

# Workforce Management Strategy 2025 - 2028

PART TWO

## Introduction

The Workforce Management Strategy assists Tamworth Regional Council (Council) to identify its current and future staffing needs based on internal and external information for the duration of the Delivery Program and beyond. Planning includes initiatives and priorities to make sure Council attracts and retains talent to ensure we have the right people, with the right skills in the right jobs at the right time. The availability and quality of our workforce is a critical element to delivering each of Council's plans, outlined in the Integrated Planning & Reporting (IP&R) documents.

Council's Workforce Management Strategy reviews the evidence, trends, issues and strategies required to sustainably resource the delivery of our services to the Tamworth region now and in the future. The Strategy aims to provide the following benefits:

- Improve our capacity to deliver strategic and operational plans
- Improve our current and future capability and performance by understanding our workforce profile
- Enable us to be more agile in response to change
- Create career paths and develop our people
- Forecast and mitigate risks that impact our workforce

Successful workforce planning is an active process which Council will continually monitor and adjust when required, to address new workforce or organisational issues and opportunities. This strategy is based on Council delivering on nine (9) focus areas as part of its Community Strategic Plan (CSP) including:



The CSP is the leading component of the IP&R Framework mandated for all NSW councils by the State Government and requires councils to demonstrate how they will deliver aspects of the CSP through a detailed four-year Delivery Program and annual Operational Plan.

### How we developed our strategy

Our Workforce Management Strategy is the result of extensive review of data, engagement and collaboration across Council. Council engaged an external consultant in 2023-2024 to assist with a strategic workforce planning project which included a combination of data analysis, interviews and workshops with Executive Leadership Team and Blueprint Management Group of leaders. The recommended actions were then reviewed in light of current trends and progress on initiatives in consultation with Council's People and Culture leadership team, Risk and Safety Manager and Executive Leadership Team to formulate the framework of strategies and actions for the 2025-2028 Workforce Management Strategy. Planning and review has focused on evidence and insights about Council's current workforce, future requirements and skills and capability gaps to inform the plan.

Consultation with Council's Consultative Committee, divisional managers and inclusion of feedback from Council's employee survey in 2024 was also integral in the development of this plan.

## Review Cycle

The Workforce Management Strategy is reviewed annually by:

- Reviewing current statistical information and identifying trends
- Reporting on the progress and success of initiatives
- Considering whether strategies remain current and prioritise accordingly
- Gathering feedback from the organisation through surveys
- Determining whether new issues are relevant and actions need to be added
- Evolving the document in response to any significant organisational change including restructures

## Community Vision

The Tamworth region will be thriving, modern and prosperous, with compassion for our people, reverence for our culture, and respect for nature.

We will build a more resilient, inclusive community. We will protect and support our natural environment. We will celebrate our rich culture and heritage. We will expand our proud identity. We will enable prosperity by supporting businesses to grow, through better housing options, thriving town centres and productive employment areas. We will deliver water infrastructure and security that supports the growth of our region and economic aspirations. We will attract new businesses, support educational opportunities, and make it easier to do business. We will connect our region and its citizens through a safe and efficient movement network. We will achieve this with openness and accountability.

## Values

Council is committed to being a local government of excellence that enhances our region's quality of life and environment through effective leadership, community involvement and commitment to service. We strive to be a purpose-led, values driven organisation which sees our values shape everything we do every day. They provide the foundation of our organisational culture and guide how we deliver the strategies and actions outlined in the Delivery Program.



## Who are we?

### Our Workforce

Council has a large workforce spread throughout a wide geographic area, which encompasses a broad range of disciplines across the organisation. Our employees work across community and external facing services including planning, construction, road and asset maintenance, waste and water facilities, sport and recreation through to entertainment, libraries, art, museums and delivery of the Country Music Festival. Our Council is also supported by internal services such as legal, finance, IT, customer service, communications, risk, safety, people and culture.

Council's organisational structure comprises of 5 directorates being:

- Regional Services
- Water and Waste
- Liveable Communities
- Creative Communities and Experiences
- Office of the General Manager

Services are provided to the community through 33 Divisions aligned to these directorates and Council's focus areas.

### Executive Leadership Team

The Executive Leadership Team is comprised of 8 leaders including:

- General Manager
- Director Regional Services
- Director Water and Waste
- Director Liveable Communities
- Chief People Officer
- Chief Financial Officer
- Executive Manager Strategy and Performance
- Executive Manager Creative Communities and Experiences

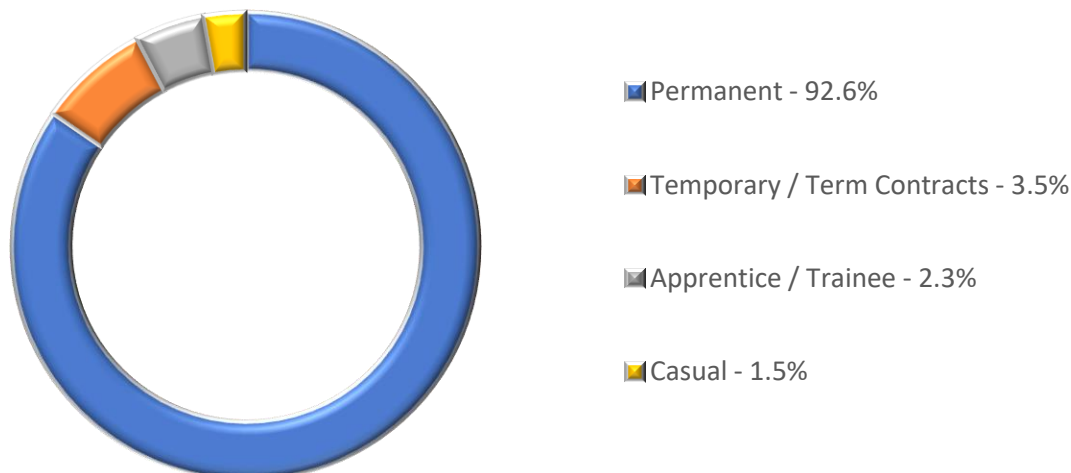
### Workforce Snapshot

**678 Employees** ➡ **630 Full Time Equivalent (FTE)**

Our workforce comprises of 678 employees with 88% being permanent staff (full or part time). Eleven (11)% of staff are employed on a casual, temporary or fixed term basis. Five (5) % are currently participating in tertiary/vocational education programs.

Our employee base is supplemented by contract employees or external labour hire which fluctuates with operational short-term demand. This approach allows flexibility to meet periods of peak demand while protecting ongoing job security for our employees. Over reliance on this type of labour can present challenges and on-going viability and utilisation is reviewed regularly.

### Workforce Breakdown at 1 Jan 2025





## Age

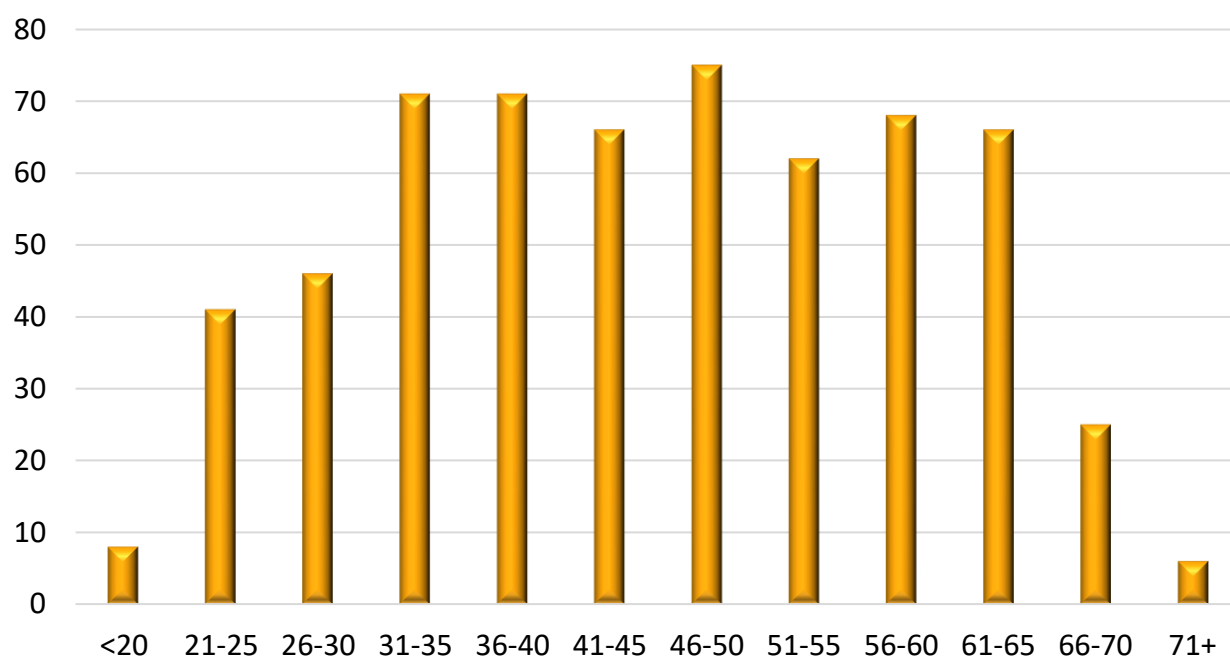
Average Age: 44.4

Highest Age Profile: 46-50yrs range with 11% of the workforce

Council continues to manage an aging workforce with 33% of our employees approaching retirement age (56 years and over), which has increased by over 3% in the last four years. It is anticipated that this will continue to grow and with it, the number of employees planning for retirement and exiting the organisation. This will become a significant challenge to particular parts of the workforce and highlights the need for stronger emphasis on succession planning and career development.

Council increased its proportion of employees under 25 years of age from 4.5% in 2023 to 7.5% in 2024. This is largely due to an injection of additional traineeship and apprenticeship positions into the workforce. This is anticipated to continue to increase with the *Fresh Start for Local Government: traineeship and apprenticeship grant* launched by the Office of Local Government in 2024.

**Demographic Age Groups**



Generation	%
Baby Boomers (1946-1962)	15%
Generation X (1963-1980)	37%
Generation Y (1981-1994)	36%
Generation Z (1995-2009)	12%

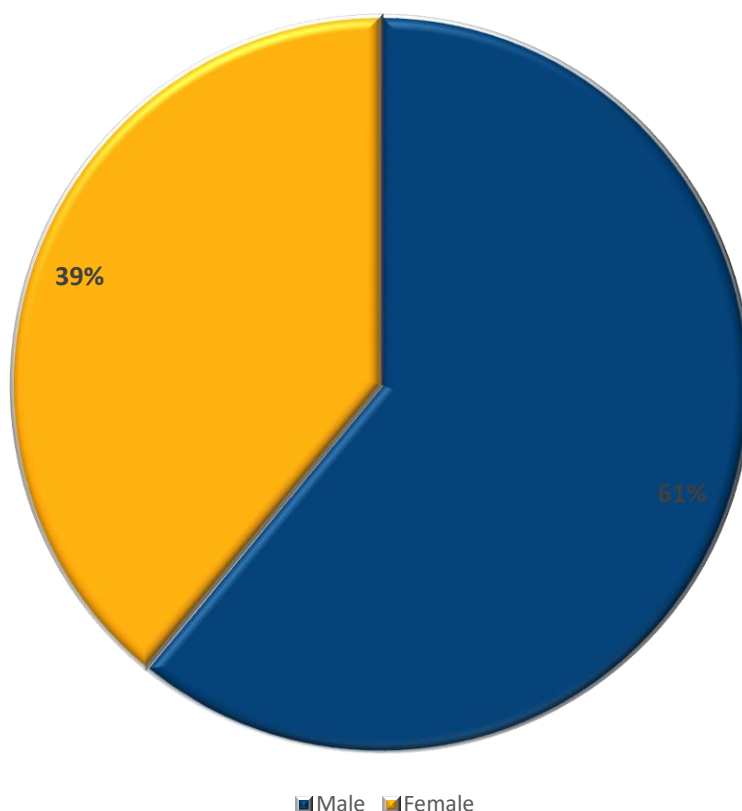
## Gender

The proportion of female employees has increased from 35% to 39% in the last 3 years, with 61% of Council's workforce being male. 0.2% of respondents to Council's employee survey in 2024 indicated that they identified as 'another gender'.

Currently Council's leadership teams reflect similar proportions of female to male ratio, being 36% female and 64% male.

The Regional Services and Water & Waste Directorates have a high proportion of male employees, particularly in outdoor occupations. Predominantly female employees are largely seen in indoor occupations. The number of female employees in senior leadership positions has increased over the last 12 months.

**Gender 2024**



## Years of Service

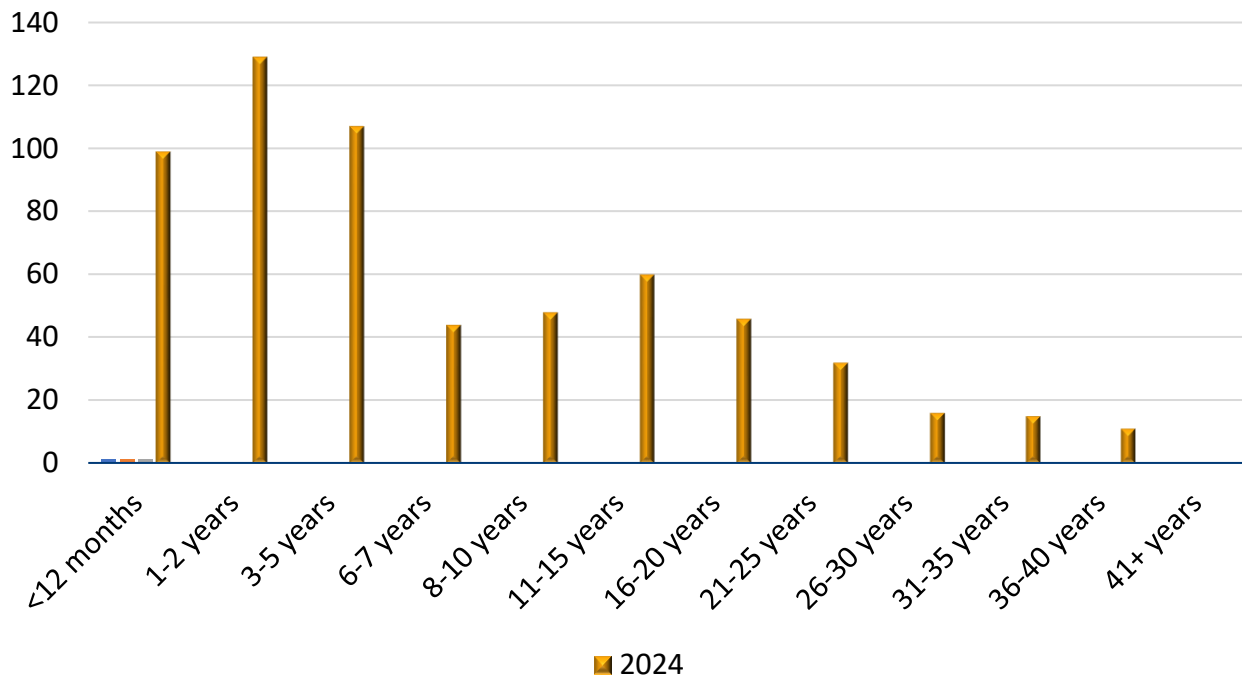
17% of our employees have up to 20 or more years of service at Council.

33% have 2 years or less service with Council.

15% have been in their role less than 12 months.

Council's Executive Leadership Team and Management Team has more than 50% of employees with over 10 years tenure at Council. This presents the risk of significant organisational knowledge deficit should these leaders leave the organisation and demonstrates the need for knowledge transfer and succession planning programs to be prioritised.

## Years of Service



## Diversity

Council's employee survey in 2024 recorded the following figures from respondents:

8% Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

52% have caring responsibilities

8% are from ethnic backgrounds outside Australia

6% speak languages other than English

3% identify as being a part of the LGBTQIA+ community

2% are living with a disability or require additional support to do their job

3% identify as being neurodivergent

Council understands the benefits of attracting and retaining a diverse workforce to bring the breadth and calibre of skills needed to sustainably service our community's needs. Currently the proportion of employees identifying as being Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander is 8%, which is less than the Tamworth Region's population of 12%. Council has more than half its workforce caring for others, a growing number of employees are living with a disability and identify as being neurodivergent, requiring strategies for education and training, the provision of reasonable adjustments and for flexible working arrangements to become more important.

## Turnover and vacancies

Average annual turnover rate at Council continues to sit at around 16%, similar to 2021. This more than doubled from Council's turnover rate of 6.4% prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Council's vacancy rate fluctuates over the course of time depending on resignations and creation of additional role that are not yet filled.

Council did however, see a decline in terminations from 119 in 2023 to 104 in 2024. Terminations include resignations, retirements, end of contracts and dismissals.

## Achievements from Workforce Management Plan – 2022-2025

Our previous workforce management plan detailed five strategies to achieve its objective:

**Our People – Our Development – Our Culture – Our Operations – Our Future**

The progress that has been made against each of these strategies is outlined below.

### Our People

*Attract and retain a high performing and engaged workforce*

#### Employee Value Proposition

Council created an Employee Value Proposition and associated brand elements in 2023 to provide a consistent and compelling message for Council as an employer of choice. Through extensive consultation with the organisation, Council finalised its employee brand logo with new tag line – ‘A great place to live and work’. The key EVP message is ‘It’s worth working at Tamworth Regional Council’ or ‘It’s worth it’, backed by four pillars for promotion being:

- For your lifestyle
- For our community
- For your career
- To belong

Council implemented numerous brand awareness and role specific campaigns with its new branding, associated imagery and videos and will continue to utilise EVP messaging to promote working for and attracting talent.

#### Flexible Working Arrangements

In response to market expectations following the COVID-19 pandemic, enhanced flexible working arrangements were introduced in 2022. These included options for a compressed work week, opportunities for hybrid or remote working arrangements, access to a 9-day fortnight for management positions and changes to Council’s Executive Leave offering, replacing this with Discretionary Leave. All arrangements are considered reasonably on the basis of operational requirements and impacts on outputs and sustainable resourcing. Feedback from the enhancements has been positive with 91% of respondents in Council’s 2024 employee survey agreeing that the flexible work arrangements were suitable for their team.

#### Induction and Onboarding

Following recommendations from an internal audit into Council’s Induction and Onboarding processes, Council invested in its learning and development function bringing on an Organisational Trainer position, supported by an existing Learning and Development Associate and new Assistant role. A new Induction and Onboarding Framework was developed and implemented including the creation of an online ‘Welcome Module’, face to face ‘Foundations Masterclass’ corporate induction, ‘Lead the Way’ workshop with the Executive Leadership Team, supported by a range of online and face-to-face corporate training programs. Council also implemented its Candidate Care program which includes personal phone call surveys to new starters at 1 week, 1 month and 3 months after commencement. Feedback from new starters over the last 12 months improved significantly with 89% of new starters saying they felt the first 3 months has set them up for success in their role. An average



response of 4.7 star rating out of 5 was received for questions regarding how supported, comfortable and positive employees feel about their role at Council.

## Our Development

*Create opportunities for learning and the development of our people*

### Learning and Development Framework

Council developed and continues to implement and evolve its Learning and Development Framework. Key achievements include the creation of a training needs analysis matrix for all positions at Council covering qualifications, licences and accreditations such as corporate and digital training, work health and safety, compliance, professional development and leadership training. This information coupled with existing training data assisted with the creation of Council's Corporate Training Plan which spans over a 5 year period, focusing on mandatory and high frequency programs and continues to evolve and grow.

## Our Culture

*Facilitate a culture of innovation, respect, excellence and wellbeing*

### Employee Survey

In 2024, Council undertook a survey of staff in order to create positive change in our workplace and enable the Executive Leadership Team to improve staff wellbeing and overall satisfaction at work. The survey included questions on the following themes:

- Ways of work, including IT, equipment and TRC facilities
- Leadership, including communication and values
- People Development and Contribution, including career development, recognition and learning and development
- Safety
- Diversity and inclusion

83% of staff completed the survey which provided an accurate snapshot of the current work environment. Each division was then given the opportunity to hold a workshop to receive the survey results and create relevant actions to improve and enhance their workplaces.

### Child Safe Framework

In response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, and the requirement to implement the 10 Child Safe Standards, Council has developed a Child Safe Framework. With the aim to ensure that children in our community feel heard, respected and included, the development of the framework considered not only the problems of here and now, but the innovation and solutions for a sustained long-term culture where the care and protection of children is a part of our everyday actions. The Framework continues to strive forward with the appointment of a Child Safe Leader, and Child Safe Champions Group who work together to continuously improve and embed child safety at Tamworth Regional Council. The Framework emphasises the importance of transparency and accountability. It has introduced robust policies for reporting addressing concerns related to child safety, ensuring that any issues are identified early and appropriately dealt with. Council has focused these efforts not only internally through extensive communication and a multi-tiered education program, but also externally through the creation of a webpage for community

members to access, ensuring there are a number of different ways to report to assist members of the community to speak up and report any concerns.

## **Values Review and Relaunch**

There was an overwhelming level of feedback received in the 2024 Employee Survey in relation to how Council manages performance. The Executive Leadership Team determined that Council's corporate values and alignment to our purpose - to be in service of our community - are the foundational pieces to a performance framework. Council is currently undertaking a consultation process with staff to ensure the values are relevant and fit for purpose as we look to the future. The consultation process to date has included two phases of employee surveys and the formation of a Values Champions group made up of representatives across the organisation to review and provide advice on the survey results. Council's refreshed values will be communicated and embedded across recruitment, induction and onboarding, training and performance related processes such as probation and appraisals. The values will guide behaviours and decision making, influencing Council's culture and identity in the community.

## **Health Monitoring**

Council's Health Monitoring program continues to evolve with initial focus on the provision of education and training for managers. Health monitoring requirements are specified in work health and safety legislation and the responsibility of Council is to monitor the health of workers who may be exposed to particular chemical, noise, or biological hazards (where immunisations are required). The program focuses on identifying the hazards, determining the health monitoring requirements, consulting with relevant employees and coordinating the health monitoring appointment and record management. Relevant Council divisions conduct risk assessments and contribute to the health monitoring requirements plan.

In 2023 an Occupational Hygienist was engaged to provide additional expertise, attending a number of operational sites to identify the health monitoring risks and recommendations for each relevant area. Employees who were identified as having a risk of exposure to asbestos received respiratory testing through the iCare Lung Bus, a practice which will continue bi-annually. Respirator fit mask testing was also undertaken for employees required to wear specific PPE for high-risk work. Audiometric testing was undertaken in August 2023 and February 2024 and is scheduled in again for August 2025.

The program continues with testing to identify specific levels and measurements of potential exposures on Council worksites. This information will inform the ongoing risk management and health monitoring requirements.

## **Risk Management**

The introduction of the Office of Local Government's Risk Management and Internal Audit Guidelines required Council to implement a Risk Management Framework that aligned with ISO 31000:2108. A revised risk management framework consisting of the Risk Management Policy, Risk Management guidelines and Risk Management Plan were adopted by Council and the Executive Leadership team in June 2024. Since adoption, Council has defined its strategic risks and aligned them to the Community strategic plan focus areas. Internal education and implementation of the framework continues, and the development of Council's Operational risk profile is underway. The Executive Leadership team and key management representatives participated in a business continuity exercise during November 2024. The exercise provided a safe environment for the Leadership team to work through a business disruption scenario, increase response capabilities and identified areas for improvement.

## Work Health and Safety

Council maintained its Integrated Management System certification for Construction. Council's incident reporting system is transitioning during 2025 to HSI Donesafe. The system provides enhanced functionality and will complement the technology upgrades being rolled out across Council.

## Our Operations

*Promote ethical operations, efficient processes and systems of work*

## Technology enhancements

Upgrades to Council's Human Resource Information System (HRIS) is underway with improvements to processes such as training, performance, onboarding, offboarding anticipated to positively impact efficiency, quality of experience for candidates, employees and leaders. The new programs will give additional visibility and self-service to employees and leaders to assist with managing their careers and team members.

## Our Future

*Plan for our future workforce*

## Strategic Workforce Blueprint

Council engaged the University of Newcastle to assist with developing a future focused Strategic Workforce Blueprint to help align people initiatives with Council objectives. These recommendations have been embedded into this Workforce Management Plan 2205-2028, forming the foundation of our priorities.

## Factors Considered in Developing this Strategy

### Ways of working and impacts in our organisation

Council has identified numerous impacts on our workforce that have been taken into account when formulating this plan:

- Current and prospective employee expectations of technology in the workplace must be met to attract and retain an engaged and high performing workforce
- Diversity, inclusion and belonging are increasingly important factors to the current generation
- A focus on positive duty towards hostile workplace behaviour is more heavily regulated, as compliance and expectations continue to grow
- Innovative technology, automation and artificial intelligence are expected by employees to boost productivity
- Disparate locations of our administration offices make it even more important to reduce silos and increase collaboration
- A focus on capability and growing our own talent to reduce loss of skills and knowledge due to a retiring workforce
- A changing culture with higher turnover, more employees from outside local government, a variety of different generations, backgrounds and experiences in the workplace
- Keeping our people safe and well with increasing focus on psychosocial hazards and psychological wellness
- Change is constant and needs to be managed appropriately
- Attraction and retention of particular professions and roles continues to be challenging
- Changing work arrangements including increased demand for hybrid and flexible working
- Need for greater agility and evolving workforce to meet skills gaps and strategic priorities
- Changes and increasing legislation require specialist skills in governance and quality
- Impacts of the COVID 19 pandemic continue to be felt in expectations for flexible work and attitude toward illness in the workplace
- Social media, Councillor and community sentiment have an adverse impact on wellbeing of employees, prompting proactive and reactive measures to protect employees and provide a safe working environment
- Ongoing challenges of managing changing expectations of the community
- Employee sentiment in recent surveys focused on the need for improved performance management processes, better change management, updated technology and a salary system review

### Challenges in the current and future external environment

External impacts that influence our workforce include:

- Council's ambition for a growing region by 2041 and continued growth rate of 1.1% means there will be increased demand for Council services
- Migration to Tamworth from Central Coast and Hawkesbury areas. Most popular migration destinations away from Tamworth include Newcastle, Port Macquarie, Coffs Harbour and Gold Coast
- The expectation that Council's workforce reflects the community, for example; 12.5 % of residents in the Tamworth Region identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, and residents from migrant backgrounds continue to increase
- Council is committed to focusing on the national Closing the Gap agreement, including continuing its relationship with the Tamworth Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations

- Continued increases in overseas migration to Tamworth Region could address skills shortage through programs to bridge the gap with English language barriers
- The housing market in the region is tight and unless our staff already live in Tamworth, people find it hard to relocate
- Tamworth region has historically low levels of unemployment of 2.1% which makes recruitment a challenge
- Council competes with the agriculture, mining, tourism and electricity generation sectors in the region for rewarding work and salaries
- There is an increasing short to medium term requirement for clean energy skills such as trades, truck drivers etc across the region which will continue to put pressure on attraction and retention, due to the Tamworth region's location in the New England Renewable Energy Zone
- Council's assets and community face increasing impacts of climate change
- Our community wants more active engagement and participation in decisions which affect them
- There is more rapid digitisation and technological change ahead, increasing reliance on systems/technology including automation and artificial intelligence

### **Long Term Needs - Links to Council's Long Term Financial Plan**

Council's Long Term Financial Plan identifies key initiatives that will impact the Council's resourcing strategy, funded by Council's approved Special Rate Variation. Initiatives include increased funding for road maintenance and renewal programs, Council's commitment to build a new Aquatic Centre and investment and significant upgrades to Council's technology.

### **Roads Maintenance and Renewal Program**

As a result of community sentiment and the requirement of Council's asset management program, Council has prioritised an additional focus on its road maintenance and asset renewal program. The Special Rate Variation has injected approximately \$4 million of additional road maintenance funding into budgets for the 2024-2025 financial year. When combined with a further funding increase anticipated in subsequent years, it has been recognised that the delivery of this program will require additional resources within the Transport Operations division of Regional Services, as well as a number of other supporting functions.

#### Current Workforce

In addition to its current FTE of 87, Transport Operations added nine new operator positions to its structure in early 2025. There have also been a number of existing positions altered with the aim of improving the span of control within the Division. With a focus on growing our own talent through learning and development, it is anticipated that both internal and external appointments will occur to fill these positions. Delivery of the program will also utilise contractors for specialist projects such as pavement stabilising and resealing, as well as using labour hire to maintain productivity during work fluctuations.

The Transport Operations Division requires a team of multi-skilled operators that are able to apply themselves to the various road maintenance tasks as they arise. Skills required include sealed road pothole patching, heavy patching, pavement reconstruction, maintenance grading, gravel resheeting and concrete repairs. As such, Council staff need to be able to operate a variety of machinery and apply themselves to a variety of work types.

#### Future Workforce

It is anticipated that the second year of the Special Rate Variation will inject an additional \$4.7 million into Council's budget for our roads. This will increase Transport Operations asset renewal program by approximately 50%.



It is anticipated that the structural changes of 2025 will accommodate this additional work when combined with prudent use of contractors, however there will need to be a continued focus on recruitment, skill development, team building and supervisory capability. It is also anticipated that, as teams get close to being fully staffed, Council will recruit a “labour pool” aimed at reducing our reliance on external labour hire. This could see a further 10 positions added to the organisational structure including Specialist Operators, operators and labourers.

In order to manage the organisational change across this period, it will be important that supervisory skills are developed across the senior operational team.

## **Aquatic Centre**

The approved Tamworth Aquatic Centre, following completion of the build, will be operated largely in-house by Council employees for the first three years. Leased spaces include a gym, café and sports science facility. Other activities such as cleaning will be contracted and resourced externally, and therefore will not impact Council’s requirement for employees or skills.

### Current Workforce

Resources include the following positions engaged by Council:

- 1 x Aquatics Coordinator
- 1 x Aquatics Specialist
- 6 x Pool Supervisors
- 1 Duty Manager
- 1 x Trainee

Due to the nature of seasonal work for the six current outdoor facilities across Tamworth region, Duty Managers and Lifeguards are engaged via labour hire. The 26-week season engages approximately 40 casual lifeguards for 7,000 hours, equating to 8.3 Full Time Equivalent (FTE).

Total resources required to operate the pool facilities is 15 FTE.

Skills and qualifications include Certificate IV in Community Recreation (Aquatics), Pool Lifeguard Licence, First Aid certificate and confined spaces qualification. In addition to customer service and emergency management skills, aquatics employees are required to have de-escalation and confrontation management skills to manage abusive customers. Staff are also required to hold valid working with children check.

### Future Workforce

Upon completion and handover of the new facility, Council will take responsibility for Aquatic Centre operations, learn to swim programs, member administration and may continue to maintain one of the existing Tamworth town pools. It is anticipated that there will be an increase in membership administration, programs and events attracted to the new facility.

The following positions and skills are anticipated to be required, but will be assessed at the appropriate time, pending the outcome of leasing additional space to the community:

- |                             |                             |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ▪ Centre Manager            | ▪ Learn to Swim Instructors |
| ▪ Up to 3 x Leaders         | ▪ Member Administration     |
| ▪ Duty Managers             | ▪ Lifeguards                |
| ▪ Aquatics Services Officer |                             |

It is anticipated that the total resources required would be approximately 20 FTE. Use of labour hire for seasonal positions will be determined closer to the time of handover.

Skills and qualifications required for the future, in addition to current requirements, include knowledge and experience of modern plant room equipment, learn to swim programs, event and facility management.

## Technology Blueprint

Council's investment in upgrading technology will require additional skills and capability for the short-term implementation, longer term operations as well as continuous improvement and response to new advancements.

In order to deliver priority projects, Council has identified the need for the following skills to be developed and/or injected into the workforce:

- Strategic Planning
- Project Management
- Change Management
- Technology One expertise
- Microsoft 365 expertise
- Benefits Realisation and Digital Readiness
- Cyber Security
- Training and Communication
- Information Management and Data Governance
- Asset Maintenance and Renewal
- IT Engineering and Support

Council also recognises the need to invest in backfilling current functions in order for subject matter experts to adequately resource project implementation in a timely manner. This is anticipated to occur in a range of work units such as People and Culture, Finance, Communications and Marketing.

These skills will be resourced through the development of existing employees, internal and external recruitment, short term and longer-term contracts, labour hire and specialist consultants and contractors.

The ongoing resourcing needs of the workforce to support technology change and implementation at Council will be continuously reviewed to ensure it is fit for purpose.

## Funding Strategies

The Workforce Management Strategy is funded by a number of internal and external sources including general revenue, including existing human resources, reserve funds from Council's training budget and government funding initiatives. A number of actions are not currently funded, however, as projects are scoped and business cases formulated, Council will consider suitable funding options and prioritise accordingly.

Council utilises a number of government funding initiatives to support the changing demands of our workforce, ensuring our employees are suitably trained and upskilled. These funding initiatives include, but are not limited to:

- Smart & Skilled funding – Used to fully fund or subsidise training programs for eligible employees
- Office of the Local Government (OLG) – 'Fresh Start Program' funding – Used to support Council to add more Trainee, Apprentice and Cadet positions to their structure to support succession planning and internal growth opportunities
- General and Priority Hiring and Wage Subsidies and Incentives – Federal Government funding used to subsidise wages of Trainees and Apprentices under the Australia Apprenticeships Incentive System (AAIS)

Council has benefited from around \$2 million worth of government funding for training and resourcing initiatives over the last four years and will continue to seek and capitalise on opportunities as they become available.

## Workforce Management Action Plan

**Objective:** Build an agile and future ready workforce to deliver community priorities and respond to changing needs.

Our plan to achieve our workforce objective sits under four key strategies:



The tables on the following pages detail specific actions identified against each strategy

#	ELEMENT	ACTION	BENEFIT
1.1	<b>Talent Acquisition</b>	Continue to evolve and implement Council's Talent Acquisition strategy including promotion of Employee Value Proposition and Tamworth Region Place Brand.	Build employer of choice brand awareness through consistent brand elements and messaging. Attract employees to Tamworth Region. Include brand awareness and role specific focus. Increase number of quality candidates, increase retention rates, decrease vacancy rates.
1.2	<b>Onboarding</b>	Set up new employees ready for success with an informative induction and onboarding experience	Positive experiences for new starters impact retention. Quicker return on investment for Council with new starter capability and output. Focus on upskilling supervisors to deliver experiences positively and consistently.
1.3	<b>Performance Management</b>	Design and implement a holistic performance management framework which is aligned to Council's strategic objectives and delivery targets, leadership capability framework and to support the learning and development needs of the organisation	Enhance employee performance through clear goals and feedback. Consistent management of misconduct and under performance. Reward and recognition for employees.
1.4	<b>Salary System</b>	Review salary system procedures and technology to ensure consistent, transparent approach.	Ensure consistent approach for fairness, transparency and benchmarking. Improves efficiency and timeliness of evaluations.
1.5	<b>Flexible Working</b>	Continuous review of flexible work arrangements, impact of organisation and relevance in current market	Attraction and retention of employees. Employer of choice benefit. Ensure fit for purpose and meet operational need. Meet expectation of current market. Ensure productive use of Council resources and identify impacts on structure.
1.6	<b>External Resourcing</b>	Complete the review of contingent labour levels (contractors, contracts, labour hire) to understand ongoing workforce needs	Understand full picture of resourcing expenditure. Sustainable return on investment. Impact on compliance, safety and culture with numerous external resources.
1.7	<b>Internal Resourcing</b>	Creation of talent development programs for critical areas to increase availability of skilled workforce at short notice	Business continuity for high turnover areas, reduce lag time for recruitment, succession plan, knowledge transfer from experienced employees.
1.8	<b>Grow our Own Strategy</b>	Continue to develop Council's 'Grow our Own' strategy to increase younger demographic within the workforce through career pathways such as traineeships, apprenticeships, cadetships, internships and work experience	Increase pipeline of talent for Council's workforce. Increase proportion of younger demographic making up workforce. Succession plan for critical areas.

*Increase capability through continuous learning*

#	ELEMENT	ACTION	BENEFIT
2.1	<b>Learning and Development Strategy</b>	Continue to implement and evolve Council's Learning and Development strategy to support current and future skill requirements, aligned to Council strategic objectives and future needs, including diversity, equity and inclusion, and cultural sensitivity	Build capability of Council employees to increase performance outcomes. Meet legislative requirements. Increase retention and satisfaction of existing employees. Meet the needs of future service requirements through critical skill development.
2.2	<b>Succession Planning</b>	Develop and implement a succession planning framework for critical, emerging roles and retirement planning	Enable knowledge transfer to ensure business continuity. Increase retention due to career pathways. Increase capability of existing workforce. Mitigate risk of gaps in knowledge due to short notice exits.
2.3	<b>Leadership Capability</b>	Create a leadership capability framework and invest in leadership development programs as a foundation for leaders at all levels	Positive cultural and performance influence. Increase retention and satisfaction. Ensure consistent management approach.
2.4	<b>Coaching and mentoring</b>	Design and implement coaching and mentoring programs at all levels to take advantage of Council's intergenerational workforce	Transfer knowledge and experience between generations and peers. Utilise existing skills and resources to develop our people, minimising external costs. Forge internal relationships.



## Our Culture

### Cultivate innovation, diversity, respect and wellbeing

#	ELEMENT	ACTION	BENEFIT
3.1	<b>Employee Feedback</b>	Continue to monitor and measure organisational culture via annual and ongoing pulse surveys	Monitor culture and engagement. Identify meaningful action to improve morale and retention. Focus attention on meaningful change. Give employees a voice.
3.2	<b>Corporate Values</b>	Relaunch and embed Council's values across the organisation through consultation, education, procedures and documents to reinforce a values based culture	Create a foundation for communicating and measuring positive behaviours and managing performance. Create benchmark for behaviour, decisions and culture.
3.3	<b>Diversity, Equity and Inclusion</b>	Develop a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion strategy to attract and retain employees from diverse backgrounds, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds, and create an inclusive working environment which reflects our community. Include review of Council's Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan	Capitalise on diverse strengths of workforce for innovation and skills. Minimise the risk of bullying, psychosocial hazards and discrimination.
3.4	<b>Healthy Workforce Strategy</b>	Design and implement a Healthy Workforce strategy including physical and mental health, addressing psychosocial hazards and psychological safety	Decrease the risk of psychosocial hazards. Decrease risk of physical and psychological workers compensation claims. Improve health and mental wellness of employees.
3.5	<b>Child Safety</b>	Continue to embed Council's Child Safe Framework to improve positive culture toward child safety	Decrease risk of abuse to children in Council facilities and programs. Deter negative behaviours and practices. Lead the community in our approach to Child Safety.
3.6	<b>Change Management</b>	Research, design and develop capability in change management to provide consistency across the organisation to support change initiatives	Increase likelihood of realising benefits of change early. Influence smoother transitions to change initiatives. Increase resilience and adaptability of employees to workplace change. Mitigate risk of psychosocial hazards with regard to workplace change.
3.7	<b>Risk Management</b>	Embed and maintain an organisational wide positive culture of risk management to enable the ongoing development and innovation required for our Community Strategic Plan and its associated strategic initiatives while supporting the efficient delivery of essential services to our community.	Plan for and mitigate risk of adverse events that effect Council's sustainability and commitment to community.
3.8	<b>Health and Safety</b>	Provide a workplace that protects both the physical and psychological safety and wellbeing of all people through education and awareness, competency based programs and continual improvement.	Decrease likelihood of injury, illness or death. Protect employees from adverse events.

#	ELEMENT	ACTION	BENEFIT
4.1	<b>Workforce Planning</b>	Continue to develop and improve Workforce Planning toward best practice to ensure our workforce is sustainable through systematic and proactive engagement with business units	Proactively plan Council's approach to resourcing in a sustainable manner. Increase quality of performance outcomes aligned to community priorities due to adequate skills, resources.
4.2	<b>Evaluation and Reporting</b>	Design and implement a monitoring and evaluation framework to measure impact of Workforce Management Plan	Monitor trends, positive and negative impacts of initiatives. Identify hotspots and priorities, measure benefits.
4.3	<b>Structural Design</b>	Continue to design and evolve a sustainable organisational structure that aligns with Council's strategic priorities, changing needs, technological change and future ways of working	Fit for purpose structure, aligned to priorities. Remove barriers and increase collaboration, increase agility to respond when needed.
4.4	<b>Technology Upgrade</b>	Implement additional technology to increase efficiency, automation, use of AI and integration with Council's corporate systems, and provide a positive experience for workers	Increase efficiency through automation. Keep up with current technology. Repurpose resources by monitoring changes to work design.

## Implementation and Progress Measures

Workforce planning is an ongoing exercise in a dynamic operating environment. These organisational actions are balanced with the service planning needs of Council's divisions. Organisational initiatives are generally implemented by Council's divisions of People and Culture, and Risk and Safety, with the support of Business Systems and Solutions for technology implementation.

Progress in relation to the plan is reviewed regularly and documented annually through reporting processes.

Relevance of the strategies are also continuously reviewed, adjusted and reprioritised based on current and emerging impacts during the course of the period, including responding to regulatory changes, audit recommendations, employee feedback, internal data trends and external influences.

High level indicators to assist in measuring success will include:

- Stability of employee numbers
- Vacancy rates
- Staff turnover rate
- Employee satisfaction rate
- Diversity indicators
- Training effectiveness
- Work Health and Safety indicators
- Workers Compensation lost time and injuries

.