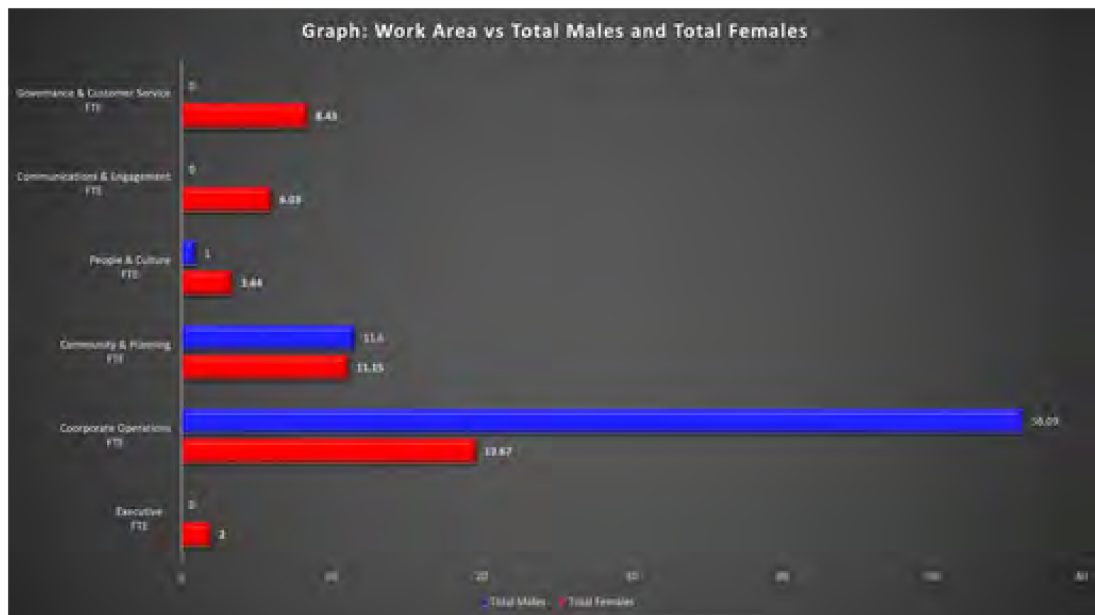
Profile across Work Areas

The spread of employees across the organisational work units, as identified in Figure 8, reveals that the majority work in the Corporate Operations area - 75.76 FTE (63.7%) - and of these, men comprise 74%. Given the high proportion of males in the 55 and over age bracket shown in the previous graph, there are implications for the outdoor workforce in particular as retirements are likely to increase significantly over the next few years. Further analysis of this cohort is warranted to promote succession planning.

While women are employed in all organisational units there are currently no men located in the Governance and Customer Service, People & Culture or the Communications and Engagement areas.

It is not clear how much can be read into this gender stratification as the numbers in some of these work units are very small. It is likely however, that the spread corresponds to traditional male roles in physical labour, engineering and asset management functions, whereas women are employed more in frontline services which may be partially due to greater flexibility in working arrangements.

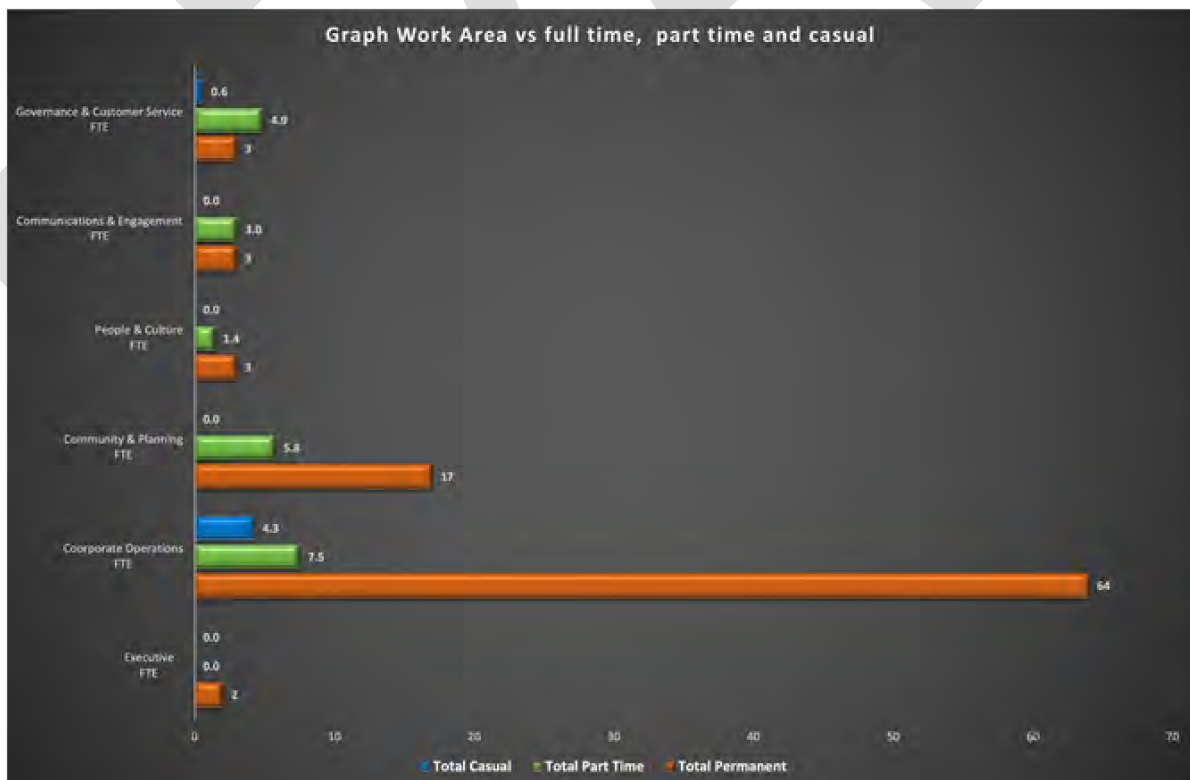
Figure 8 Spread of staff across departments (breakdown Males and Females)



Employment Status

Most staff are employed on a full-time basis, with part-time staff spread fairly evenly across the different work groups. A small number of casuals are employed almost exclusively in the Corporate Operations areas.

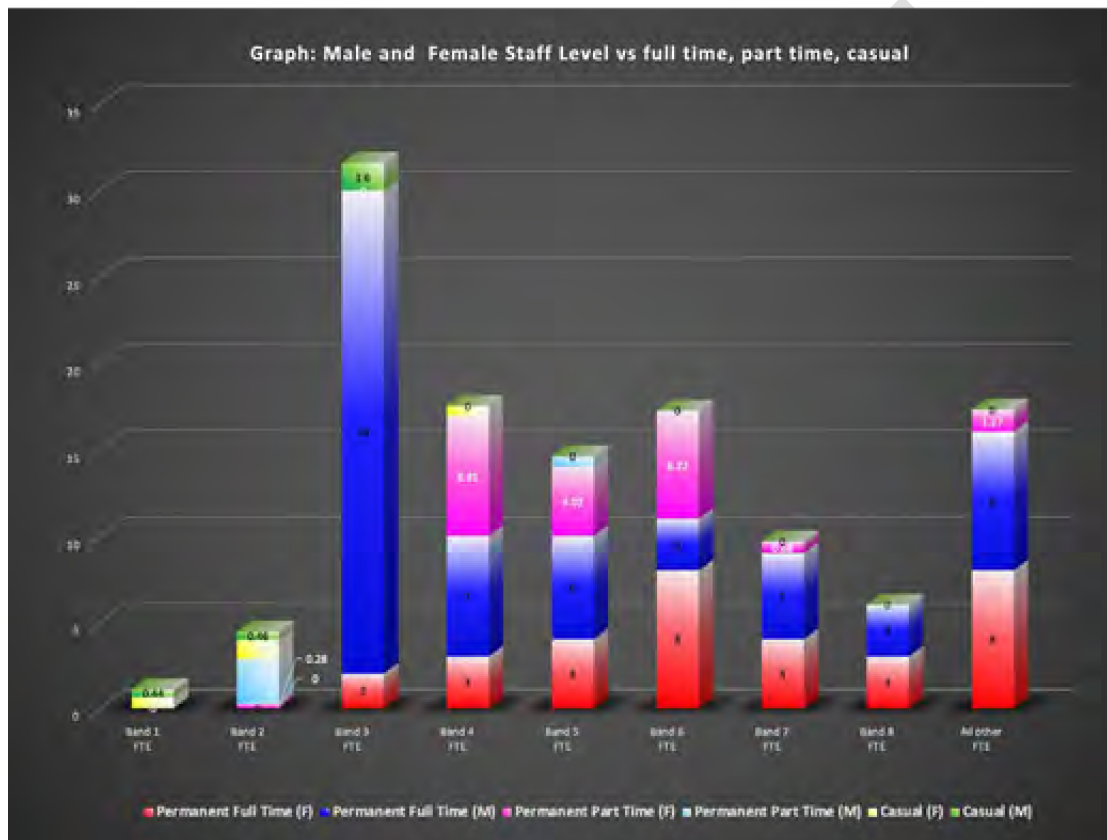
Figure 9 Breakdown of full time, part time and casual positions by department



Work Level and employment status

As shown in Figure 10 below, part-time employees are located primarily in the Band 4 - 6 levels and are almost exclusively occupied by women (see pink shaded areas).

Figure 10 Breakdown of full time, part time and casual positions by gender



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) employees

Strathbogie currently does not record how many ATSI people it employs. This needs to be included as a priority action in the Workforce Plan, along with the collation of broader intersectional data. As highlighted above, 1.2% ATSI persons form part of the Strathbogie community (2016 Census).

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) employees

Strathbogie currently does not record data on culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) employees. This will be addressed as part of the Workforce Plan Actions and Council's Gender Action Plan.

Staff with Disabilities

At this time there is no data on disabled employees employed at Council, which will be addressed under the proposed Workforce Plan Actions.

2.4.4 Critical Roles

Occupations within Council

The current occupations and Full Time Equivalent staff employed at Council are:

- Accountants (including Finance Officers or equivalent) – 3
- Engineers (including Technical Officers and GIS) – 10.55
- Other Professionals/Human Resources – 12.63
- Statutory and Strategic Planners – 5
- Maternal Child Health Nurses -1.68
- Community (including Fire Prevention and Grants) – 5
- Administration and Customer Service (including Market and Tourism) – 22.3
- Trades – 3 (Carpenters)
- Other – 57.94 (primarily outdoor staff).

Employee Turnover

The pattern of employee turnover (excluding casuals) over the last 5 years is shown in Figure 11 below. There has been a significant stabilisation in staff in the past year, which we believe is due to cultural changes driven by the new CEO and Executive Leadership Team, along with the reallocation of resources to better deliver on community priorities and alignment of work units.

Figure 11 Staff Turnover 2016 - 2021

Year	Turnover (%)
2016-17	12.7
2017-18	8.5
2018-19	7.4
2019-20	20.6
2020-21	10.9

PART 3 – FUTURE WORKFORCE DEMANDS

3.1 The forecast external context

As far as practicable, the Council workforce should be representative of the community it serves. Our work to strengthen a more modernised workforce will be pivotal to attracting talent and building on the emerging development opportunities in the shire.

There is competition for resources from other LGAs, from State Government agencies and in some cases from the private sector.

Strong support the well-being and development of new and existing employees will be pivotal to addressing our workforce challenges.

Forecasts predict moderate population growth over the next 20 years in Strathbogie, mainly in the older age cohorts of over 55 years. This predicted growth brings development opportunities for housing, recreation and services for older residents. Once established however, residents at this time of life are often not members of the workforce and are lesser consumers of services and goods in the community, compared to their younger cohorts where people are developing and building businesses and careers and their families.

As stated above, COVID-19 impacts are still evolving but it has already resulted in measurable population shifts, particularly away from Melbourne and Sydney. This is accompanied by changes in accommodation preferences as people have needed to live, work, study and school their children from home with limited access to outdoor spaces for exercise and enjoyment. House prices have also increased significantly across the country.

We know by experience over the past 18 months that people are seeking to move to the regions and smaller country towns into more spacious accommodation and some are choosing to work fully or mainly from home. Lockdowns and lack of the opportunity to travel have also resulted in people spending additional money on renovating their homes and building materials and available tradespeople have often not been adequate to meet demand. Long wait times for new builds and renovations are occurring across the State.

Strathbogie Shire is less than two hours from Melbourne by car and has already experienced visitor growth. The uncertainty of interstate travel due to COVID-19 lockdowns and border closures means that more and more, people are choosing to travel within their own State. The easy distance from Melbourne may also attract more working age people, attracted by being able to live and work remotely in a less expensive but attractive location and still travel to Melbourne from time to time.

Moderate growth means the lodgement of more planning and building applications, along with infrastructure planning, delivery and maintenance. To reflect this additional workload, Council has provided funding for an additional Statutory Planner for the 2021-22 financial year and funding has been obtained through the State Government to support a Business Concierge program for the same time period.

While such minor changes to resource allocation have been made through the annual budget process, the completion of this Workforce Plan and the actions attached to it will ensure we have a more strategic approach in the future.

3.2 A changing legislative and regulatory environment

Local government is heavily regulated by State and Federal legislation.

In 2020 the State government introduced a new Local Government Act 2020, which is the primary legislation under which Council is constituted and operates.

This new act has significantly altered the way in which Council works and the minimum demands on Councils in relation to structures, policies and requirements around:

- Good governance
- Councillor training and support
- Communications and engagement with the community
- Performance reporting
- Preparation of a suite of strategic plans
- Preparation of a suite of mandated policies
- Broader functions for the Audit and Risk Committee (requiring more administrative support).

This has placed substantial demands on very restricted resources and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. This is why, in 2020, the major restructure was undertaken by the CEO to create dedicated departments to Communications & Engagement and Governance & Customer Service. Additional EFT were allocated to these teams as a means of responding to these new State mandated requirements and their people leaders form part of the Executive Leadership Team.

The volume of work created by the new Act in the Governance & Customer Service department led to Council allocating funding for a Governance Officer on an ongoing basis in the 2021-22 budget. Additional resources have also been allocated in this budget to support the development of a new website as a means of providing the organisation, particularly the Communication & Engagement team, with the tools they require to communicate with our community.

Other legislative changes, including the introduction of a new Environmental Protection Act 2018, also place more demands on local councils.

Over recent years there has been a marked increase in the level of reporting to external bodies and government departments placed on local government. Further, there are now four integrity bodies that oversee Council operations; the Victorian Ombudsman, the Local Government Inspectorate, the Independent Broad-Based Anti-Corruption Commission (IBAC) and the Victorian Auditor General's Office (VAGO). The reporting and auditing requirements of each of these organisations has further increased the need for policies, procedures and internal auditing structures.

This increased scrutiny over public expenditure and the increase in legislative regulations has also resulted in the creation of a Projects department. Again, additional resources have been dedicated to this team through the 2020 restructure as a means of efficiently and effectively costing, planning and delivering capital works projects.

Overall, Council is in a transition to modernise its structure, skill set and operations in response to cost shifting from other levels of government, which has occurred over many years, and increased complexity in the environment in which we operate. These trends are expected to continue over the life of this plan and will, therefore, impact on our workforce planning regime.

3.3 Future demand for services

Future workforce numbers and composition are likely to be affected due to system changes and changes in technology, although any changes are likely to be minimal with opportunities for moving within the organisation to other areas of need. flexible working practices.

COVID-19 has impacted on our services and created different ways of working, particularly over lockdown periods. A Crisis Management Team has been put in place to manage Council's response to the pandemic and to work through any service delivery issues.

Strathbogie Shire is likely to continue to be a beneficiary of these COVID-19 induced shifting population movements, should it continue. But this is still an unknown. If more people move to

Strathbogie they will spend money, require housing, need education for their children and require access to other goods and services. In turn, this will boost the local economy and increase demand for Council's services in many areas.

However, Council's key strategic documents envisage that existing services will be maintained with only very minor increases in resources over the period of the Workforce Plan. We are a small shire with a small rate and income base, so it is imperative that the organisation is as efficient as possible given it is unlikely that there will be any significant increase in funding over the life of this plan.

The completion of service planning will provide another decision point where any changes to service levels will need to be reassessed and the Workforce Plan adjusted accordingly.

We already know a number of system changes are being investigated or implemented including a possible joint ICT project with three adjoining Councils (subject to a grant application), a new asset management system and a new Payroll system. Some of these will result in potential relocation of a small number of staff over the four-year period of the Workforce Plan. Such system changes tend to be slow and create more work in the short term, rather than less.

A greater focus on strategic planning, climate change mitigation and community engagement in the 2021-25 Council Plan and 2040 Community Vision means that a greater focus of resources and skills will need to be placed in these areas over the life of this workforce plan. A review of the Planning & Investment team is being undertaken at present as a reflection of the greater focus on long term planning to manage population growth.

3.4 Workforce needed to meet future demands

Upskilling of current staff and attracting new staff to council, particularly in technical roles, are essential to ensure that we meet the demands of the organisation. We need to ensure we are an employer of choice and that we employ a diverse workforce that reflects, as far as possible, the community we service.

As outlined in the previous section the Operations area, in particular, has an ageing workforce and succession planning needs to be coordinated and comprehensive in order to manage this change in the workforce to ensure the Shire does not lose a large quantum of skills and experience in a very short period of time.

Flexible working arrangements and planned transitions to retirement can form part of this succession planning and to help upskill new and younger members of our Operations team. There may also be opportunities to invest in new equipment or changed work practices that enable those undertaking more manual labour focussed tasks to reduce the physical burden of their day to day work to enable staff to work for longer should they wish to.

Council has a strong level of support in relation to its current flexible working arrangements through very positive responses to the People Matters Survey 2021. A mixture of employment types – permanent, fixed term or casual; and full time or part time – will continue to be provided to best meet demand and to attract or retain employees.

Feedback provided through a recent People Matters Survey also indicate that we need to do more around developing our own people and providing them with career paths.

From the legislative changes made by State government in recent times we know our staff will need to have more awareness around corporate governance and meaningful community engagement. The range of knowledge and skills required in all positions is, therefore, becoming more complex and demanding.

We know, from our recent recruitment experience, that the market for technical specialists such as Planners, Engineers, Systems Accountants and Engineers is incredibly tight and competitive. The uncertainty created by the Covid 19 pandemic has been a double-edged sword in relation to this specialist recruitment – in some ways experienced people from the capital cities are looking

for a 'tree change', however at the same time all of the economic uncertainty can place a handbrake on the desire to make that change.

Our first strategy will be developing existing staff to reflect the changing priorities of our community and elected Council. Our willingness and ability to change and adapt to an increased demand will be crucial to the upskilling of people. Not only do we need, for example, to recruit more planners for development, or engineers for construction, we need to build capacity to embrace growth within our four walls.

Further, the completion of Service Planning in 2022, which forms the basis of an Action in the recently adopted 2021-25 Council Plan, will provide a clearer indication of future service levels to identify the skills we require and if any change should be made to existing resource allocation or alignment in order to best deliver the Council Plan for maximum community benefit.

PART 4 - WORKFORCE GAPS

The 2021-25 Council Plan was adopted in October 2021 and requires service plans to be undertaken in the next year to identify how financial and human resources are best allocated to deliver the Council Plan and to adapt to the changing needs of our community and legislative landscape.

Prior to undertaking a comprehensive service planning exercise, we do know that there are current gaps in our workforce.

4.1 Numbers and Roles

The Strathbogie Strategic Resource Plan, the 10 Year Financial Plan and the Budget are formulated on the following principles:

- Maintain investment in renewal of assets to reduce the escalating risk and maintenance of aging infrastructure.
- Provide reasonable stability in the level of the rate burden • Prudently manage financial risks relating to debt, assets and liabilities.
- Consider the financial effects of Council decisions on future generations • Provide full, accurate and timely disclosure of financial information
- Maintaining current service levels for the next 4 years to enable Council sufficient time to complete a full review of its service delivery programs.

As outlined in Part 1 of this document, current forward estimates for the workforce numbers and costs therefore show minimal increases in line with budgetary assumptions.

The completion of Service Planning will identify any changes to services and the resources required to deliver them. These changes will need to be assimilated into the Workforce Plan when known.

Within these constraints, we know the process for recruitment needs to be strengthened, such that all vacant positions are reviewed before filling and an active decision is made to replace, modify or retain the existing duties.

There are several ways through which we can identify workforce gaps; the Annual Performance Review Process is a key way of tracking skill, training and development needs and another is through tracking the trends and success of recruitment to positions.

We know that there are improvements to be made to the annual performance review system to ensure that there is a coordinated approach to identifying organisation wide training needs. We also need to ensure that our team leaders and managers are upskilled to effectively manage performance all year round and address performance issues swiftly and meaningfully.

4.1 The gaps

- Resource focus and roles – ensuring staffing levels meet shifts in focus outlined by the 2021-25 Council Plan and the results of the 2021 Community Satisfaction Survey
- Skills – professional skills shortages in some areas such as project management, planning and engineering areas makes recruitment challenging
- Workforce Profile – workforce diversity gaps and information on diversity need to be addressed to ensure we are effectively representing the broader community and addressing the issues raised by staff in the People Matters Survey 2021
- Succession planning – how to capture the corporate knowledge and develop expertise

of existing/new staff to allow for the smooth and orderly exit of staff from the organisation through retirement or resignation.

4.2 The risk of not addressing the gaps

The 2021 Community Satisfaction Survey analysis identified the following areas where improved performance could significantly improve customer satisfaction ratings:

- Lobbying
- Informing the community
- Community decisions
- Condition of local sealed roads
- Planning and building permits.

Failure to focus on these services and functions will result in either stagnant satisfaction ratings or a decline in ratings. It is noted that satisfaction ratings is relatively low given a significant drop in 2020 due to the fallout from the VAGO Fraud and Corruption report and Council is trying to work back to the ratings pre 2020 and better them.

Further, failure to focus on the delivery of the Council Plan through the completion of service reviews and a review of resource allocation in December 2021 following the adoption of the Council Plan in October would jeopardise the deliver of the Council Plan in its first year, undermining confidence of the elected Council and also the community in the ability of the administration to implement the Council Plan and work towards the 2040 Community Vision.

This could result in significant reputational damage and lack of trust from the Council and the community.

Not addressing the issues raised in the People Matters 2021 survey head on could result in lower staff morale and lack of trust in the leadership of Council.

In an ageing workforce, we need to ensure knowledge is captured within the organisation and skills are transferred to ensure that we are succession planning effectively and facilitating continuous improvement within our organisation.

In specialist areas or where resources cannot be retained, trained internally or recruited we may need to consider other options including joint or shared resources with neighbouring Councils or (temporary) delivery mechanisms, including (local) contractors and consultants.

In the past, there has been a reliance on consultants to 'plug the gaps', which has meant that structural workforce issues have not been addressed head on. This approach has changed over the past 18 months to a more sustainable model where workforce gaps are identified, investment is made in upskilling existing staff or identifying that contracting out services is, for some functions, not the best outcome for the organisation or the community in terms of community benefit and cost effectiveness.

4.3 Staff Skill Shortages

The skills that Strathbogie has had difficulty in attracting are evident from an examination of Council's recent recruitment history and the need to buy in services from outside from time to time include:

- Senior engineers
- Planners
- Policy Researchers
- Accountants

- Project Officers
- Maternal and Child Health Nurses.

4.4 System Changes

Systems technology changes rapidly and over time systems become unsupported or opportunities arise for shared arrangements which bring cost and efficiency benefits to the organisation. Council has a number of systems that have been recognised as requiring replacement/upgrading, namely:

- Possible joint ICT System shared with three surrounding Councils – subject to a grant application to State Government to be submitted by the end of December 2021
- New Asset Management System – migration to “Assetic” is underway
- New payroll system to replace current non-compliant system is being investigated.

Except for the payroll system, there is likely to be job redesign required for the ICT project and some roles may be transitioned into specialist areas and shared across multiple Councils.

The new asset management system should lead to less manual intervention when providing reporting.

The Covid 19 pandemic has seen a shift to online transactions and to support more staff working from home during lockdowns, more use of our existing IT systems such as our electronic document management system, has seen improvements in the efficiency of day to day tasks such as processing invoices, planning permit applications, council agenda preparation and the like.

In the transition period between systems, additional work is required by existing team members, as well as the system providers.

In the longer term, the shared resourcing of the ICT project, if it proceeds, could be further expanded into other areas such as Planning, Governance, Projects and Finance. Workforce needs would need to be reconsidered as part of any expansion into these wider areas.

4.5 Recent Priority Areas for our Workforce

4.5.1 Leadership development

Since the 2020 restructure efforts have been made to develop leadership capacity through:

- regular meetings of both the Executive Leadership Team and the Management Group for information sharing and co-operation as well as building understanding of the challenges across each level.
- providing opportunities for Managers to present to ELT to build their presentation skills and executive experience
- providing training for the management group including public interest disclosures, conflict of interest management, contract management, probity in procurement, fraud and corruption control
- involvement of a cross section of key staff in the Crisis Management Team to respond to the Covid 19 pandemic.

Further work to enhance the functionality of these Teams would be beneficial as would exposure to leadership courses and development opportunities for individuals.

4.5.2 Learning and Development

Enhancing the learning and development opportunities of all staff is a priority. Over the past 18 months gaps relating to compliance related knowledge has been delivered to the Management Team and broader professionals on the following topics:

- procurement and probity
- conflict of interest
- OH&S and Health and Safety Representative training
- risk management (both strategic and operational registers)
- contractor management
- gender equity
- sexual harassment.

We will continue to provide ongoing training and updating to ensure ethical and safe workforce performance in the delivery of services to the community.

4.5.3 Crisis Management

The COVID-19 pandemic has required focussed attention by the organisation in the form of a Crisis Management Team. A cross functional team has been formed drawn from People and Culture, Planning, Environmental Health, IT, Governance & Customer Service and Communications to manage the impacts and record the costs.

It is likely that the COVID-19 Crisis Management Team will have a role for some time into the future, although hopefully at a reducing level. At this stage it appears that this will be managed within existing resources but the need for an additional resource may need to be reviewed as the pandemic becomes endemic.

4.5.4 Gender Equity

Although Strathbogie currently has a good mix of genders with more females than males at the senior levels, we are currently developing a Gender Equity Action Plan (GEAP) by March 2022 and are using the People Matters Survey 2021 to inform this work. The GEAP may identify additional gaps and strategies that are relevant to and will need to be incorporated into the Workforce Plan.

4.5.6 Community Engagement

In its Community Engagement Strategy and Policy, Council identified the need to ensure communications and engagement is culturally embedded as an inherent part of everyone's role. Staff are now required to understand and participate in deliberative engagement processes as part of the implementation of the strategy and policy, which will require more sophisticated skills around conflict management, dealing with difficult people and being able to engage with a broad cross section of the community. Knowledge of the principles and the tools of communications and engagement, therefore, needs to spread across the organisation.

The development of the Community Vision 2040 and Council Plan 2021-25 saw the first formal implementation of our deliberative engagement framework and involved the participation of a cross section of staff from across the organisation in market stalls, survey preparation, town hall style meetings, presentation to the Community Panel and participation in the development of the Council Plan itself.

PART 5 - WORKFORCE STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS TO ADDRESS THE GAPS

The 2021-25 Council Plan sets out the Community's Vision and Council's priorities. The Workforce Plan aims to articulate how Council will achieve the outcomes through the effective utilisation of its employees.

To achieve this, the Executive Leadership Team and the Management Group has worked through strategies and actions to be included in the Workforce Plan. Implementation of the Plan should progress more smoothly if senior staff have a good understanding or and indeed ownership of the Plan so they can convey it with conviction to their staff.

5.1 Focus Areas

Four focus areas have been identified to provide a framework for the Plan. There is a degree of cross-over in these focus areas which are intended to complement each other in delivering the Plan.



5.2 Strategies and Actions

This section outlines the strategies and actions that will form the focus of Workforce Plan implementation over the life of this plan. Actions are directly related to the issues and gaps identified in earlier sections of this Plan.

Focus Area 1. Enhancing Our Culture		
Strategy	Actions	Responsibility and Timing
1.1 Promote the Community Vision 2040 and Council Plan 2021-25	Ensure that staff at all levels are aware of the Community Vision and Values by including actions and performance indicators in individual performance plans.	ELT & Management Group Staff reviews 2022
1.2 Create a supported workforce	Review the efficacy the Employee Assistance Program to identify program needs prior to public tender.	People & Culture department June 2022
1.3 Create a diverse workforce	Collect and report data on ATSI employees and diverse groups in the organisation including culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) employees and people with disabilities.	People & Culture Department June 2022
1.4 Diversity through policy	Assess the need to develop policies to encourage recruitment, retention and progress of diverse employees, informed by the collection of data outlined in Action 1.3.	People & Culture to lead ELT & Management Group December 2023
1.5 Supporting gender equity	Implement the recommendations of the Gender Equity Action Plan.	All staff In accordance with timeframes set in the Gender Equity Action Plan (GEAP)

Focus Area 2. Investing in Our People

Strategy	Actions	Responsibility and Timing
2.1 Meaningful performance reviews	Revise the performance review system to include a relevant and active development plan for each staff member that provides direct links to the Council Plan 2021-25 and Customer Service Charter.	People & Culture to lead ELT & Management Group September 2022
2.2 Improve learning and development programs	Build a Skills and Training Matrix based on critical needs, informed by the annual performance review process.	People & Culture to lead ELT & Management Group September 2022
2.3 Tracking development	Create a tracking system to record the upskilling and development of staff.	People & Culture to lead ELT & Management Group September 2023
2.4 Staff awareness around development opportunities	Build awareness of staff of right to access learning and development opportunities.	People & Culture to lead ELT & Management Group September 2023
2.5 Agile learning & development models	Assess and expand the range of learning and development modules available to reflect emerging needs of the organisation.	People & Culture to lead ELT & Management Group September 2024

Focus Area 2. Investing in Our People (cont'd)		
Strategy	Actions	Responsibility and Timing
2.6 Ongoing good governance, risk and OHS program	Continue delivery of leadership training on compliance related knowledge such as procurement, conflict of interest, OH&S, risk management and contractor management.	Governance & Customer Service to lead 2022 - 25
2.7 Robust consultation mechanisms in place	Include questions on Workforce Planning in the biannual Staff Survey	People & Culture to lead 2023 and 2025
2.8 Proactive industrial relations	Foster relationships with Employee representatives to enable constant and collaborative feedback on HR/IR matters.	People & Culture to lead ELT 2022 - 25

Focus Area 3 Effective Leadership

Strategy	Actions	Priority and Timing
3.1 Advance effective leadership across the organisation to improve accountability and customer focus in all areas.	Continue team building and development opportunities at the ELT and Managers Group level through: - practical in-house experience such as presentations to ELT and Council - facilitated team building - exposure to the wider community and other organisations through deliberative engagement activities.	People & Culture to lead ELT & Management Group 2022 - 25
3.2 Driving workforce planning across the organisation	Include workforce planning elements in all Managers' key performance indicators.	People & Culture to lead 2022
3.4 Effective communication and consultation	Complete the development and roll out of the Share Strathbogie staff portal to provide a one stop shop for human resource/ workforce communication and feedback.	People & Culture Communications & Engagement team 2022
3.5 Improved performance management	Develop and implement a training and mentoring program for line managers to conduct difficult conversations and act early and poor performance.	People & Culture to lead ELT & Management Group 2023
3.6 Analysing performance gaps	Develop and implement a performance gap analysis, driven by the Annual Review process.	People & Culture to lead ELT & Management Group 2023
3.7 Covid 19 Pandemic response	Continue the operation of the COVID-19 Crisis Management team to assist with workforce planning and management.	Crisis Management Team 2022
3.8 Workforce Plan Working Group	Consult with the organisation to identify if a cross-organisational Working Group is required to help drive and monitor the implementation of the Workforce Plan.	People & Culture supported by the Communications & Engagement team 2022

Focus Area 4 A Resilient Organisation		
Strategy	Actions	Priority and Timing
4.1 System, and technology improvements to drive workforce efficiency	Complete service reviews across the full range of Council services and determine workforce planning implications, ensuring alignment with the Council Plan and Community Vision.	Process driven by People & Culture ELT & Management Group 2022
4.2 Improved efficiency through technology	Explore and implement improved systems opportunities and process efficiency, such as - possible joint ICT Systems arrangement with 3 surrounding Councils subject to State government funding - New asset management system – ‘Assetic’ - New payroll system.	IT department Asset Planning department People & Culture department 2022 - 25
4.2 Supporting health and well being	Update the Injury and Return to Work CEO Directive, ensuring the Management Group and all people leaders understand its requirements.	People & Culture 2023
4.3 Supporting health and well being	Review existing well-being programs to support the mental and physical health of staff, including tendering for employee assistance programs.	People & Culture 2022
4.4 Actioning the People Matters Survey 2021	Implement the action plan to address issues raised by staff in the 2021 People Matters Survey.	ELT & Management Group 2022
4.5 Measuring staff satisfaction	Implement a biannual staff satisfaction survey	Led by People & Culture 2023
4.6 Proactive Succession planning	Drive succession planning across the organisation, ensuring key corporate information is retained and appropriate transition to retirement programs are implemented.	Management Group & ELT 2022 – 25
4.5 Improved recruitment processes	Introduce a business review of each vacant position, including analysis of ongoing need and approval by Finance, HR and CEO	People & Culture 2022

PART 6 - MONITORING AND EVALUATION

6.1 Annual review

The Workforce Plan will be subject to annual review to ensure it aligns with the annual Council Plan 2021-25 review, annual budget and subsequent adjustments to the Financial Plan.

Regular reviews also ensure any emerging workforce and organisational issues are addressed and that actions and strategies are deleted as they are completed so that the document remains current and relevant.

An update to Council and the community on key achievements will be made through the Annual Report process.

In reviewing the Workforce Plan, we will consider

- the content of any new strategic documents,
- progress on the planned strategies and actions in this plan and related plans such as the Gender Equity Action Plan
- results of service planning reviews
- any system changes that have been implemented
- the cost of implementing the plan against estimates
- qualitative performance information from staff and community surveys.

In reporting to Council on the effectiveness and implementation of the Workforce Plan the following success factors will be applied:

- Undertaking a major review of the Plan after two years
- reporting to Council on outcomes prior to consideration of the 2024-25 Budget
- Improvements in key community and staff metrics provided by the annual Community Satisfaction Survey and biannual staff satisfaction survey.

6.2 Quarterly Progress Reporting

Monitoring progress via quarterly reports to ELT, the Management Group and the Audit and Risk Committee, and in turn Council, will be undertaken. This will be supported by a brief summary on achievements to date and key priorities for the coming quarter. The results will be communicated to all staff and Union representatives.

ⁱ Workforce Planning Toolkit, Victorian Sate Services Authority 2006 p2

ⁱⁱ Workforce Planning Toolkit *ibid* p4