



# Workforce Plan 2023 -2036

## Contents

Shire Vision.....	3
Introduction .....	4
Service Provision.....	5
Four Steps of Workforce Planning.....	5
Internal and External Environment and Workforce.....	6
External Environment .....	7
Current Organisation Structure.....	8
Organisational Environment.....	9
Analysis of current workforce data .....	9
Current Organisational ad Workforce Risk Profile.....	9
Tenure of Employment .....	10
Strategic Community Plan Workforce Implications.....	11
Organisation Structure Implications.....	11
Strategic Community Plan priorities.....	11
Strategic to meet future workforce needs .....	11
Strategies to meet future requirements .....	11
Monitoring and Evaluation.....	12
Achieving the objectives of the Strategic Community Plan.....	12

### Revision History

Rev No	Date	Reason for Revision
1.0	27 <sup>th</sup> September 2023	Desktop Review

## Shire Vision

*The Shire of Cunderdin is committed to workforce planning to provide quality services to the community and to attract, recruit, retain manage and develop our staff. The Council and Executive of the Shire take a unified approach and we are proud of our staff and their contribution to achieving the goals and objectives set for them through our planning and community consultation processes. Integrated workforce planning is a relatively new discipline and we have embraced the concept and started our journey.*

*Our Community values and aspirations will underpin our workforce planning and decision-making processes.*

*We are committed to the continuous improvement and integration of our workforces requirements and needs. We understand it is pivotal in ensuring we have the right people in the right place and at the right time to be able to continue to meet the changing requirements and challenges posed by government, community, employment and economic environments.*

*We aim to be flexible to accommodate the wellbeing of our staff and their families and to reflect the lifestyle people enjoy in this Community. This will allow us to attract and retain the level of skills and expertise to fulfil our legislative requirements and to provide quality and affordable services for our community.*

This workforce plan has been developed to address the requirements of the Local Government Act 1995 Section S5.56 (1) A “plan for the future” and the associated Regulations.

## Introduction

The Workforce Plan 2023-2036 forms part of the Shire's Integrated Planning Framework. The purpose of this plan is to identify and determine the workforce needs for the Shire in regards to capacity and capability needs to deliver the outcomes of the Corporate Business Plan 2021/22 – 2024/25

The Workforce Plan 2023-2036 is based on a review of the past workforce initiatives, re-alignment of workforce needs around the Shire's service delivery framework; and future workforce initiatives that will ensure projected workforce needs are met as service and project requirements change.

To do this successfully, the Shire must:

- Develop an understanding of the current workforce and also the future needs.
- Identify the emerging skills gaps in the capability of the workforce.
- Capture the emerging challenges facing the business that may affect the workforce.

The Shire has been guided by the Workforce Plan since the Shire's inaugural Workforce Plan in 2013 and the second Workforce Plan in 2018. This Workforce Plan will be the third developed under the Department of Local Government Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework guidelines.

The Workforce Plan is a guiding document within the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework.



This Workforce Plan identifies and reports on the internal capacity to meet current and future needs of the goals and objectives of the Shire and the community, both in capacity and capability. It identifies the gaps or surpluses in human, assets or financial resources and identifies strategies to ensure there are the right people in the right place and at the right time to deliver on expectations.

The Shire of Cunderdin acknowledges that Workforce Planning enables a Local Government to:

- Respond quickly and strategically to change by recognising emerging challenges within the community;
- Improve efficiency, effectiveness and productivity by having employees with the right knowledge and skills and who are a good fit for the job they are in;
- Facilitate strategic staffing and planning for future workforce requirements by identifying these in a timely manner, monitoring staff separations and making arrangements to fill key vacancies;
- Encourage understanding of the organisation's workforce profile so that existing workforce capacity can be maximised, and the future workforce shaped as needed;
- Assist with identifying and managing people with the knowledge critical for efficient and effective business operations, and managing corporate memory;
- Monitor costs and directly link workforce expenditure against business outputs and outcomes, and
- Strengthen the local government industry through stronger career paths and staff development.

## Service Provision

The Shire delivers a wide range of services and facilities to the community.

It is proposed that existing service levels be maintained for all operational areas in formulating this plan. However, a key objective in the Corporate Business Plan is to improve existing service levels in the longer term whilst continuing to achieve annual operating surpluses each year to fund the provision of infrastructure.

The Shire of Cunderdin employs 31 full time equivalents (FTE's). Activity over the period covered by this Plan is expected to be 'business as usual' and no significant changes to its operations are envisaged that arise from the Strategic Community Plan or others.

External factors such as local government mergers or devolution of State services may have an influence but at this stage have not been considered as part of the workforce plan.

## Four Steps of Workforce Planning

The methodology used follows the practices and principles of the WA Department of Local Government's Workforce Planning Guidelines.

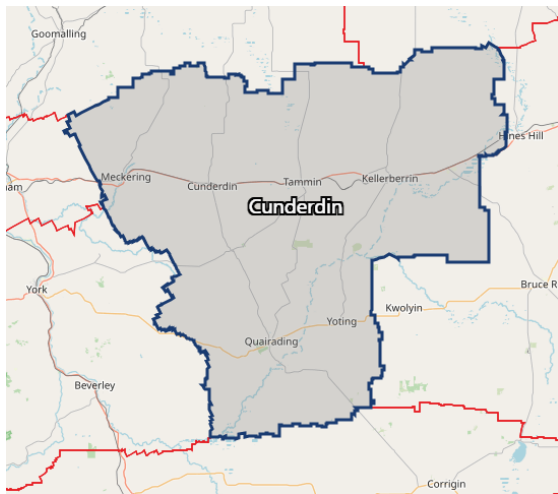
There are four distinct stages as outlined in the diagram and the process was carried out in a consultative and capacity building manner to ensure ownership and sustainability. This plan will be used to guide recruitment, retention and workforce growth, development or changes over the term of its life.

This document addresses these steps.



## Internal and External Environment and Workforce

Source - <https://www.abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/LGA52450>



Geography type [Local Government Areas](#)  
Area code LGA52450

An analysis of the demographic profile of the Shire has been undertaken as part of the Strategic Community planning process using current data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

According to the 2021 Census data supplied by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, there were 1,302 people in the Shire of Cunderdin, of these 52.4% were male and 47.6% were female. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people made up 3.1% of the population.

The median age of the population was 37 years.

Children aged 0 - 14 years made up 20.2% of the population and people aged 60 years and over made up 25.1% of the population.

	<b>People</b>	<b>1,302</b>
	Male	52.4%
	Female	47.6%
	Median age	37
	<b>Families</b>	<b>305</b>
	Average number of children per family	
	for families with children	2.1
	for all households (a)	0.8
	<b>All private dwellings</b>	<b>658</b>
	Average number of people per household	2.5
	Median weekly household income	\$1,496
	Median monthly mortgage repayments	\$1,200
	Median weekly rent (b)	\$200
	Average number of motor vehicles per dwelling	2.4

(a) This label has been updated to more accurately reflect the Census concept shown in this data item. The data has not changed.  
(b) For 2021, median weekly rent calculations exclude dwellings being occupied rent-free.

Of the population, 33.48% of people were attending an educational institution; 23.8% were in primary school, 33.4% in secondary school and 11.2% in a tertiary or technical institution.

The most common ancestries in the Shire were Australian 47.9%, English 40%, Scottish 7.4%, Irish 6.8% and 4.3% Filipino. Those of Australian Aboriginal ancestry comprise 3.1% of the population. 77.6% of the population were born in Australia.

For 86.3% of the population, English is the only language spoken at home while 5.8% of households speak a non-english language with 1.3% Filipino and 2.3% Tagalog (Filipino variant) being the most common.

There were 612 people who reported being in the labour force in the week before Census night in the Shire. Of these 58.3% were employed full time,

28.9% were employed part-time and 5.4% were unemployed.

The most common occupations within the Shire are Managers 25.5%, Technicians and Trades Workers 14.8%, Labourers 13.8%, Clerical and Administrative Workers 10%. Of those persons employed, 11.6% worked in the Other Grain Growing industry, 9.1% in Grain-Sheep or Grain-Beef Cattle Farming, 7.4% in Secondary Education and 4.5% in Local Government Administration.

67.5% of people aged 15 years and over did unpaid domestic work in the week before the Census. 29.1% provided unpaid care for children and 10.3% provided unpaid assistance to a person with a disability, health condition or due to old age. In the 12 months prior to the Census, 30.8% of people did voluntary work through an organisation or a group.

The major industry of employment for the region is agriculture, followed by education and training. This is not expected to change although some diversification of the local economy, with manufacturing being another major industry, may assist in reducing reliance on a major single sector.

The main activities of the Shire are:

- Maintenance of a transport (road) network;
- Provision of parks, recreation facilities in the Cunderdin & Meckering townsites; and
- Administration of regulatory services under various State Acts such as Planning and Development, Building, Health etc.

The Shire is not expecting major growth or a shift in community expectations in the immediate future that may affect the scope or level of services provided. Possible closure by the State of some or part of the rail network in the district will increase use of local roads by heavy vehicles and may require an increase in the capacity of the Shire's transport network maintenance capacity.

While the volume of work undertaken by the Shire remains relatively stable, its complexity is increasing. Regulatory requirements to be administered by the Shire grow and appear to continue to do so as does increasing State and Federal compliance reporting.

## External Environment

The Local Government industry has faced and will continue to face many challenges in relation to structural reform across the sector that includes amalgamations and collaborative resource sharing where practical to ensure sustainability and governance to build for the future. Both metropolitan and regional areas are experiencing change and uncertainty that has the potential to impact on the workforce both positively and negatively in being an industry of choice for employment. Increasing workloads, exit of skilled staff to other employment sectors, aging workforces and the levels of staff turnover in some areas of the workforce are creating serious challenges in recruitment and retention as well as on the wellbeing of the officers. Increased service expectations and transfer of services from State Government in some areas is also having an impact on the ability to attract, recruit and afford the appropriate workforce.

A number of governance arrangements are in place to ensure the future sustainability of communities through the provision of resource sharing, diversification and a growing use of Regional Organisations of Councils. These aim for future economic, environmental and social sustainability for the region.

In planning for the workforce there are a number of external pressures to take into account that are beyond the Shire's ability to control, however strategies to address them must be taken into account in the overall planning process. These include, but are not limited to:

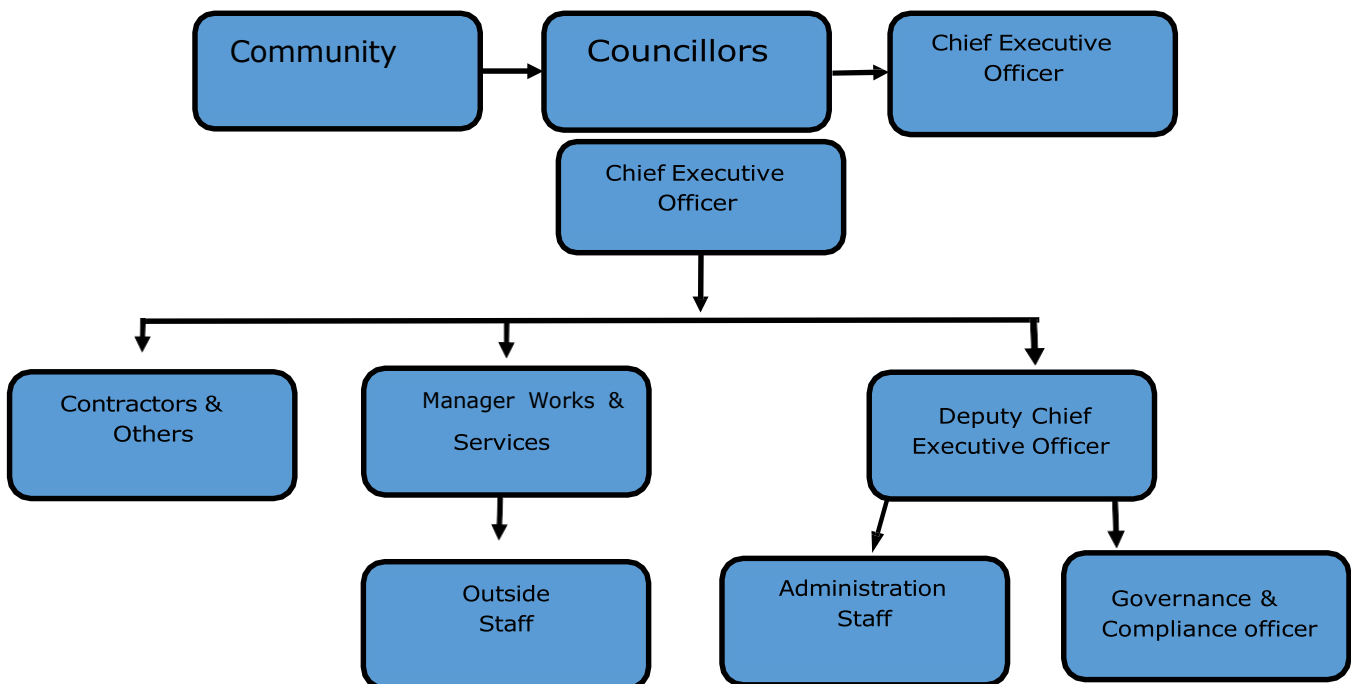
- The rural economy - threats that underline the rural economy include climate change, changing rainfall patterns, transport network, support services and continuing changes in farm management. Rural production has seen changes in its approach to a permanent labour force, including introduction of "global" servicing, evolution of technology, crop diversification, hub suppliers and distribution. These changes have, over time seen the reduction of local suppliers, reduced requirement for a localised workforce and subsequently a reduction on the local population. The Shire's role is to see that public infrastructure, road and transport links are well maintained and facilitate economic development in the district.
- Competition from other Local Governments and regional industries for current and potential workforce skills and knowledge.
- Downward trend in working population for smaller towns making it difficult to employ local people putting pressure on accommodation and family needs for those employed from other places.

- The growth in the mining and resources sector is having an impact on the availability and affordability of workforce for Local Governments, particularly in the works and technical services areas.
- Increase in legislative changes related to governance and integrated planning and other associated activities of a local government will require more focus and specific skills and knowledge to ensure communication and compliance.
- Increasing cost of living in areas such as utilities and fuel prices puts further pressure on wages and benefits.
- Availability of suitable development training in the region and other costs involved in sending staff to regional centres or Perth.
- Availability of suitable housing resulting in a shortage in the region.

## Current Organisation Structure

The Shire is performing well in both governance and management for a local government of this size and location, with systems and processes evolving within the skills and resources constraints. There is a relatively new senior management, and the staff demonstrate a positive attitude.

The current organisational structure is below:





## Organisational Environment

**Workplace Culture** - There is a positive and tangible workplace culture of teamwork, effective and amenable working relationships between management and staff with open communication and clear direction.

**Management** - Within workload constraints, management systems and processes across the Shire are generally sound although often not formally documented. While there are good staff development practices in place, the CEO has a large span of control and is the carrier of a significant level of corporate knowledge. Administration staff are currently multi-tasking with the availability to cover other staff members while they are away on leave.

**Communications** - There is an effective communication in place with all staff having direct access to management, with no communication issues identified. In relation to policy, procedure and records management, there are some areas that can be improved for the outside workforce who do not access the computer system on a regular basis. The Council use electronic media for their agendas and to access formal documents which has improved the communication process in timeliness and having a central point for knowledge management. IT systems and infrastructure are adequate and managed externally.

**Project Management** – limited formal skills and knowledge or formal systems in place but projects are carried out and satisfactorily completed without a dedicated resource.

## Analysis of current workforce data

The Shire seeks to employ locally wherever possible. This has a number of benefits including a reduced need for Shire provided housing and relocation costs. Although difficult to measure, it believes this also contributes to relatively low turnover of staff.

The Shire is not able to match the salaries offered by the resources sector. It competes on the basis of lifestyle, values and a sense of community.

There are three (3) positions within the organisation that are considered key roles:

- Chief Executive Officer
- Deputy Chief Executive Officer
- Manager of Works and Services

Formal succession planning is not undertaken but to minimise the potential for disruption to its services in the event of any vacancies in these positions, the Shire prefers to use 'understudies' whereby other employees are given some training and guidance to allow them to take on the role for parts thereof for short periods if required. Alternatively, skilled staff and/or contractors are sought from outside the organisation for long periods of leave and/or mentoring.

## Current Organisational and Workforce Risk Profile

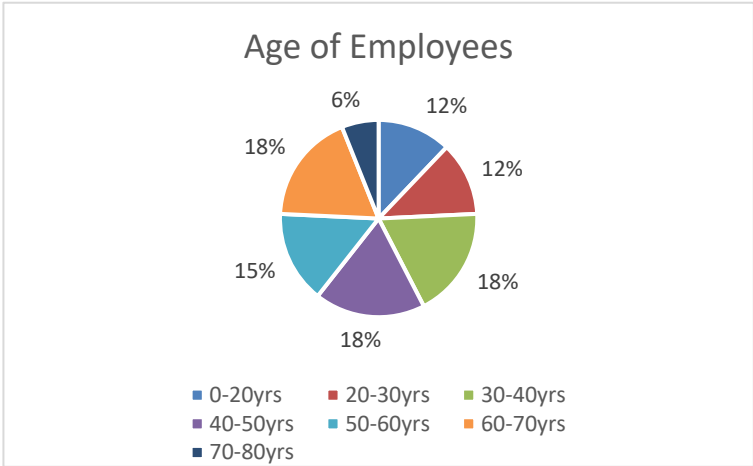
Capacity and capability in some areas reduces the ability to employ local people with advanced skill sets. These include developing and implementing:

- IT infrastructure
- Management systems
- Reporting, and;
- Specialised reviews

There is good opportunity for continued resource sharing and outsourcing options with adjacent Shires and/or specialised consultants. This is due to the limited skillsets or capacity of available staff, and/or potential local people to set up systems and keep up to date with constant changes in statutory compliance.

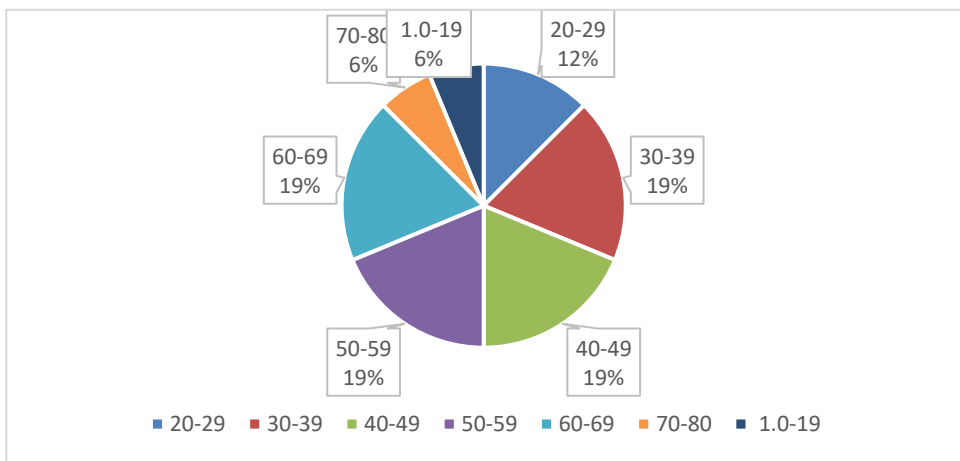
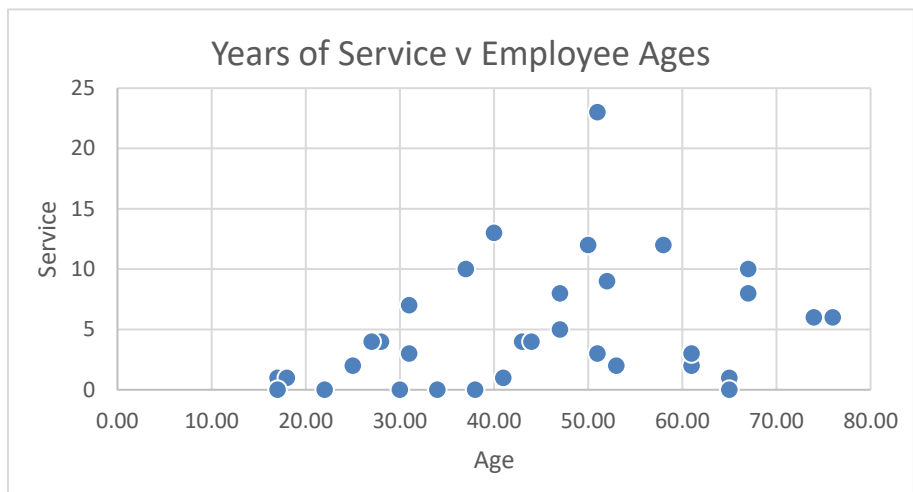
The age demographics within the Shire’s workforce is varied ranging from 17 to 76 years. An ageing workforce is reflected with 57% of staff over the age of 40 years. This provides an opportunity for skill development and mentoring whilst also presenting some future challenges, such as the recruitment of adequately qualified staff in sufficient numbers to replace the outgoing workforce when the time arises.

The chart to the right indicates the age range of employees.



### Tenure of Employment

Given the relatively small size of the workforce, a good level of length of service is represented across most departmental areas. There are 6 employees within the organisation who have contributed more than 10 years of service.



The average length of service for each of the age profile shows a the significant level of service and experience held by the workforce with employees aged 30 years and over, almost 40% of these have been employed with the Shire for a term exceeding 5 years. This poses some risk in terms of knowledge management and succession planning at the point in time when these staff move on or retire.

With employee turnover at the Shire relatively low, only one to two positions typically falling vacant each year. These vacancies generally occur due to career opportunities outside of the Shire. The Shire does not have a retention strategy but offers benefits which can support staff in their employment with the shire. These include:

- Superannuation Co-Contribution Scheme.
- Rostered Day Off scheme (specified positions).
- Professional development.
- Safety bonuses (specified positions).
- Private Use or restricted use of Vehicle (specified positions).
- Housing or housing allowance.
- Free season pass to Swimming Pool.
- Christmas bonus based on years of service.

## Strategic Community Plan Workforce Implications

### Organisation Structure Implications

A more structured and functional approach is required to address changing needs. The diversity of resourcing is reflected within position descriptions and contract documents clearly outlining reporting lines, roles and responsibilities. Roles and job descriptions, and guidelines for the use of the skills and knowledge gap funds will be developed in consultation with relevant stakeholders. The structure reflects the strategies to address aspects of staff retention, staff development, succession planning and knowledge management as well as increasing capacity in the administration area which was an identified issue.

It is proposed that existing service levels will be maintained for all operational areas in formulating this plan.

### Strategic Community Plan priorities

The Strategic Community Plan states vision, purpose, values and goals of the community to help the Shire plan for the future. The priorities for achieving the plan’s objectives are defined as short, medium or long term. Strategies of an ongoing nature will also set priorities for the short and medium term. The Corporate Business Plan activates these strategies to achieve the realisation of our community’s vision and aspirations.

It is proposed that the implementation of the strategies outlined in the Strategic Community Plan will be pursued within the existing workforce resources of the Shire. At this stage the data collection and the additional governance responsibilities and therefore the potential costs have not been established.

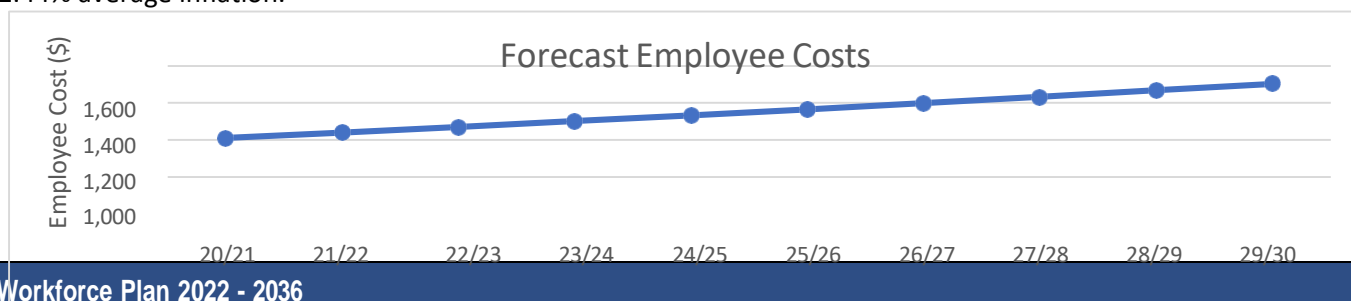
## Strategic to meet future workforce needs

### Strategies to meet future requirements

As noted above, it is expected to be ‘business as usual’ for the Shire and little changes are expected for the period covered by this plan. There were no gaps identified by the community in terms of services provision by the Shire in relation to matters under its direct control.

The measures undertaken by the Shire in terms of succession planning and the like are considered commensurate with its size and scale of operations.

The Long-Term Financial Plan provides for a stable workforce over the period of the plan as follows, based on 2.44% average inflation.



## Monitoring and Evaluation

### Achieving the objectives of the Strategic Community Plan

The requirements for Integrated Planning by the Shire recognise the importance and value of planning and regular review. The Shire is to review their Strategic Community Plan at least once every four years and the Corporate Business Plan for the district each year.

This monitoring and review process will involve the following questions:

Have we delivered Strategic Community Plan and Workforce Planning outcomes? Have we delivered what the community expected?

- Have we achieved/made progress towards planned outcomes for the workforce and organisation?
- What progress have we made against performance indicators?

Given the limited role workforce planning is expected to have on these questions, there are no performance indicators in the Plan in this version. However, over time and as matters unfold this may change.

This plan will be reviewed annually as part of the planning cycle and adjusted and reported on accordingly to ensure ongoing integration with the long term financial and asset management plans. All updates will be communicated to relevant stakeholders.

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