



Murrumbidgee  
COUNCIL

# WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

2022-2026



# Acknowledgement of **COUNTRY**

We would like to show respect and acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land, Elders past and present, and extend that respect to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Pictured is local boy Bobby admiring the incredible mural which graces the walls of the Council Chambers at Jerilderie.

The mural is titled 'Yo-thun-ing-yuna-ngarratya', meaning 'Coming Together'. Created for the 2000 Olympic Games, it was hung in Parliament House to provide a visual welcome to visitors and wish them peace and safe travel.

The painting depicts various Aboriginal design elements, including the Eaglehawk, which is the Barundji/Barkindji totem. It also depicts a white feather to symbolise safe travel.

The mural was created by four Barundji/Barkindji artists: Elsie Black, Gertrude Gittins, Eileen Ballangarry and Sos Hawkins. These women can trace their family back at least 700 years as direct matriarchal descendants of the tribe. We sincerely thank these talented artists for this masterpiece and for allowing us to share it for all to see and appreciate.

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WE WELCOME FEEDBACK ON THIS PLAN.

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**THIS WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY  
HAS BEEN PREPARED IN KEEPING WITH THE  
REQUIREMENTS OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
ACT 1993.**

First endorsed: August 2017.

Revised version endorsed: June 2022.









# MESSAGE

## from the General Manager



### ‘We must work smarter, not harder’

More than ever, it's important to have a Workforce Management

Strategy that positions Murrumbidgee Council to tackle future challenges and opportunities head on.

Close to record low unemployment federally, means fewer people competing for more jobs. As such, we need to look internally first and foremost, to grow from within. This is a strong way to address these issues.

Succession planning is a key element to this. To do this successfully, we provide the opportunity for everyone to train and learn new roles. This means multiple people from within can be considered for positions.

With close to a quarter of our workforce of retirement age or reaching it in five years, it's important we focus on this wealth of knowledge and skill that will be leaving the organisation. This strategy acknowledges that and provides outcomes to implement.

Another important component of this plan is providing opportunities within Council for the youth of our LGA. This is to address the incidence of our youth leaving to take opportunities in larger

centres, as is often the case in small, regional areas. We aim to retain them here and keep our communities strong.

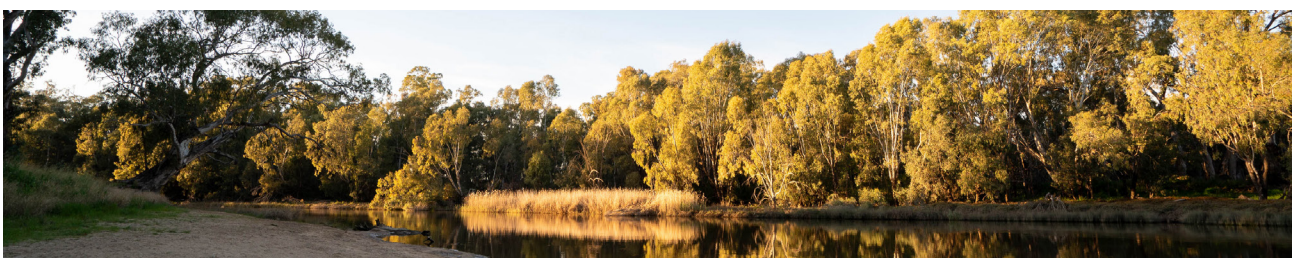
With the market being so competitive for employees, we also need to develop strategies to retain who we have and upskill our own. We also must make it easier for new people to join our organisation by simplifying the job application process.

As a Council, we have a duty and are committed to instilling diversity in the workplace. A sign of a mature, cohesive workforce is a diverse workforce that equates to the diversity of our communities, including the percentage of women, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders, new immigrants to our community, etc.

On a final note, we need to be ready to embrace technology, to implement processes, functions, different equipment/robots, machines and artificial learning. This will enable us to improve service delivery to ratepayers and residents.

To quote a simple phrase, ‘we must work smarter, not harder’. By embracing these areas, we can free up our time devoted to repetitive tasks to achieve more for the community.

John Scarce



# INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME

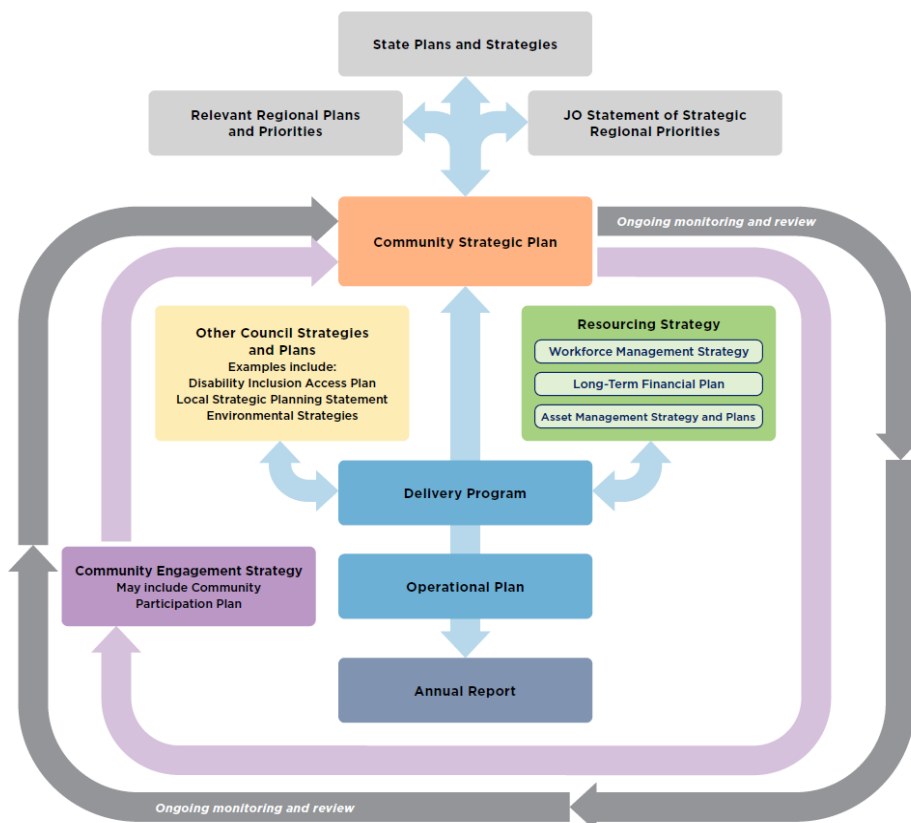
Our staff are the essence of Murrumbidgee Council. With a workforce of over 90 people, we are truly embedded in the organisation, with 93 percent of us living in the community we represent. Collectively, we share the common goal and vision of making our Council area the best it can be.

While we have this vital foundation for a successful workplace, we still face challenges at the local, state and national level that must be addressed to place us in a strong position into the future. We operate in a challenging environment that requires flexibility, performance improvement and responsiveness to meet the constraints of skills shortages.

This document identifies the challenges we face and outlines the strategies to ensure we build capabilities and capacity in the organisation.

This strategy, as part of the Resourcing Strategy, ties in closely with the full suite of strategic planning and reporting documents. The overarching plan is the Community Strategic Plan, which sets out the aspirations and expectations of the community over the next ten years. All other documents then detail how this will be achieved.

The Workforce Management Strategy is an integral part of this as it guides the structure of our Council team to make sure we have the human element required to achieve our strategic goals and objectives. It outlines how future staffing and skills requirements will be met, such as recruitment, succession planning and staff progression and development.



The Workforce Management Strategy outlines the staffing resources required over the next four years. It identifies strategies to enable the organisation to build the capacity and capability of staff into the future.





# ABOUT US

Our purpose is to deliver quality services, creating a friendly, welcoming and engaged community.

## Our corporate values

### Creativity | Teamwork | Innovation

We strive to deliver quality services and well-maintained facilities.

We achieve this with strong, positive and trusted leadership that respects traditional principles and forward thinking, and through this, nurtures who we are, where we live and what we have built.

## Our staff values

### Trust

We have confidence in all cogs of the Council wheel, which leads to efficiencies through a co-operative approach.

### Honesty

We are open, honest and accountable and have great and justifiable pride in our work.

### Teamwork

We work together and embrace a team environment of inclusion, equality and open communication.

### Respect

We genuinely respect each other and appreciate our individual skills, characters and backgrounds.





# Our ORGANISATION

Our organisation is structured into three key departments headed by Directors. A fourth reports directly to the General Manager.



## General Manager

- Executive Support
- Media & Communications
- People & Culture
- Workplace Health & Safety

## Planning, Community & Development

- Customer Service
- Economic Development & Tourism
- Libraries
- Development Assets
- Strategic Planning
- Community Services

## Infrastructure

- Assets
- RMCC (Roads Maintenance) Contract
- Maintenance
- Construction
- Building Maintenance
- Biosecurity

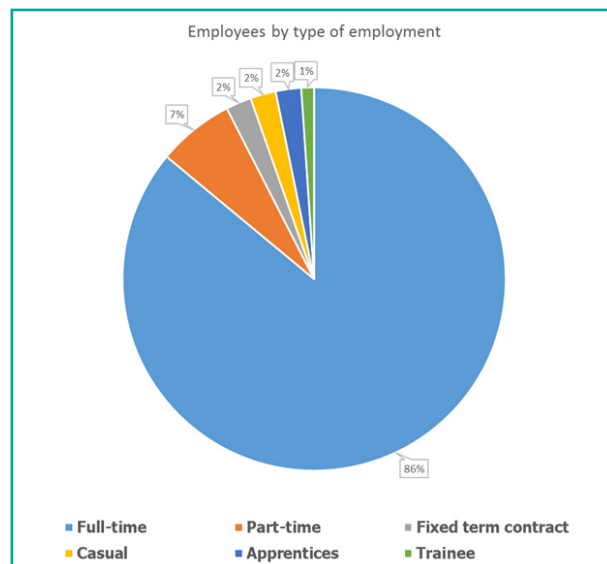
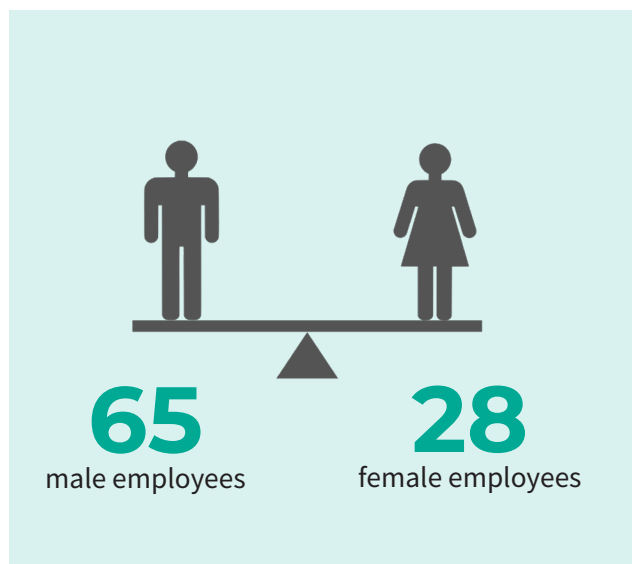
## Finance

- Revenue
- Banking
- Creditors
- Rates
- Procurement & Stores
- Financial Management
- Payroll

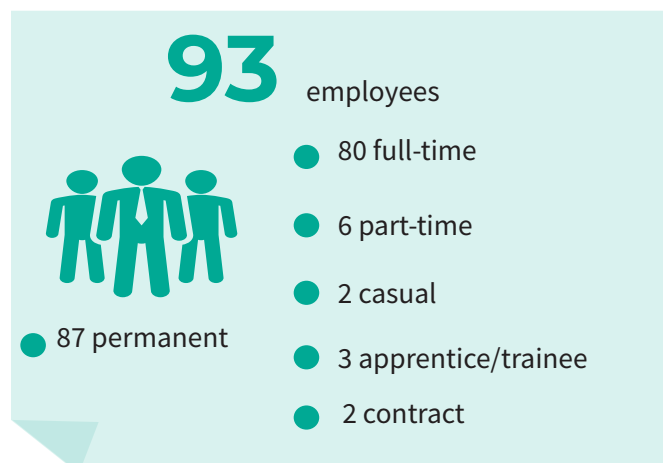




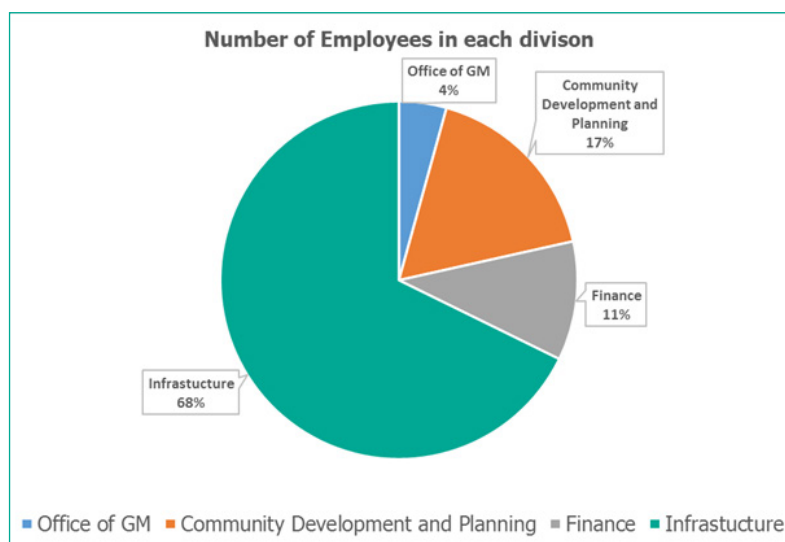
# A snapshot of our **WORKFORCE**



Staff  
turnover  
rate  
5%



Workers  
living in  
our LGA  
93%



Statistics taken on 28 June 2022



# OUR CULTURE

## How we'd like our team to be

We are focusing on building a collaborative culture where we work closely together as a team. Our engagement with staff has shown they strive for a more unified workplace, which will lead to greater

employee satisfaction, personal health and well-being, and in turn, a more productive and highly functioning workplace.



### Our culture

- We will work closely as a team, despite being a large Council area with three different offices.
- We will recognise and celebrate achievements in the workplace.
- We will recognise and appreciate the various skills and experience of our fellow workmates. We will harness this knowledge to empower other employees.
- We will have a high regard for workplace health and safety, and also well-being.
- We will communicate effectively to make sure all staff know Council's priorities, projects and other information.
- We will be offered professional growth opportunities to allow us to build our skills.



*Below: Steve Kraus receiving his 10 year anniversary mementos from Mayor Ruth McRae at the Staff Recognition Ceremony, 16 June 2021. Julie Conn in background.*



### We need to work towards

- Greater inclusivity by unifying the three Council locations.
- Ensuring workplace policies are put into action.
- Building morale.
- Skills development.
- Improving communication.

## How we engaged

- Whole of staff survey
- Anecdotal feedback
- Consultative Committee feedback





# OUR CHALLENGES

- A shortage of qualified staff.
- An ageing workforce, with close to 25 percent of staff nearing retirement.
- Attracting and retaining the right people.
- Achieving diversity in the workplace.
- Building leadership capability.
- Unifying staff and improving collaboration across the organisation.
- Business improvement through more efficient and technological developments.
- Keeping pace with rapid changes in the technological space.
- Continuing to offer the services and capabilities expected by the community in a cost effective way.
- The breadth of our Council area, which makes travelling to other locations an impost on the workday.





# OUR OBJECTIVES

## What we are aiming for

### 1 Culture

We strive to build a workforce culture and environment with buoyant morale, where our staff feel highly valued. Our various teams will collaborate effectively so the organisation functions seamlessly and in sync. We encourage a culture of continuous improvement.

### 2 Attract and retain

We strive to attract and retain great people who understand the important part they play in the community's way of life and are focused on positively contributing to the shared values and visions of the community and organisation.

### 3 Be our best

We strive to build our staff capabilities by empowering all staff, and nurturing future leaders. We will do this by motivating, mentoring and coaching our people so they rise to opportunities and challenges.

### 4 Celebrate our achievements

We will strive for a culture of best practice, which will be achieved through continuous improvement of our people, the team and work practices. We will celebrate and acknowledge the great work we do here at Council. We shout out our successes and achievements and our incredible contribution that is a vital cog in our community.



# OUR PLAN

## How we will achieve our objectives

### Objective 1



### Culture

To create a workforce culture and environment where each member of our team feels valued, included and they are supported to be their best.

Action	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Genuine communication and engagement, including dialogue with staff to understand their needs and improve the working environment	●	●	●	●
Build a work environment that promotes a healthy work/life balance	●	●	●	●
Promote and support employee health and well-being and workplace safety	●	●	●	●
Review Workplace Health and Safety policies and procedures and ensure they support staff safety and well-being	●	●	●	●
Make use of internal research to guide and improve workplace procedures and practices, including employee surveys, training feedback, sentiment analysis from anecdotal staff feedback	●	●	●	●
Implement the Equal Employment Opportunity Policy	●	●	●	●

### Measures

- Improved staff turnover levels
- Attract high level applicants to positions
- More favourable feedback from staff
- Toolbox talks held regularly
- Consultative Committee meetings held every two months
- Workplace Health & Safety meetings held every two months



## Objective 2



# Attract and retain

We will attract and retain great people who understand the important part they play in the community's way of life and are focused on positively contributing to the shared values and visions of the community and organisation. This will empower our people to perform at their best.

Action	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Create an engaged workforce who enjoy their employment with Murrumbidgee Council	●	●	●	●
Build the Murrumbidgee Council brand so that positions within the organisation are highly sought after	●	●	●	●
Implement training packages for each staff member to ensure they continue to learn professionally and personally	●	●	●	●
Implement transition to retirement opportunities, where appropriate	●	●	●	●
Develop constructive and regular goal setting and performance feedback mechanisms	●	●	●	●
Ensure recruitment procedures are effective to ensure we attract high calibre candidates	●	●	●	●
Develop and implement an employment strategy to entice traineeships to Council particularly in skilled shortage areas	●	●	●	●
Develop and implement a sub-strategy to attract trainees to the organisation, particularly in areas with skills shortages	●	●	●	●

## Measures

- Successful transition to retirement for retiring staff members
- More positive feedback obtained in exit interviews
- Improved staff turnover levels
- Fill shortage gaps
- Increased average of applicants for positions





## Objective 3



# Be our best

We strive to build our staff capabilities by empowering all staff and nurturing future leaders. We will do this by motivating, mentoring and coaching our people so they rise to opportunities and challenges.

Action	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Build strength of Council by developing our leadership capability	●	●	●	●
Equip leaders with the correct techniques and tools to champion change	●	●	●	●
Develop leadership at all levels in the organisation	●	●	●	●
Coach leaders in performance management and conflict resolution	●	●	●	●
Create an engaged workforce who enjoy their employment with Murrumbidgee Council	●	●	●	●

## Measures

- Identify employees to participate in future leaders program
- Deliver leadership training
- Deliver performance management and conflict training
- Deliver emotional Intelligence training
- Providing staff opportunities to lead
- Increase staff satisfaction with organisational leadership
- Identify and help grow our emerging leaders



## Objective 4



# Celebrate our achievements

We will strive for a culture of best practice, which will be achieved through continuous improvement of our people, the team and work practices. We will celebrate and acknowledge the great work we do here at Council. We shout out our successes and achievements and our incredible contribution that is a vital cog in our community.

Action	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Build a workplace environment where colleagues and team recognise accomplishments	●	●	●	●
Ensure leaders in the organisation recognise and acknowledge accomplishments	●	●	●	●
Ensure accomplishments are recognised through Council's communication channels, such as the staff newsletter	●	●	●	●
Hold activities to build rapport within the organisation, including whole-of-Council events	●	●	●	●
Review work planning and practices to ensure they are focused on sustainable and efficient work practices that support outcomes of the Community Strategic Plan	●	●	●	●

## Measures

- Long service recognition ceremonies held annually
- Christmas Party held annually
- Team building event held annually
- Improved feedback from staff



# FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

## How this affects the budget



### Employment costs

Employment costs account for 38% of the total operating expenditure for Council. This is in line with the median across Australian Councils,

which ranges from 35-40% of total operating expenses.

Our Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP), has been developed on the basis that service levels

remain consistent over the ten year period. As such, employment costs have been projected to support delivery of services on a business-as-usual basis.

Employee costs are comprised of three components: salary and wage award and performance review increases; movements in employee leave entitlements; and superannuation costs.



### Salary, wage award and performance reviews

In developing the LTFP, we estimated that total employee costs will align with the existing organisation staff structure and increase in line with projected award increases.

Component	2022-23 \$,000	2023-24 \$,000	2024-25 \$,000	2025-26 \$,000
Salaries, wages and leave costs	7,317	7,463	7,612	7,764
Superannuation	825	850	876	902
Workers compensation	315	324	334	344
Training and development	350	350	350	350
Workplace health and safety (WHS)	27	27	27	27
Fringe Benefits Tax	99	102	105	108







## Leave entitlements

Employee leave related estimates reflect our ageing workforce and anticipated retirements and leave patterns. Our Time in Lieu

and Rostered Day Off (RDO) Policy prevents the accrual of time in lieu for overtime where indoor staff members have six or more weeks annual leave accrued.

In addition, the Excess Annual Leave Policy was adopted in March 2022. Broadly, under this policy, staff with annual leave entitlements in excess of 8 weeks are required to take a minimum amount of annual leave each year until their entitlement is at or below this threshold. The result of the policy

is that leave balances for these employees can be expected to reduce, rather than increase, each year.

In addition, a Leave Balance Report is now included as a standing agenda item for consideration at weekly executive team meetings and discussions have recently been held with employees who are required to take leave under this policy.

With some employees carrying sizeable annual leave balances in excess of the threshold, it is anticipated that reducing all leave balances below the 8 week threshold will be a gradual and ongoing process.

## Accrued annual leave



**16%** 12 weeks and over

**26%** 4-8 weeks

**58%** up to 4 weeks



## Superannuation

Superannuation contributions are projected to increase in line with employee costs and increasing contribution

rates as per the Superannuation Guarantee (Administration) Act 1992. The Super Guarantee rate for 2022/23 will be 10.5%, and will steadily increase through to 2025-26, when the contribution rate will be 12%.

In addition, Council is party to an Industry Defined Benefit Superannuation Scheme. In 2009, the Scheme advised member councils that, as a result of the Global Financial Crisis (GFC), it has a significant deficiency of assets over liabilities. Consequently, the scheme asked for significant increases in contributions to fund the deficiency. Council's contribution for 2022-23 will be \$48,441.

