

## Uralla Shire Workforce Management Strategy 2022



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### Document Control

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This document is prepared in accordance with:

1. Office of Local Government, *Integrated Planning & Reporting: Guidelines for Local Government in NSW*, September 2021
2. *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)*
3. Industrial Awards.

## 1. Executive Summary

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People are Council's best asset. Council currently has 135 full-time-equivalent positions and employs a diverse workforce of approximately 180 people as well as engaging a range of local contractors and service providers. Council also coordinates a range of volunteer programs which provide critical support to the community in areas such as aged care, library, visitor information, community transport and native vegetation management. Council is the largest single employer in the Shire.

The Workforce Management Strategy (WMS) is part of the overall resourcing strategy within the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework. The purpose of the resourcing strategy is to provide a clear plan setting out how Council is intending to support delivery of the community's ideas and aspirations for the future captured in the Community Strategic Plan within available resources.

The WMS sets out the Council's strategies to address the human resourcing requirements of Council's four-year Delivery Program. The relevant strategies contained in the WMS must be reflected in the Delivery Program and Operational Plan and the costs associated with delivering the WMS must be reflected in the Long-term Financial Plan.

This WMS has been prepared as the world enters the third year of a pandemic which has caused significant disruption to the economy and employment market. This poses both challenges and opportunities which are set out in this strategy. Over the last year Council has undertaken extensive consultation with its community on a wide range of council services and infrastructure needs through specific project engagements, listening posts, forums, and a draft long term financial plan. This information has been used to prepare a new draft Community Strategic Plan (placed on public exhibition 3 March 2022) and this forms the basis for the Council's preparation of its new Delivery Program and this WMS.

By setting out a WMS Council can align its human resource needs with its infrastructure and service delivery plans so that the organisation can be agile and respond to the ever-changing community needs and circumstances. Importantly, the strategies and actions in the WMS support the embedding of the organisation's core values of "Unity, Safety and Commitment to Service", which were developed by employees in 2021 and endorsed by Council in early 2022.

Kate Jessep  
**General Manager**



## 2. Background

The Workforce Management Strategy makes up one of the three components of Council's Resourcing Strategy as required under the Office of Local Government's Integrated Planning & Reporting framework.

Workforce planning is about forecasting and predicting trends. It is not an exact science but a continual process to analyse the current workforce and future needs, identify gaps between present and future requirements and develop solutions for Council to achieve its mission and objectives.

In short, workforce planning aims to have the right people in the right places with the right skills and motivation doing the right jobs at the right time. Workforce planning will help Council to:

- make staffing decisions to provide services based on strategic priorities;
- identify potential resource or skill shortfalls and take steps to address these;
- identify and plan for new and emerging roles;
- recruit appropriate numbers of suitable staff to meet current and future needs;
- develop workforce skills; and
- contain human resources costs including the cost of turnover, absenteeism and injury.

This Workforce Management Strategy is designed to review the current workforce at Uralla Shire Council and outline the strategies and actions that will ensure that appropriate staff are available and are competent to implement the Delivery Program. By identifying workforce capabilities on hand now, considering what will be needed into the future and planning systematically, Council can limit the risks associated with unanticipated events and make sure we are appropriately resourced to handle the changes and challenges that will need to be faced in the coming years.



*Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework*

### 3. Our Values and Principles

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Council's values lay the foundation for the organisation and guide us in our actions.

#### 4.1 Unity

*We succeed as a team with integrity and accountability*

Indicators: no dishonesty; mistakes are identified and corrected.

#### 4.2 Safety

*Keeping our people and community safe*

Indicators: Hazard reporting is high; incident occurrence is low.

#### 4.3 Commitment to Service

*We use resources efficiently in an equitable manner*

Indicators: Council service is fair, tailored and within resources.

Council has also developed the following customer service principles which underpin our professional approach to serving our community:

Respect	<i>All people are equal</i>
Accountability	<i>In the interest of the community</i>
Honesty	<i>We act on facts</i>
Efficiency	<i>Value-for-money use of resources</i>
Equity	<i>We are genuinely fair</i>
Communication	<i>We are clear and concise</i>

## 4. Our Structure

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The workforce management strategies contained within this document address the human resourcing requirements of the Delivery Program and Operational Plan. The workforce is comprised of three (3) directorates reporting to the office of the General Manager. Each directorate comprises of several divisions.

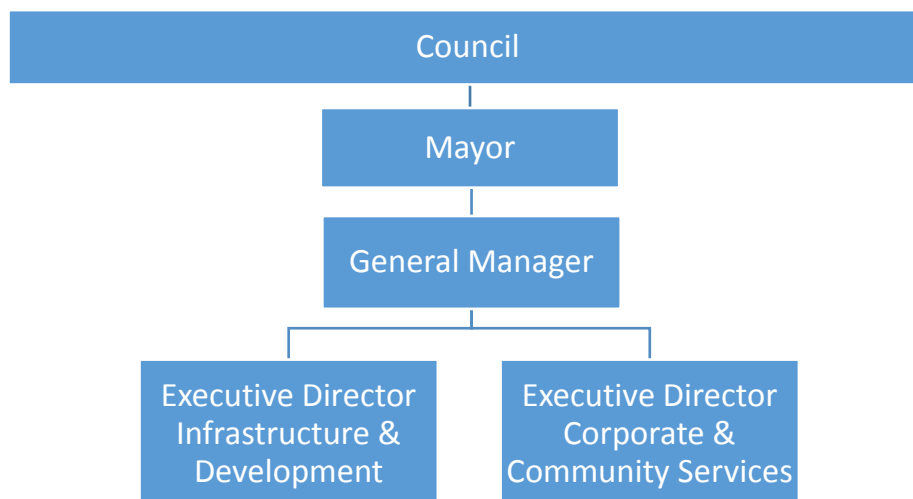
Currently Council has 180 employees; 76 full-time, 52 part-time, 52 casual and temporary employees. Uralla Shire Council has 2 trainees employed in various departments across Council.

Council staff deliver Council's services and capital renewal, rehabilitation and maintenance programs supplemented by contracted specialist equipment and/or temporary/contract workers to address temporary shortages such as when additional grant funding is secured and/or work load exceeds normal staffing hours.

Council determines the senior staff structure under S332 of the *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)* in consultation with the General Manager.

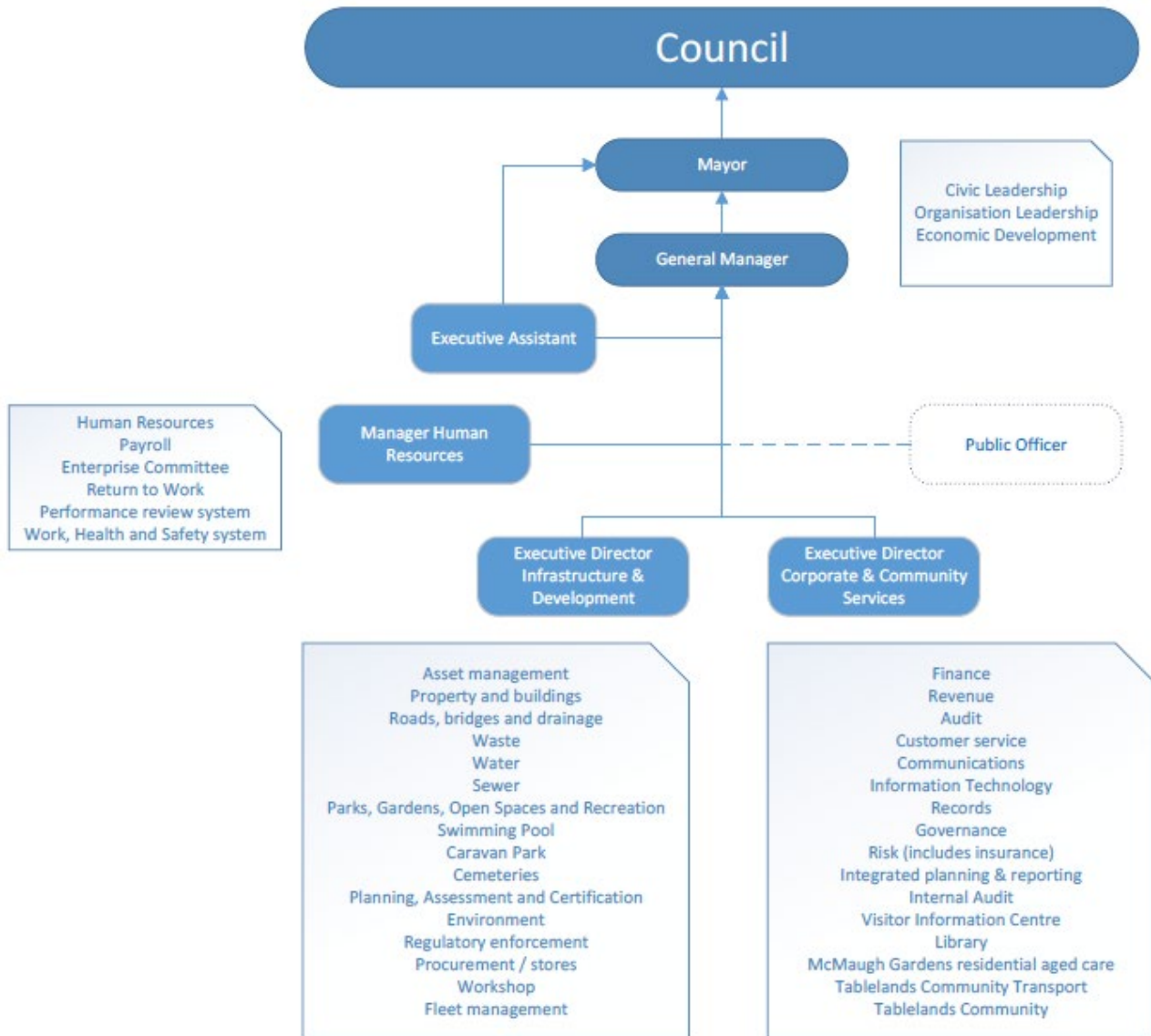
The senior staff structure and reporting lines with effect from 11 July 2022 are:

- General Manager (reporting to Council per the Act)
- Executive Director Infrastructure and Development reporting to the General Manager
- Executive Director Corporate and Community Services reporting to the General Manager



The General Manager determines the organisation structure, under S332 of the *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)* in consultation with the Council.

The organisation structure with effect 11 July 2022 is:



## 5. Our Organisation

Workforce summary	Total
Headcount	180
Full-time equivalent staff*	133
Voluntary turnover rate (12 months to 31/3/22)	16%
Retirement rate (12 months to 31/3/22)	0%

**\*Including 3 FTE positions subject to grant funding.**

Gender	
Male employees	47%
Female employees	53%
Gender not defined	0%

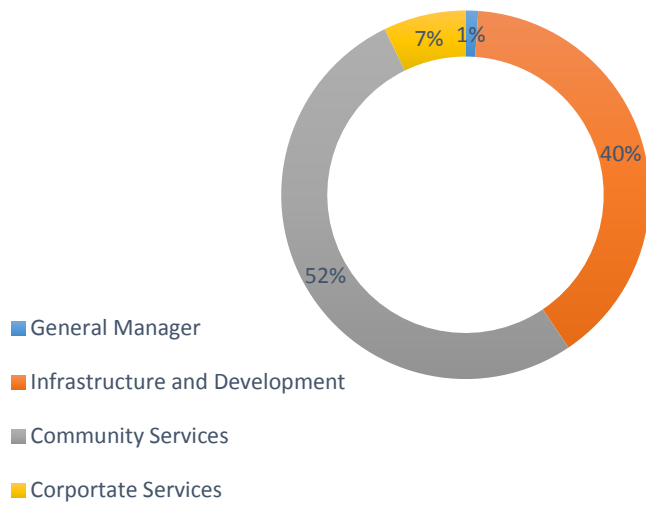
Age	
Employees aged 15 to 19	4%
Employees aged 20 to 24	1%
Employees aged 25 to 29	9%
Employees aged 30 to 34	10%
Employees aged 35 to 39	8%
Employees aged 40 to 44	12%
Employees aged 45 to 49	10%
Employees aged 50 to 54	11%
Employees aged 55 to 59	13%
Employees aged 60 to 64	12%
Employees aged 65 and older	8%

Health and Safety	
Frequency per 100 employees*	10.76%
Frequency per \$1M in wages*	1.48
Reporting within 48 hours*	76%

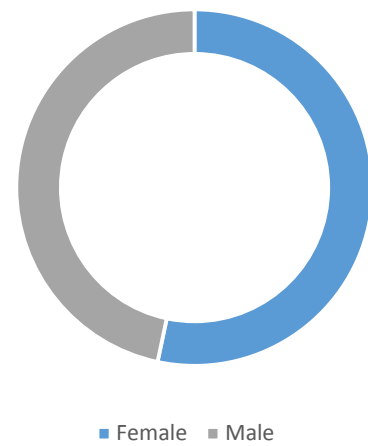
**\*As per StateCover General Managers report 2020 -2021**



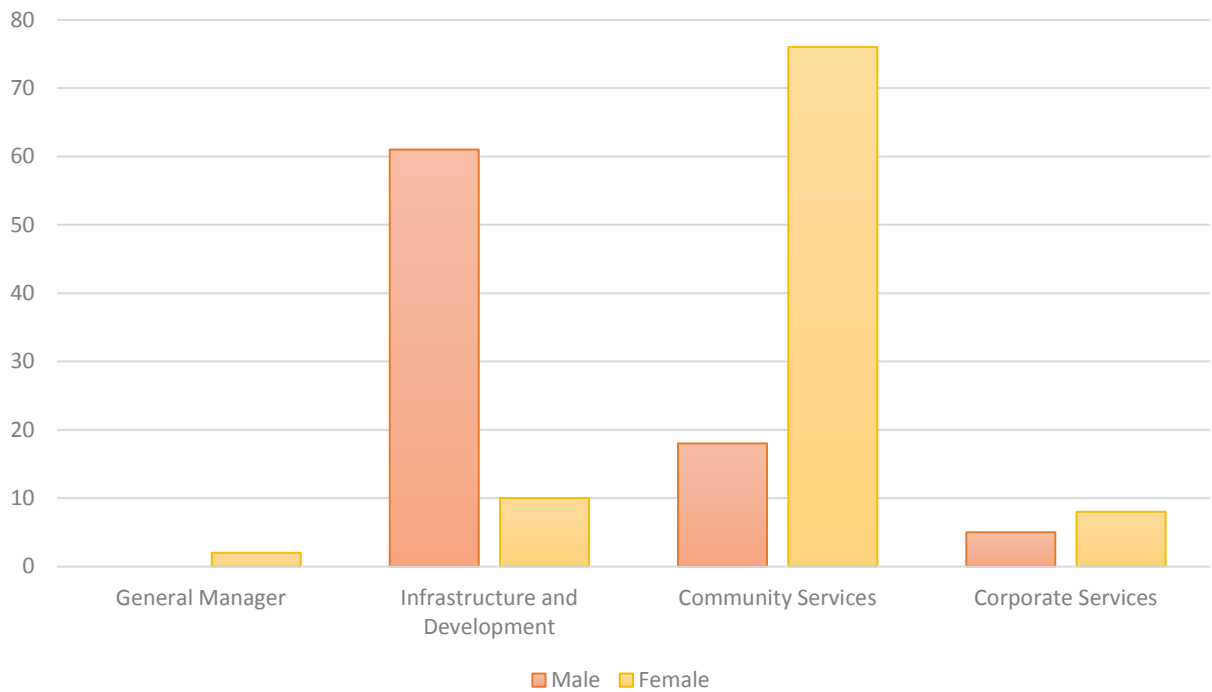
Workforce overview by directorate



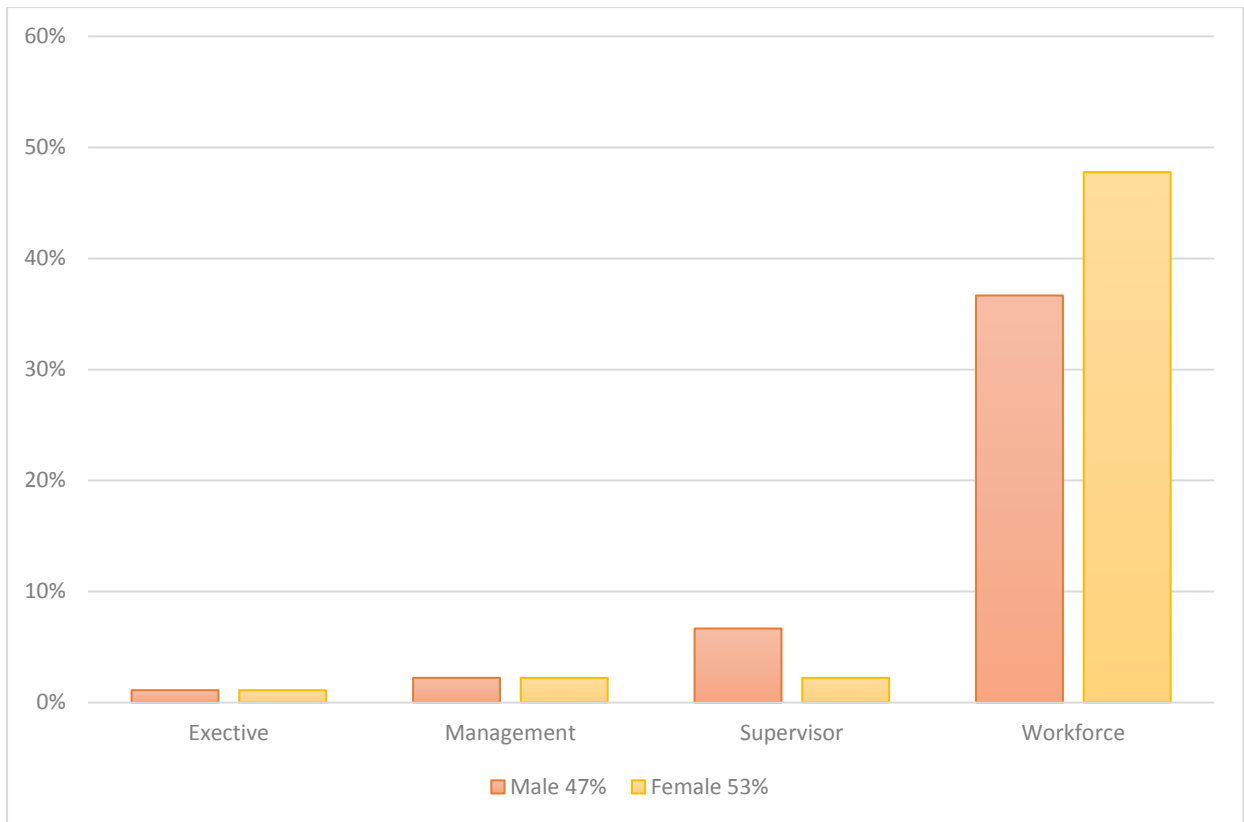
Total workforce by gender



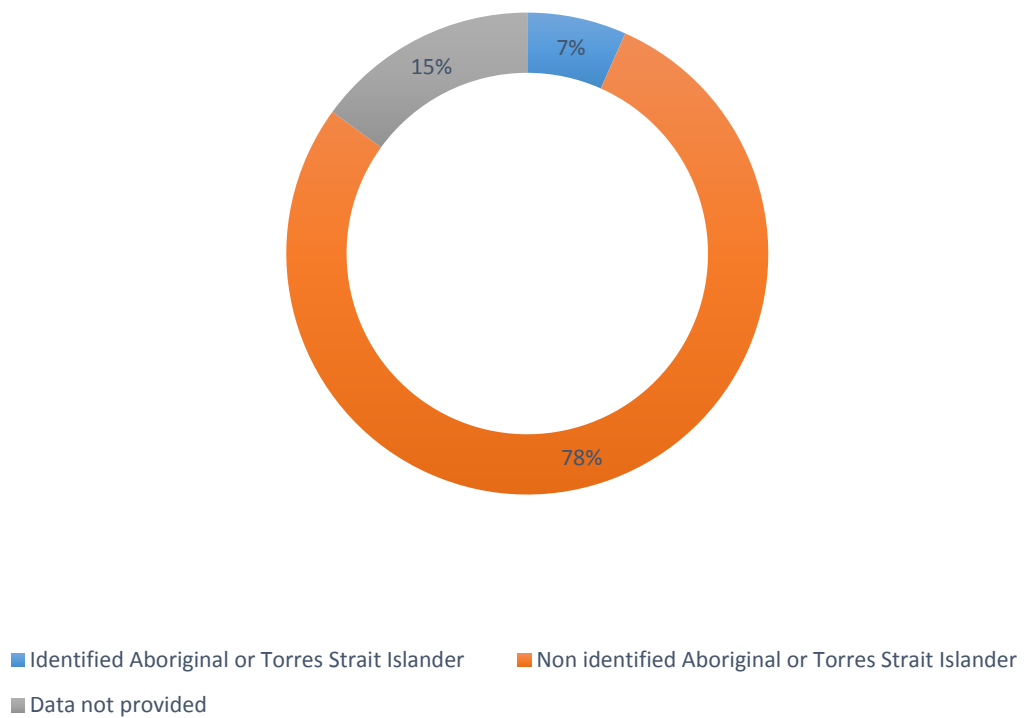
Gender distribution by directorate



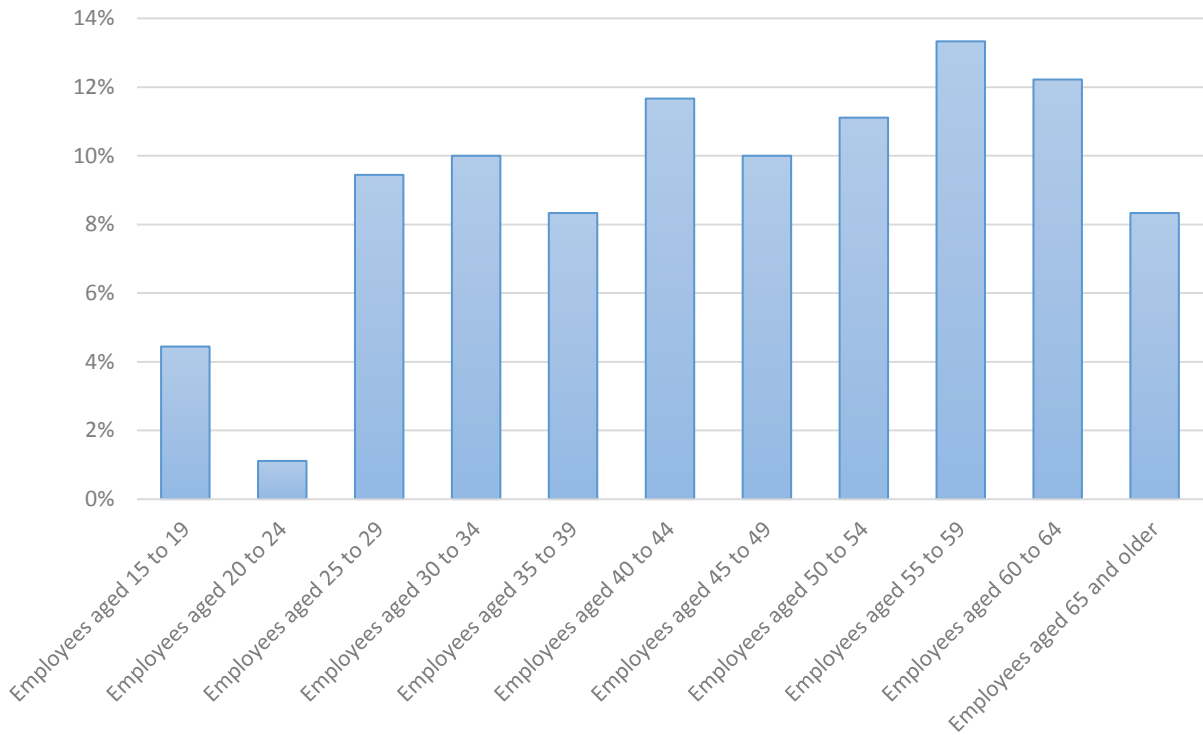
### Gender distribution by structure level.



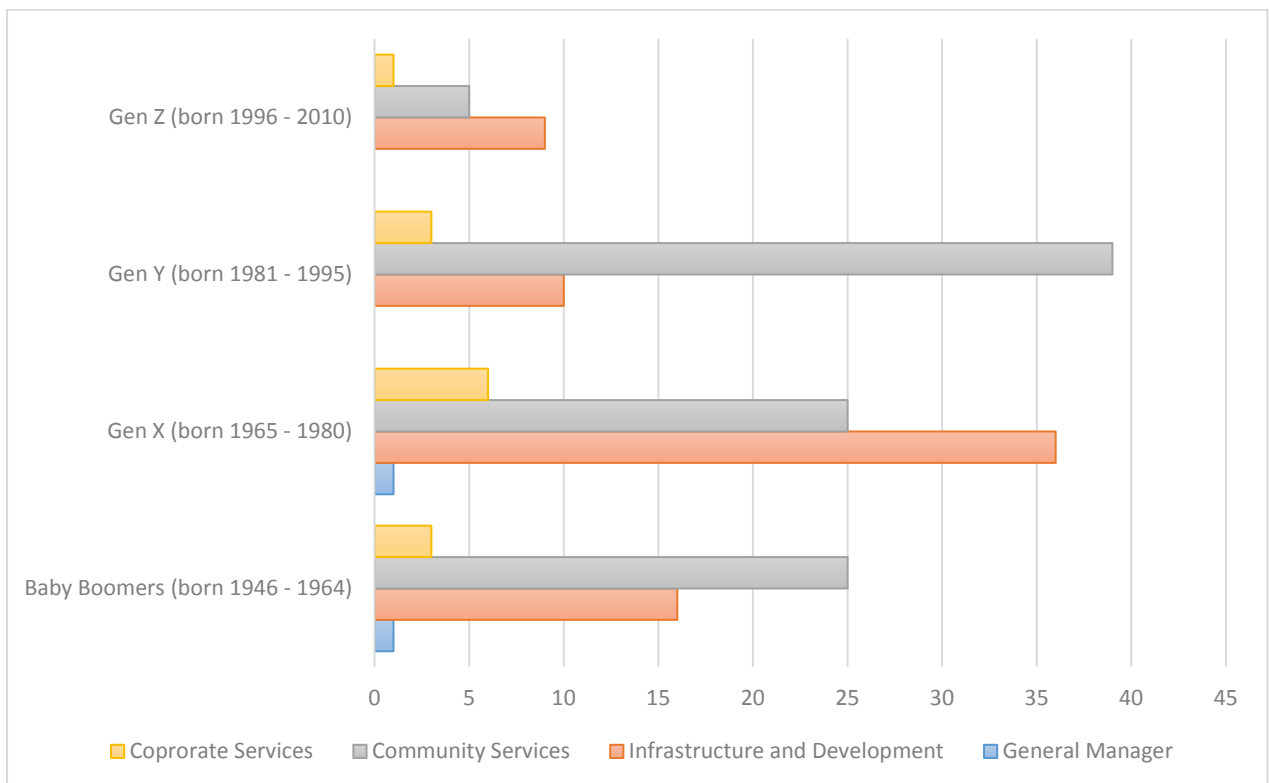
### Diversity of the total workforce



### Workforce by age



### Generation breakdown by directorate



## 6. Comparative Data

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A desktop benchmarking study was undertaken to provide a snapshot analyses of Uralla Shire Council's current operational performance.

The review analysed a total sample group of 18 NSW LGAs. It is acknowledged that 'like for like' benchmarks are difficult to attain and often open to debate. As such a random yet broad range of LGAs was analysed to ensure both trend lines and ratios were accurate and impartial.

The range included country councils:

- Bellingen
- Edward River
- Goulburn
- Inverell
- Nambucca
- Snowy Valleys
- Uralla Shire

Regional Councils:

- Bathurst
- MidCoast
- Queanbeyan-Paleran Regional Council
- Shoalhaven
- Wagga

Metro Councils:

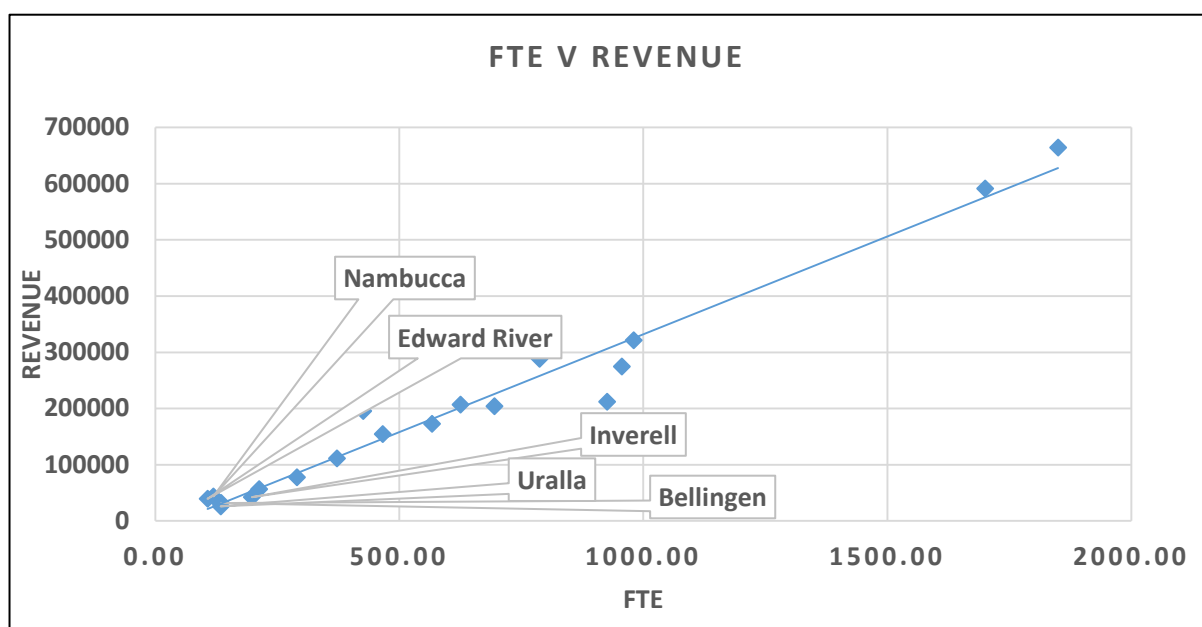
- Bayside Council
- Blacktown Council
- Campbelltown
- Cumberland City Council

## Summary of Findings

Total FTE v Council revenue.

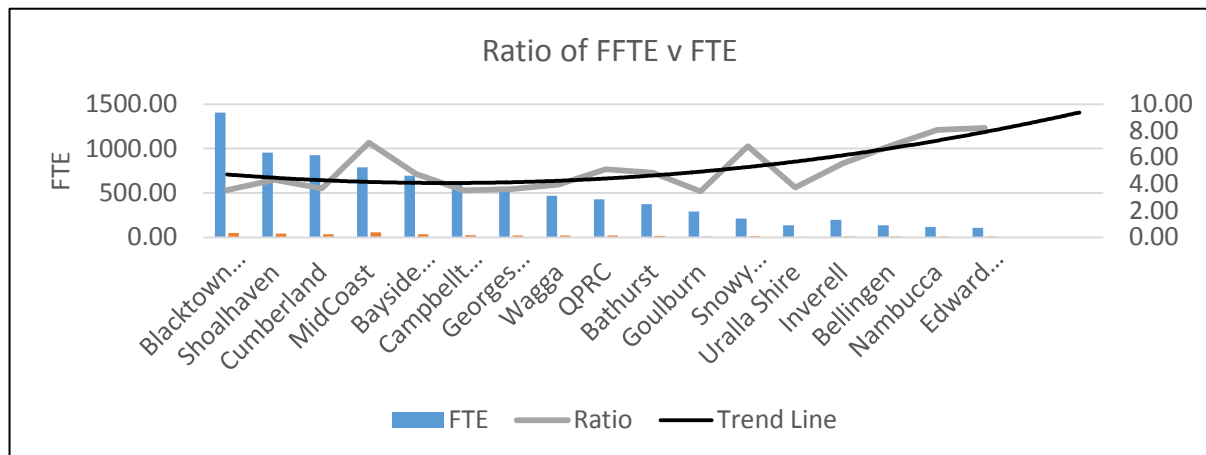
Within this pattern Uralla Shire Council was seen to be performing well - slightly below the trend line yet within the standard area of deviation when judged against the sample pool.

The closest comparable LGA in terms of staffing levels to Uralla Shire Council was observed to be Bellingen Council. Whilst Bellingen had one additional headcount, they had 18.4% of additional revenue and no aged care services consuming corporate support resources.



The number of finance directorate employees (FFTE) v total FTE.

Within this pattern Uralla Shire placed well below both the trend line and comparative ratio. Indeed, with a current FTE size of 5, Uralla Shire was observed to have the smallest headcount in terms of finance across the entire sample pool.



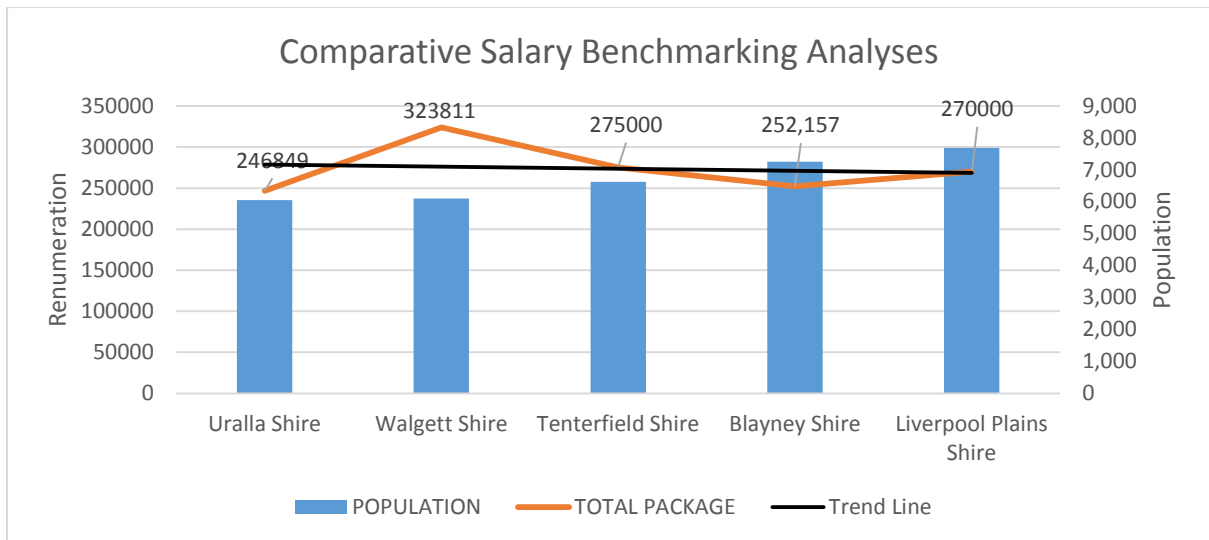
### General Manager Salary Benchmarking

A final study was undertaken to establish potential benchmarks in relation to remuneration packages of General Manager/CEOs in a range of councils with populations ranging from circa 5,000 to 9,000. This data was sourced from the last National census. Councils included:

- Blayney Shire
- Glen Innes-Severn Shire
- Gwydir Shire
- Liverpool Plains Shire
- Uralla Shire
- Tenterfield Shire
- Walgett Shire

The following observations are made:

- Average salary observed across the sample group is \$283,815
- If the highest (Gwydir Shire Council) and lowest (Uralla Shire Council) salary figures are omitted as outliers, the average salary figure is observed to be \$276,977



To gain a more detailed understanding of Councils performance it is recommended a departmental benchmarking analysis is undertaken.

### Employment Market Forces

Recent data identifies the current employment market as being highly competitive.

Recruitment activity is at record levels but many jobs are not being filled. Candidates have a wide selection of jobs to choose from and it is important therefore that organisations promote themselves effectively. Current data also indicates that 3 out of 5 employees are currently considering leaving their positions. Over the last 12 months, 90% of people who took jobs in new towns or cities did not have to relocate.

The outlook for the coming years is a highly competitive employment market where organisational employee value propositions (EVP) will be required to be reviewed frequently to react to changing market conditions. As such it is important that Council understands and continually assesses the effectiveness and appropriateness of the current EVP.

The top five preferences identified in what workers currently want are:

1. Remuneration and reward
2. Wellbeing
3. Organisational Culture
4. Ways of working
5. Career Development

## 7. Workforce Management Strategies

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The workforce management strategies are set out below and in the action plan in part 8.

### **Capacity**

It is expected that over the life of this plan total employee numbers will remain fairly stable. There may however be some movement of positions within the structure so that resources are available where they are needed to implement the delivery program. At the same time, total wage costs are expected to increase steadily at a rate consistent with Award salary increases and scheduled performance reviews. There is also a need for a salary review to maintain competitiveness in the market.

#### *Organisational Effectiveness / Succession Planning*

There are a number of positions in Council's organisation which are critical to day to day service delivery. If the staff members in these positions were to leave without a suitable replacement being available, Council's ability to deliver its services would be compromised. Council should implement succession plans for these positions where possible, noting that all appointments require a merit based selection process.

There are a number of single person service delivery points which create a critical vulnerability. A review of the organisation structure, grouping of similar services, up-skilling of staff and documentation of procedures will provide improved organisational capacity and should contribute to staff retention. Concurrently, Council will review service levels and opportunities for shared services to pursue efficient and effective service delivery outcomes for the community.

Council staff deliver Council's services and capital renewal, rehabilitation and maintenance programs. To address temporary shortages such as long service leave, parental leave or when additional grant funding is secured and/or work load exceeds normal staffing hours (for example, surge workforce requirements to manage an operational emergency) staffing will be supplemented by contingent workers. Where necessary, contracted specialist equipment and/or temporary/contract workers will be engaged after existing staff are fully tasked to optimise additional grant funding opportunities.

### **Capability**

#### *Attraction and Retention*

When employees leave the organisation, corporate knowledge and experience are lost; at times this is significant. Council should do all that it can to retain high performing and experienced employees. When recruitment is necessary, attracting skilled and qualified employees is about more than the position itself. Attracting high



quality potential candidates is about the whole package, including the location and community in which they will live and be employed. Most importantly, the selected candidate must have the competencies required to be successful in the role.

Building a strong brand can attract talent from all over the country. Potential candidates are attracted to positions that have a great location with a supportive community and the support of the organisation to deliver objectives. This includes the right level of resources to deliver the service standards set by Council.

Consistent with most regional councils in NSW, the following workforce attraction and retention strategies are offered:

- 9-day fortnight
- Competitive remuneration packages
- Salary sacrifice superannuation
- Payroll deductions for property rates and water charges for shire residents
- Training and career development
- Employee assistance program (EAP)
- Personal protective equipment (uniforms) for outdoor staff supplied at no cost to the employee
- Long service leave payable after 5 years of service in NSW local government
- Ability to transfer sick and long service leave entitlements if you are currently working with another NSW council, under certain conditions.
- Relocation assistance

### *Ageing Workforce*

The age profile of Council's staff is skewed towards older employees with 66% of Council employees currently aged over 40. Council has implemented a number of initiatives to alleviate the challenge of an ageing workforce. These initiatives include, but are not limited to:

- Employees undertaking formal qualifications and informal on the job training,
- Employees acting in higher duties to provide them the skills and knowledge required for the position so that if it becomes vacant they have the qualifications/skills/ability to apply for the position on merit.
- Several traineeships have been commenced in recent years with the benefit of partial government funding.
- Two school-based traineeships were offered in 2021 and form part of the ongoing structure (government funded).
- Consideration is also being given to employing apprentices in trades areas of the organisation (subject to capacity to supervise and work place safety standards).

### *Training and Development*

Operational employees are required to undertake competency training in accordance with legislative requirements. This is arranged through Council's Corporate Training Plan.

Development opportunities for all employees has been identified as an area in which Council requires improvement. An online learning and development system would provide employees easier access to further enhance their skills, qualification, and knowledge to the benefit of Council.

Training budgets have been allocated within service and centrally. A strategy to improve the focus on training and development is to shift this to central management from 2022/23.

### *Workplace Health and Safety*

Council is committed to the health, safety and wellbeing of our employees while they are at work. The current position of Council's workers compensation premium will continue to be a significant focus for the organisation, with a continued strong focus on workplace health and safety systems, operations and pro-active management of return to work programs. The development of the safety system is not yet completed and needs to be supported by the up-skilling of staff across the organisation, particularly supervisors. Safety is one of Council's core values.

To support improvements in mental health in the workplace, the People at Work Survey is currently being conducted and should be repeated after one year and then biannually. It is supported by an independent consultant to facilitate the process to provide confidentiality as well as follow-up focus groups with teams to discuss the findings and opportunities to improve the workplace.

## 8. Action Plan

### Strategy 1 – Attraction and Retention

Ref	Action	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	Responsibility
1.1	Review organisational structure and implement a structure that is fit for current services / service standards	✓	✓			General Manager
1.2	Consider acquisition of small number of residential properties so that executive staff can live and interact in the local community (rent payable)	✓	✓			General Manager
1.3	Continue to implement position descriptions which include specific and measurable indicators	✓	✓	✓	✓	Manager HR
1.4	Continue to implement an online performance management system to acknowledge high performers and assist struggling employees	✓	✓	✓	✓	All supervisors
1.5	Review salaries so that they act as an incentive to attracting and retaining quality staff	✓		✓		Manager HR
1.6	Continue to offer confidential exit interviews and transition paper-based exit surveys to electronic exit surveys to enable improved reporting on systemic issues	✓	✓	✓	✓	General Manager / Manager HR
1.7	Undertake staff engagement survey to understand how staff are feeling about organisation	✓	✓	✓	✓	Manager HR
1.8	Implement a system for staff to provide informal feedback to	✓	✓	✓	✓	General Manager

Ref	Action	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	Responsibility
	General Manager and Executive. This system should allow for anonymous feedback					
1.9	Consider allowing remote working for positions which are not customer facing	✓	✓	✓	✓	Manager HR
1.10	When undertaking recruitment include psychometric testing for candidate's competencies and capacity.	✓	✓	✓	✓	Manager HR
1.11	IT systems facilitate staff's ability to perform their roles successfully		✓	✓	✓	Executive and Managers
1.12	Invest in an employment marketing prospectus to promote the benefits of living and working in Uralla Shire for Council.	✓				Manager HR

## Strategy 2 – Ageing Workforce / Succession Planning

Ref	Action	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	Responsibility
2.1	Review service critical positions and develop succession plans for these roles	✓	✓			Executive and Managers
2.2	Investigate options for the employment of additional apprentices and trainees		✓	✓	✓	Manager HR
2.3	Develop written workplace procedures so that the knowledge and experience of long term staff is maintained		✓	✓	✓	Executive and Managers
2.4	Investigate opportunities for job and resource sharing with surrounding Councils		✓			Executive

### Strategy 3 – Training and Development

Ref	Action	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	Responsibility
3.1	Training for mandatory licences and skills is undertaken as required	✓	✓	✓	✓	Manager HR
3.2	Implement learning and development plans for all staff and ensure funding is available for agreed development activities		✓	✓	✓	Executive and Managers
3.3	Provide leadership training for Directors and Managers to ensure they have the necessary skills to successfully lead the organisation	✓	✓	✓	✓	Executive and Managers

### Strategy 4 – Workplace Health and Safety

Ref	Action	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	Responsibility
4.1	WHS system is developed and implemented to comply with SafeWork NSW requirements	✓	✓	✓	✓	Director Corporate Services
4.2	All incidents and accidents are reported within statutory timeframes	✓	✓	✓	✓	Executive, Manager HR, all Managers, all staff
4.3	Regularly review WHS reports and statistics to identify opportunities to improve WHS performance and drive down workers compensation premium	✓	✓	✓	✓	Executive, Managers.
4.4	Undertake People at Work Survey and associated improvements.	✓		✓		Manager HR

Ref	Action	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	Responsibility
4.5	Recover at Work strategies are implemented for workplace injuries	✓	✓	✓	✓	Manager HR and relevant manager/supervisor.
4.6	Develop and implement annual WHS training	✓	✓	✓	✓	WHS Officer
4.7	Develop a roster and undertake regular workplace safety walks	✓	✓	✓	✓	General Manager, Directors and service area staff

## 9. Review of the Plan

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- 9.1. The effectiveness of the Workforce Management Strategy is reviewed annually and reported against an action in the annual Operational Plan. This review considers changes to the workforce and employment market such as:
- the results of service reviews completed that year;
  - any structure changes including new, increased or decreased service standards;
  - prolonged vacancies;
  - repeated turn-over in the same service area and/or position;
  - exit survey themes;
  - changes in the employment market; and
  - advice from the Consultative Committee.

## 10. Contact Us - Uralla Shire Council

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### Council Chambers and Administration Centre

<b>Address</b>	<b>Postal Address</b>	<b>Phone Number</b>	<b>Fax Number</b>
32 Salisbury Street Uralla NSW 2358	PO Box 106 Uralla NSW 2358	02 6778 6300 (All Enquiries)	Fax: 02 6778 6349

**Opening Hours:** 8.30am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday (closed 1 – 2pm each day)

**Email:** [council@uralla.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@uralla.nsw.gov.au)