



WORKFORCE PLAN

2022 - 2023



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Commencement Date	26 September 2022
Council Department	General Manager's Office
Contact Officer	Manager-Human Resources
Revision Required	Every 4 Years

Policy Review

This policy shall be reviewed at four (4) yearly intervals at least, to ensure it meets all statutory requirements and the needs of council. It may also be reviewed at other times as determined by council.

Revision History

Version	Council Meeting Date	Resolution No.	Responsible Officer
1	25 June 2012	155/2012	Manager - Human Resources
2	26 June 2017	171/2017	Manager - Human Resources
3	26 September 2022	189/2022	Manager - Human Resources

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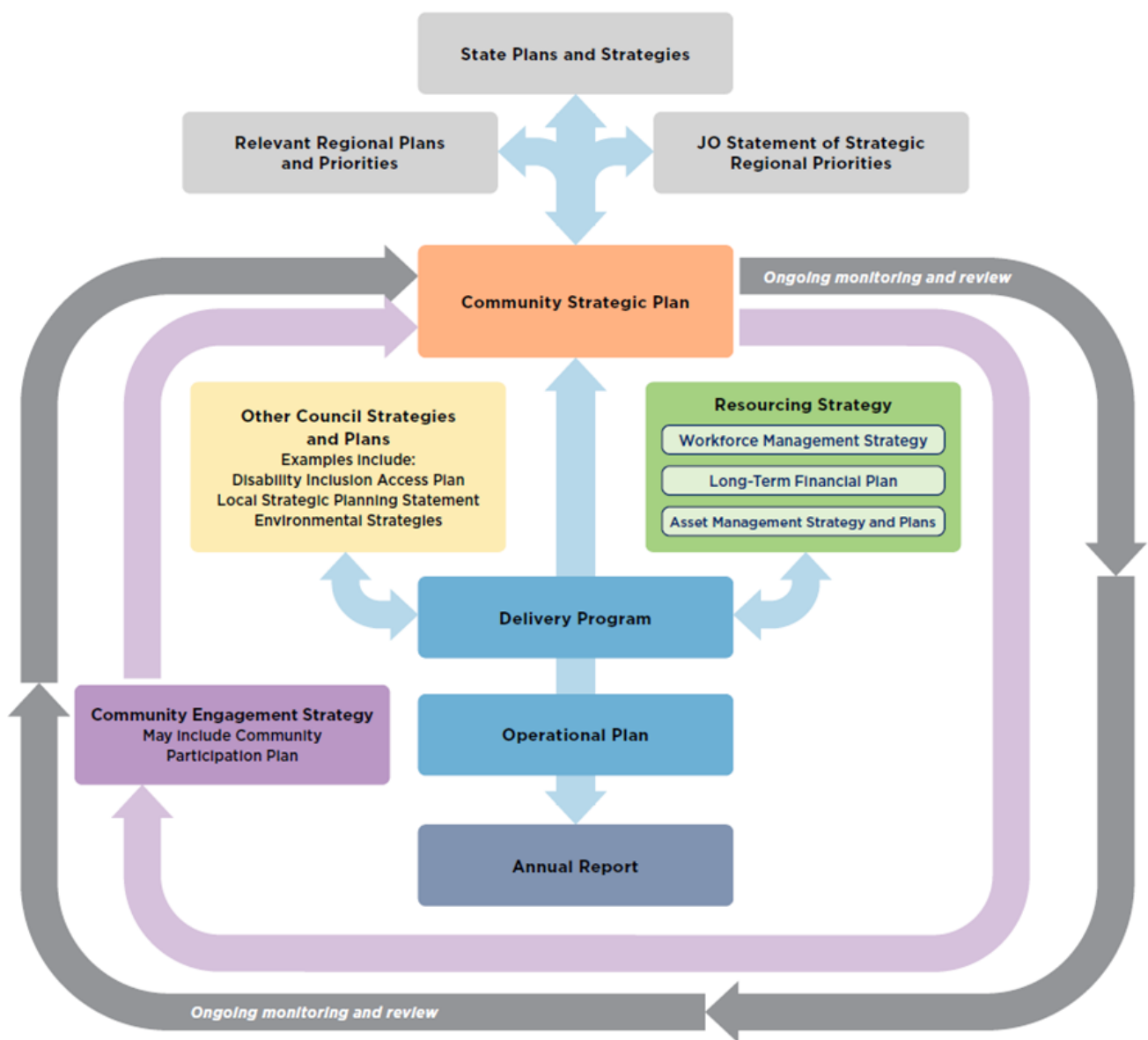
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I. Executive Statement

In planning for our Shire’s future and the Council’s contribution to the outcomes in the Community Strategic Plan, Council considers resourcing capability and future resourcing needs.

Council has developed a suite of overarching plans which demonstrates how Council will be resourced for the next ten years. Key components of Council’s resourcing capability are its assets, its financial position and outlook, existing and potential technologies and human resources.

The Integrated Planning and Reporting (IPR) framework encourages and supports the review of each of Council’s resourcing strategies aligned with the review of the community strategic plan. This Workforce Plan provides detail on Council’s forecasting of workforce requirements, external market factors affecting our workforce and our strategies to support the achievement of our organisational goals to meet the needs of the 2022-26 Delivery Program.



2. Current Workforce Profile

2.1 Snap Shot of our Workforce

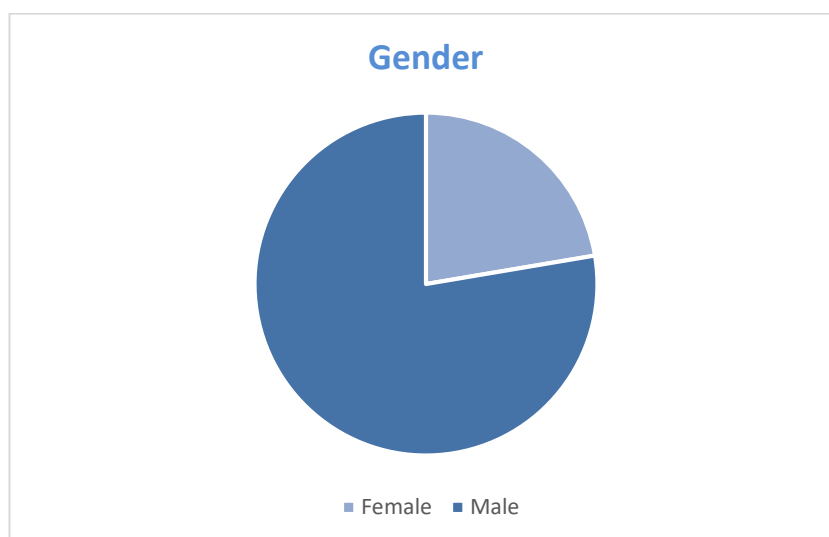
As of 31 December 2021, Council’s workforce consists of a total of 216 staff employed in a variety of capacities including fulltime, part-time, casual and term contracts.

The average age of a Cowra Council employee is 44 (Casual employees not included in calculations)

Generation Z (1995 – 2012)	11.7%
Generation Y (1977 – 1994)	26.6%
Generation X (1966 – 1976)	36.7%
Baby Boomers (1946 – 1965)	25%

2.2 Gender

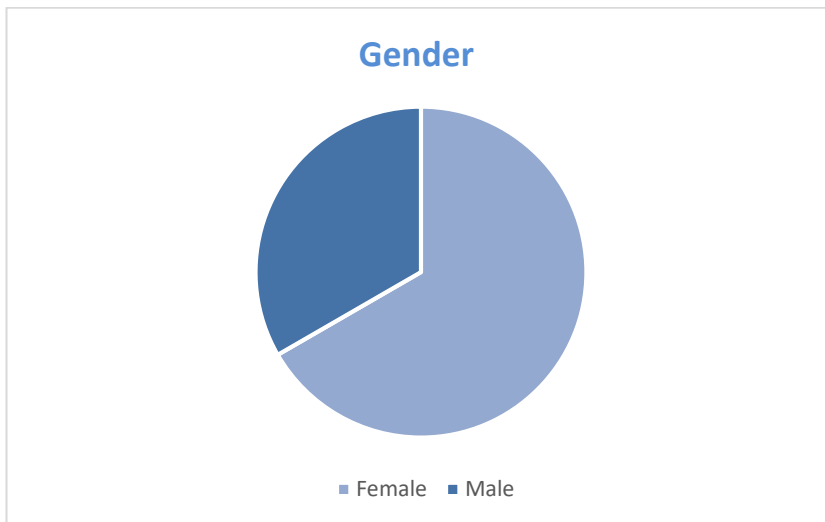
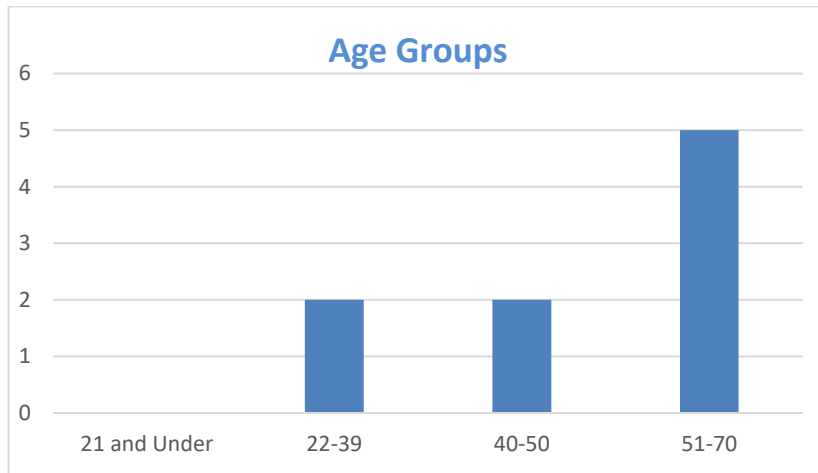
Council’s workforce consists of 78% male and 22% female across the four departments of Council.



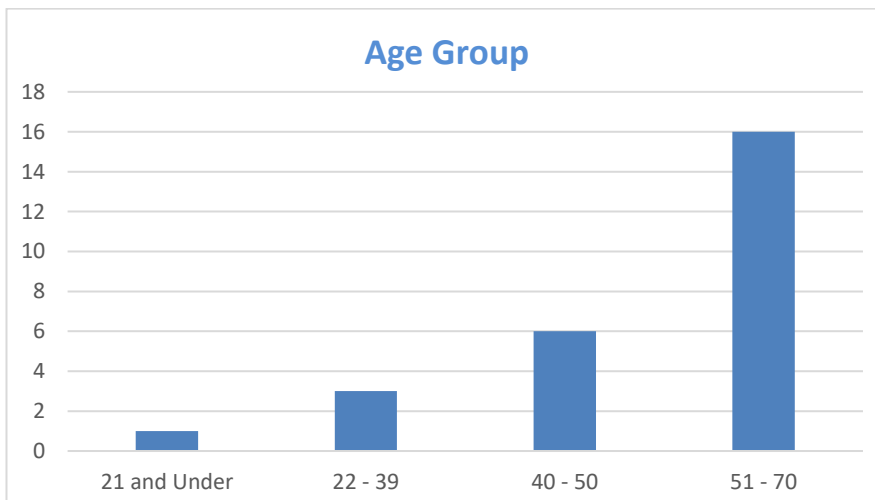
2.3 Indigenous Employees

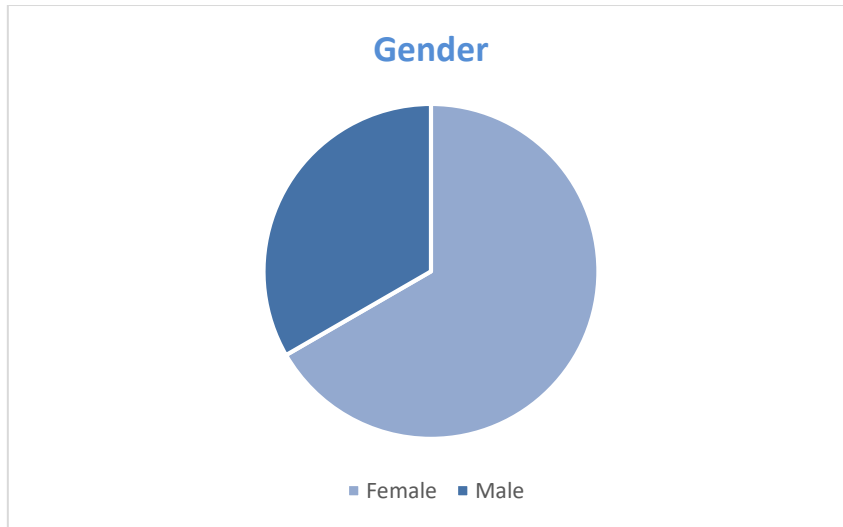
Cowra Council currently has 10 employees who identify as Indigenous. This represents 4.66% of our workforce. Cowra Shire’s Indigenous population is approximately 8.5%.

2.4 General Manager's Office

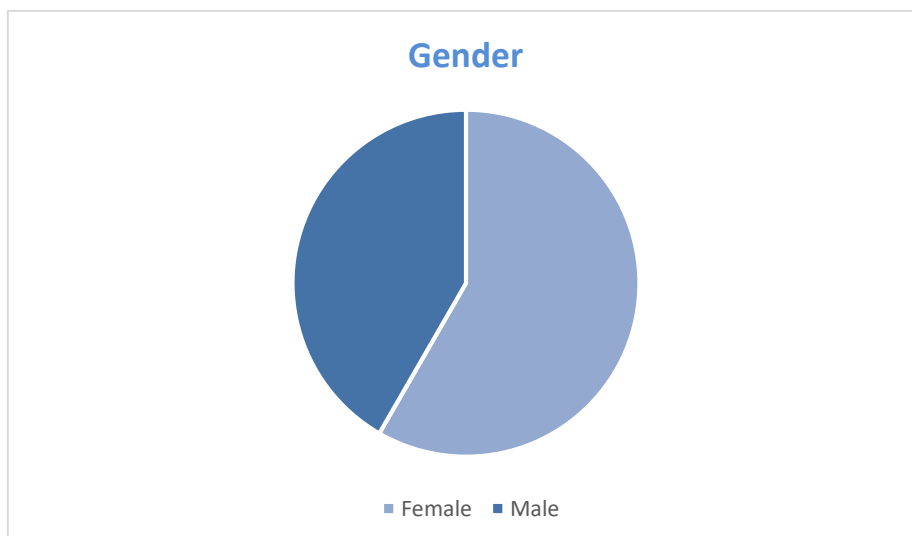
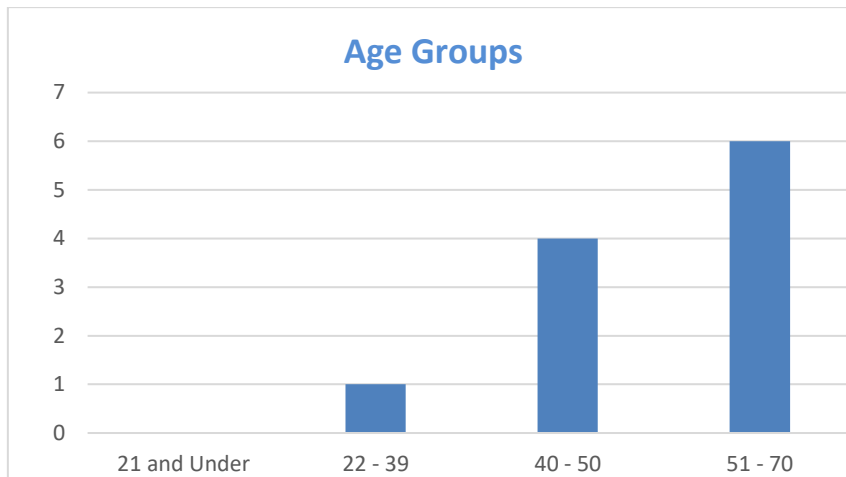


2.5 Corporate Services

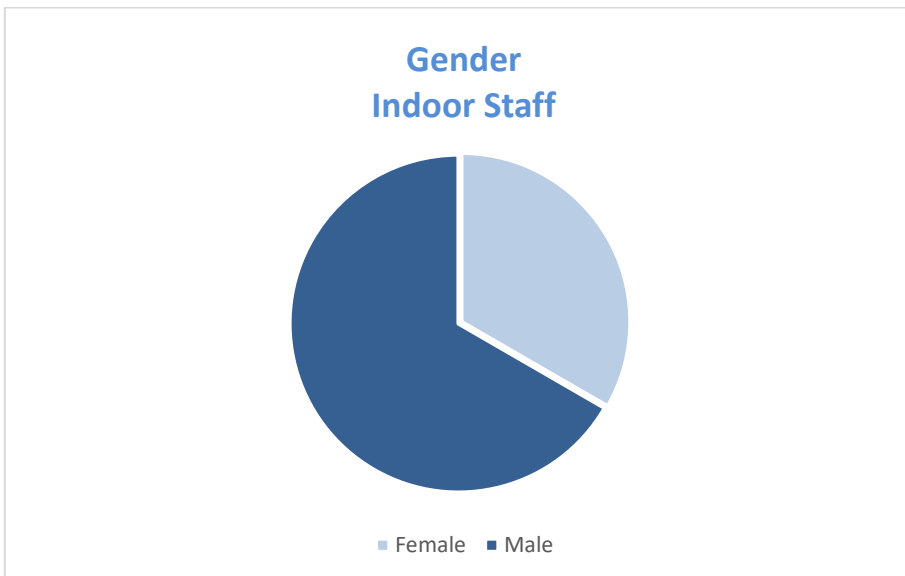
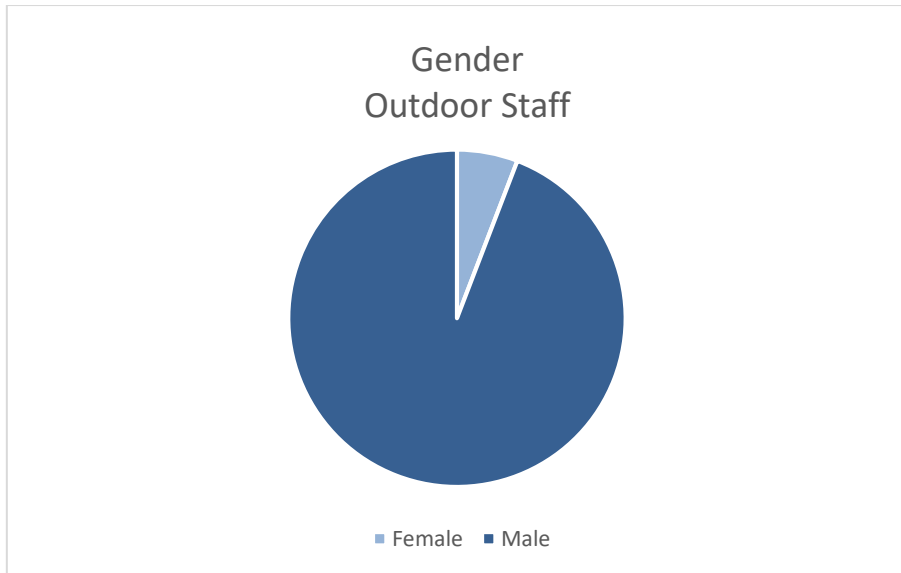
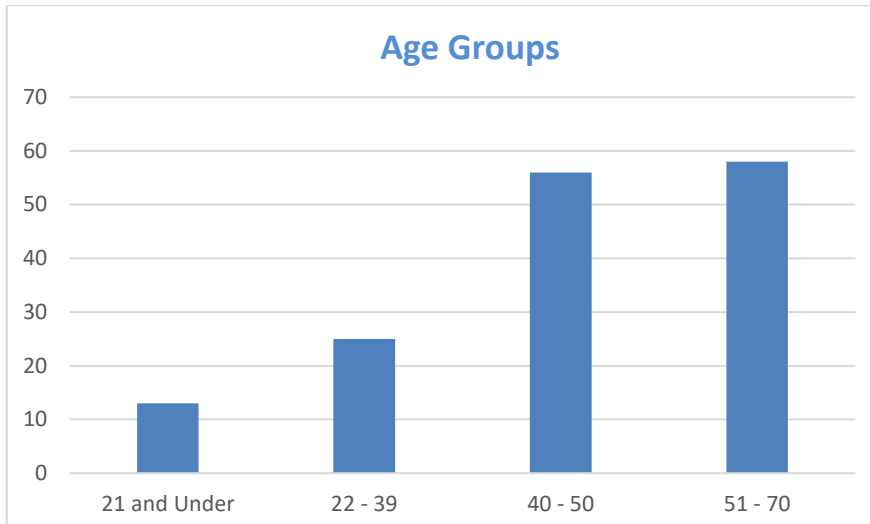




2.6 Environmental Services



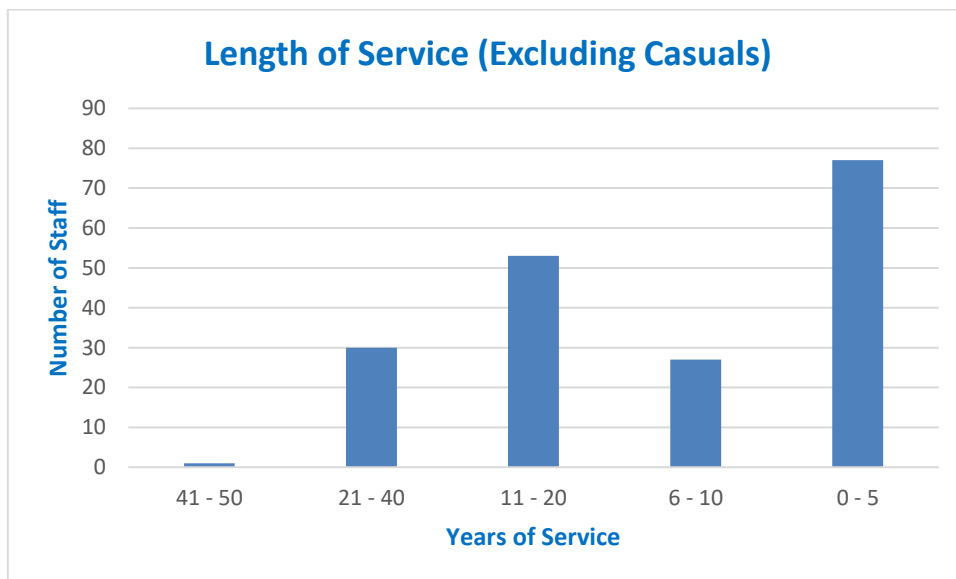
2.7 Infrastructure and Operations



2.8 Council manages the workforce activities throughout the employee lifecycle.



2.9 All Departments – Length of Service



2.10 Cowra Council’s Total Workforce

The organisational structure as at 31 December 2021 comprises of 191.94 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees across four Departments. This figure includes Trainees and Apprentices, but does not include casuals working seasonally at the Aquatic Centre and Civic Centre.

The following table provides an overview of Council’s workforce and identifies by Department and area, the number of full-time equivalent employees (FTEs) based on a 35-hour week for indoor staff and 38 hours for outdoor staff.

Department	Permanent (FTEs)	Term Contracts (FTEs)	Casuals (FTEs)	Total FTEs
General Manager's Dept				
Executive		1		1
Executive Administration	1			1
Business	1			1
Grants & Executive Projects	1			1
Communications	1.06			1.06
Human Resources	2.8			2.8
Total	6.86	1		7.86
Corporate Services				
Executive		1		1
Administration	2.5			2.5
Community Projects	2.06			2.06
Art Gallery	2.2			2.2
Risk Management	1			1
Information Services & Records Management	5			5
Finance/Payroll/Accounts/Rates/Water	8.32			8.32
Customer Service	3			3
Civic Centre		1	4.3	5.3
Total	24.08	2	4.3	50.06
Environmental Services				
Executive		1		1
Administration	1			1
Planning	4			4
Building & Regulatory	4.48			4.48
Ranger Services	2.2			2.2
Total	11.68	1		12.68
Infrastructure & Operations				
Executive		1		1
Administration	3.32			3.32
Transport for NSW	4			4
Cowra Works	6			6
Cowra Works - Construction	24			24
Cowra Works - Maintenance	21			21
Cowra Works - Water & Sewer	20			18
Depot/Workshop	11			11
Technical Services	7	1		8
Cowra Services	2			2
Cowra Services - Parks & Gardens	17			19
Biosecurity	2			2
Project Management	1			1
Cowra Services - Aerodrome & Cemeteries	2			2
Cowra Services - Aquatic Centre	2		6.8	9.8
Cowra Services - MRF	11	8		19
Cowra Services - Saleyards	3			3
Total	136.32	10	6.8	145.12
Combined Total	178.94	13	11.1	203.04

3. Workforce Trends and Considerations 2022 - 2032

The review of the Workforce Plan considers a range of internal and external factors in forecasting our future workforce needs. Detailed below are the key considerations that we need to be aware of in planning for the workforce over the coming years to deliver on the goals and objectives outlined in the other plans.

Customer Value

The role of Council's human resources section is to provide support to the organisation to effectively and efficiently deliver our community services. Therefore, from a human resources perspective, our customers are our employees and leaders in the organisation.

The increasing competition for talent and our vision of an employer of choice drives us to continually improve our employee engagement, our employees' experience at work, our leaders' experience with working with human resources and our candidates' experience when applying for vacancies.

Through the human resources function, we will continue to have a focus on customer value, finding new, innovative and flexible ways to support the goals of the organisation.

Candidate experience

The expectations of technology and speed of process for candidates needs to be considered in our attraction strategy and processes. This will ensure we are reaching and engaging effectively with talented candidates, providing an experience for them aligned to our values and strongly competing for the best talent.

Candidates increasingly have expectations of a faster, easier and accessible recruitment and selection process.

Innovation, Technology and Change

We live in an increasingly digital world. The tools we use to do our work, the delivery of services to our community and the expectations of the community for technology, innovation, online services and efficiencies continue to increase. The impact of this on our workforce is the increased need for technical and specialist skills in the areas of technology and digital communications, skilled plant operators, technologically savvy employees and the increased need for leadership with skills to drive innovation and implement change. In doing this we need to provide a learning environment that supports employees in the transition.

The competition for talent

The amalgamation of Councils together with the growing regional employment opportunities with state government have impacted the local government environment.

We are now competing to attract and retain talent with larger councils who may offer higher remuneration packages or additional career opportunities. We continue to compete for talent with the private sector and State Government bodies. Many in the professional disciplines of planning and building are branching out on their own to capitalise on the skills shortages and increase their income for relatively little risk. The transport and mining industries whilst not always offering the same work/life balance provide substantial opportunities for higher incomes that are attractive to many of our skilled employees such as plant operators and mechanics.

There is an ongoing shortage of professional staff in the industry particularly in the areas of engineering, finance, planning and building certification. We need to look at shorter and longer term options to fill that demand including cadetships and offering more flexible working arrangements.

Flexible Work Practices

Flexible work practices are a component of our competitive advantage to attract and retain talent and will continue to be reviewed to identify value to both employees and the organisation in delivering our services

Together with a complex range of services, there is an increasing expectation of broader service hours. Currently we have areas of the organisation operating between 4.30am and 10pm, 7 days a week, however the support services to those organisation areas operate during normal business hours. There will be increasing need for the services supporting the organisation operations to provide greater flexibility across operational hours.

As the workforce ages it will continue to be of importance to provide flexible work practices to support phased retirement plans. This strategy also allows us to mitigate the risk of losing corporate knowledge and supports the organisation to transfer knowledge, whilst supporting the wellbeing of our employees.

Working from home provides an opportunity for employees to experience a better work-life balance, improve productivity and increase job satisfaction. Workers who are more satisfied with their jobs will increase retention rates, retaining skilled and valuable employees. Flexibility to allow working from home and indeed in other locations eg Sydney, provides an attraction to potential skilled candidates.

Diversity and Inclusion

Council recognises the value of diversity within its workforce that reflects the community from which the workforce is drawn. We will continue to strengthen our recruitment and selection processes and look for opportunities to encourage greater diversity within the workforce.

Risk Management

We have strong performance management of our safety and risk and this will continue to be a focus for us.

Our enterprise risk management framework will continue to be reviewed and integrated across the organisation. We will continue to mitigate risk to ensure both operational and strategic risks are identified and addressed.

There are a number of significant workforce risks/issues that need to be considered and managed including:

- An ageing workforce resulting in a potential loss of corporate knowledge
- Younger employees' expectations of having numerous jobs within their lifetime over different disciplines
- The capacity of the workforce to cater for an increasing demand for and level of services from the community
- Skills shortages particularly in professional areas including accounting, engineering, building and regulatory functions and town planning.
- The rapid uptake of technology and its impacts on staff and service delivery
- Constraints on Council finances that often result in seeking more work with less resources

Employee Remuneration

To remain a desirable employer within local government, Cowra Council will need to continue to review and benchmark our remuneration. This will enable us to remain competitive in the market and attract and retain talent and continue to deliver and improve our services. Our benefits offered to employees are a strong competitive advantage, focusing on health and wellbeing, flexible work

practices for work/life balance and learning and development opportunities. Proactively promoting and marketing our benefits will contribute to attracting and retaining talent.

Building Capability through Learning and Development

We will continue our strong focus on building our leadership capability, operational skills, offering development opportunities and driving a high-performance culture.

We will continue to review the learning and development needs of employees to ensure that the skills, qualifications and competencies of employees meet our current and future operational requirements. At the same time, we recognise and embrace that all employees should have the opportunity to further develop their knowledge and skills so that they may continue to grow and succeed.

The implementation of the learning and development strategy is based on individual employee learning and development plans and evaluation of employee training needs analysis.

4. Supporting Strategies

4.1 Attraction and Retention Strategy

Introduction

The importance of attracting and retaining talent continues to be an important factor to deliver quality services to our community. The challenge of doing so is increasing with the changes in NSW local government, the ongoing competition with the private sector as business activity, headcount and salaries increase, the escalating speed of technology and changing expectations of candidates.

It is important our Workforce Plan includes our strategy to address these issues.

There are a range of programs needed to address this issue and these programs will deliver on the key actions below.

Strategic Objectives

Objective 1 – Attract Candidates

Attract and retain quality candidates

Key Actions:

- Strengthen our employer branding and presence by promoting our opportunities, working conditions, wellbeing programs, flexible work practices and learning and development programs.
- Continuously improve our recruitment and onboarding processes to focus on candidate experience and customer value.
- Review and benchmark our total rewards and benefits packages.
- Continuously coach and develop capability for strong and strategic recruitment decision making.
- Investigate feasibility of establishing an Indigenous Traineeship Program.
- Consider opportunities to recruit trainees, apprentices and professional cadets.

- Implement recruitment strategies to attract and retain target groups identified in the EEO Management Plan.

Objective 2 – Embrace Technology

Implement technology and system innovations

Key Actions:

- Improve technology capability for data management, workforce planning and reporting.
- Try new ways of reaching and engaging with potential candidates and current employees.
- Continuously improve the performance review process for meaningful career development conversations and performance.
- Review and alignment of our job evaluation process to ensure internal and external consistency
- Continually review and evaluate our workplace policies to ensure it is a fair workplace whose policies are modern, reasonable and easy to understand.

Responsibility

Management responsibilities are:

- Support the ongoing improvement and strengthening of the recruitment and selection process towards best practice and candidate experience.
- Ensure policy and process are followed to meet legal requirements and merit-based decisions.
- Participate in and support their leaders to complete training to be skilled in best practice recruitment and selection processes and decision making.
- Actively support employee engagement activities.
- Demonstrate and support development of leadership at all levels.

Human Resources responsibilities are:

- Identify and implement ongoing improvements to the recruitment and selection process.
- Provide support, coaching and training for leaders in best practice recruitment and selection practices.
- Proactively identify opportunities to promote our employer brand to attract quality candidates.
- Design, implement and continuously improve reward and recognition programs.
- Identify and take advantage of opportunities to add value and strategically advise the organisation with workforce data.
- Lead the implementation of technology and innovation to achieve attraction and retention objectives.
- Review workforce policies.

4.2 Learning and Development Strategy

Introduction

The Learning and Development Strategy details the programs to support the development needs within the resourcing strategy 2022-32. This strategy is embedded within the Workforce Plan and is reviewed annually.

Strategic Objectives

Objective 1 – Develop Skills and Capability

Develop knowledge, skills and capability through the delivery of the learning and development strategy

Key actions:

- Provide development opportunities for growth in all competencies detailed for each role.
- Deliver courses with flexible options wherever possible and package and deliver programs when requested to meet the needs of specific teams and organisational goals.
- Enhance reporting available on learning histories and progress against learning and development plans.
- Facilitate participation in specific professional development and networking opportunities.
- Develop and implement a staff Educational Assistance Policy.

Objective 2 – Develop leadership

Develop leadership capability and support a high-performance culture through leadership development

Key actions:

- Implement leadership development programs to support capability building and leadership pipeline.
- Manage programs for emerging and developing leaders to develop capabilities through learning from others either within Cowra Council or other councils, such as mentoring, shadowing, and coaching.
- Support participation in industry leadership events.
- Promote participation in and leadership of cross functional projects by emerging and developing leaders.
- Support resources and programs to induct new leaders and managers.
- Support the implementation of 360 feedback and coaching for managers and executive.

Objective 3 – Promote employee health and wellbeing

Cowra Council has a range of health and wellbeing programs including immunisation programs for at-risk employees, skin checks for employees, pre-employment medical examinations, fitness for work examinations, flu vaccination clinics, annual health checks and other programs from time to time.

These wellbeing programs are a Council initiative for a resilient, motivated, healthy and productive culture.

Key actions:

- Continue to enhance the wellbeing of employees with ongoing events and programs eg all staff barbecues, health checks.

- Continue to monitor the fitness for work where required following workplace injury or non-workplace injuries.
- Deliver psychological resilience development to support positive psychology awareness in the Council.
- Continue the Employee Assistance Program providing counselling support for all employees of the Council.

Responsibility

Employees' responsibilities are to:

- Develop their learning and development plan during their annual Performance Review
- Implement and share the skills and competencies obtained during development opportunities.
- Take action to develop and apply new skills in the workplace.
- Actively participate in learning opportunities, including a combination of learning methods (formal, from others, and from experience).
- Complete evaluation forms as requested for any learning and development initiative.
- Advise their supervisor/manager and human resources if they are unable to attend scheduled training or there are changes to their learning and development plan.

Supervisors' responsibilities are to:

- Identify skill gaps and help target development needs of their team.
- Assist in the implementation of learning on the job initiatives by providing coaching, feedback, and development opportunities.
- Anticipate potential barriers to learning and plan how to overcome them.
- Ensure employees are available to attend scheduled training and provide confirmation of non-attendance (and provide a replacement if applicable).
- Support opportunities for application of new skills in the workplace.
- Support opportunities for progressive application of new skills and agreed measures for progress.

Management responsibilities are to:

- Support opportunities for application of new skills in the workplace.
- Provide learning opportunities (formal, from others and from experience) that will enable employees to progressively develop.
- Identify and remove potential barriers to learning.
- Create a clear understanding of the importance of the implementation and completion of employees learning and development plans.
- Promote and implement targeted learning and development programs and initiatives within each department as required.
- Collaborate with human resources to ensure successful achievement of organisational development goals.

Human Resources responsibilities are to:

- Develop and provide a suite of programs each financial year based on corporate priorities and the learning needs of our employees.
- Provide flexible, enjoyable and safe learning experiences.
- Facilitate succession planning through a variety of means including trainees, cadets, apprenticeships, targeting key areas and the development of existing and potential leaders through leadership development programs.
- Communicate the availability of learning programs and initiatives through a variety of mediums.

- Seek and incorporate employee feedback to continuously improve our programs and processes.
- Provide reports on learning and development undertaken.

4.3 Risk and Safety Strategy

Introduction

The Risk and Safety Strategy details the strategies that will be implemented during the term of the current Delivery Program. This Strategy is embedded within the Workforce Plan and is reviewed annually.

The purpose of this Strategy is to increase awareness and commitment to Risk and Safety within the Council's workforce. The aim is to build, implement and achieve Risk and Safety excellence by providing minimum harm through a culture that ensures the safety of Council's workforce.

Strategic Objectives

Objective 1 - Workplace health and safety culture

Embed workplace health and safety as a core value in the workforce to support effective and positive workplace health and safety performance outcomes, which will continue to build strong relationships within all departments of Council.

Key actions:

- Report incidents as soon as possible, with a blame free culture supported through the entire workforce.
- Managers and Supervisors actively participate in risk and safety programs and consultation.
- Maintain a workforce in full compliance with mandatory workplace health and safety competencies and licences.
- Ensuring the workforce have the training and awareness to perform effectively in their roles.
- Fully inform the workforce about expected workplace health and safety behaviours, responsibilities and performance expectations.

Objective 2 – Systems, Policies and processes

Ensure workplace, health and safety training management systems provide Council with the required procedural guidance and tools to manage the health and safety of workers.

Ensure best safety practices in the management of health and safety risks and/or environmental impacts upon Council workers and worksites.

Key actions:

- Ensure implementation of an effective incident reporting and investigation system.
- Ensure policies, standard operating procedures and other documentation is accurate and current.
- Monitor compliance with workplace health and safety management systems, all related policies, procedures and initiatives across all divisions of the Council.

- Minimise SafeWork NSW notifiable incidents and introduce control measures to enhance workplace health and safety education awareness, involvement and compliance across all departments.

Objective 3 - Workers compensation, work injuries and illnesses

To reduce occupational injuries and illnesses through continued application of injury management and prevention programs and proactive management of cases where injury has occurred.

Key actions:

- Maintain 100 per cent compliance with workers compensation insurance timelines for incident reporting, resulting in no excess payments.
- Aim to achieve an actual total claim cost below the industry average and a reduced actual total day lost measure. This will be maintained through continual liaison with key stakeholders, including, workers compensation insurer, medical practitioners, return to work co-ordinators, managers, supervisors and injured workers.
- Have in place health surveillance for at risk workers.
- Continue to improve lost time injury statistics.

Objective 4 - Risk management framework

Cowra Council has an enterprise risk register to record, monitor and review organisational risks across the organisation. The risk register is continuously reviewed and updated.

Key actions:

- Continue to implement the risk register and critical control measures across all departments of the Council.
- Continue ongoing risk identification for workplace, health and safety risks that require attention and implementation of critical control measures by the department.
- Develop and implement a Risk Management Plan for systematic organisational risk assessment and management.
- Scope and implement control measures for emerging risks.
- Continue toolbox talks and other educational strategies for safety risks and environmental impacts.

Responsibility

Employee responsibilities are to:

- Ensure they practice due care in accordance with legal requirements and workplace, health and safety training.
- Ensure they assist officers in carrying out due diligence as per legal requirements.
- Ensure they notify a supervisor about any incident/illness/unsafe work practice.
- Actively participate in workplace, health and safety training.

Supervisors' responsibilities are to:

- Ensure they practice due care as per legal requirements and workplace health and safety training.
- Participate in workplace health and safety training.

- Proactively manage workplace health and safety issues within their control or escalate to manager.
- Provide toolbox talks and/or other means of communication on workplace health and safety issues.
- Support workplace health and safety training of staff.
- Undertake risk assessments as required and take appropriate actions.
- Immediately advise managers of any unsafe work practices.

Manager/Executive responsibilities are to:

- Ensure all staff, themselves included, have attended workplace health and safety training.
- Ensure their department's risks have been assessed and there are appropriate control measures implemented.
- Ensure implementation of and compliance with workplace health and safety management systems, policies and procedures in their department.
- Immediately advise managers of any unsafe work practices.

5. Measuring and Monitoring Performance against the Workforce Plan

We will measure the impact of our strategies, the progress of our programs against these issues, and the Workforce Plan themes in the following areas:

- Workforce data is accurate and accessible for strategic decision-making
- Employee engagement survey
- Delivery of human resources programs/initiatives within budget
- Minimise recruitment time
- Turnover rate
- Workforce diversity statistics
- Merit-based selection principles applied for recruitment decisions
- Annual performance review completion within timeframe
- Induction program completed by all new employees
- Satisfaction rating and participation rates of learning and development programs
- Compliance with mandatory workplace health and safety requirements
- Actual workers compensation total claim performance rate will be below industry average
- Participation and satisfaction rates for health and wellbeing programs

6. Workforce Plan Summary 2022-2025

Cowra Council continues to implement proactive and measurable programs and practices to build a sustainable, agile and capable workforce. This is a flexible and responsive Workforce Plan prepared to support and integrate with other strategic plans adopted by Council.

The Workforce Plan will ensure resources are available for the current Delivery Program to deliver services to meet the community's needs, outlined in the Cowra Shire Community Strategic Plan.