



Inverell Shire Council

2010 - 2020

Workforce

Management

Plan



Version Control

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INTRODUCTION

A Community for Everyone

The Inverell Shire's Community Strategic Plan embraces the aspirations for the Shire's diverse communities. The delivery of these aspirations relies on the collaborative and committed effort between government, business and community.

The need for a collaborative approach and committed effort resulted in the Council adopting as its mission:

'To work with the community in providing and facilitating the provision of services that enhance the quality of life of all Shire residents'

This Workforce Management Plan supports the 20 Year Strategic Plan, Delivery Plan and the Management/Operational Plan.

At the Strategic Plan level a number of strategies support the development of this Workforce Plan. These are:



Destination 1: A recognised leader in the broader context

Strategies

- R.06 Council ensures it is able to provide resources to effectively deliver its Strategy and Programs;
- R.07 Council is recognised for and distinguished by its management, innovation and customer service;
- R.08 Council leads the community by influencing and participating in policy development to the benefit of the Shire through partnerships and alliances with government, regional interests, Shire groups and communities.



Destination 5: The Communities are supported by sustainable services and infrastructure

Strategies

- S.01 Sound Local Government Administration, Governance and Financial Management are provided;
- S.02 Council displays leadership, community engagement and collaboration with others;
- S.03 Council provides equitable services, consistent with available resources and priorities to meet the Shire's identified needs and preferences;
- S.04 Council's workforce and workplace match contemporary and emerging organisational needs and requirements;
- S.10 Maintain and enhance a safe, efficient and effective local road network;
- S.11 Facilitate the sharing of information and ideas through remote communications;
- S.13 Provide communities with quality potable water supply, effective drainage and sewerage systems;
- S.15 Promote the effective integration of waste management and recycling services.

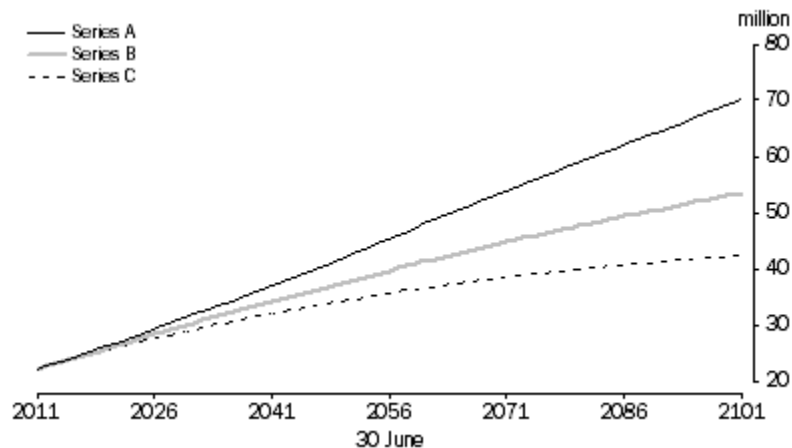
1. BACKGROUND

POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS

1.1 Population size and Growth

Australia's estimated resident population (ERP) at 30 June, 2012, of 22.7 million people is projected to increase to between 36.8 and 48.3 million people by 2061, and to between 42.4 and 70.1 million people by 2101. Series A projects the highest growth, while Series C projects the lowest growth.

PROJECTED POPULATION, Australia



In the 20 years to 30 June, 2012, Australia's population increased by 1.3% per year on average, with just over half of this growth resulting from net overseas migration (NOM) and just under half from natural increases (the excess births over deaths). In the last 2 years, Australia's population has increased by 1.6% per year on average, with the contribution of NOM growing to 56%, and natural increase decreasing to 44%. In the financial year 2011-12, there were 306,000 births and 147,200 deaths in Australia, resulting in natural increase of 158,800 people. During this same period, the contribution of NOM to population growth again increased to 58%, with natural increase decreasing to 42%.

In Series C, a state of natural decrease (deaths outnumbering births) will be reached in 2063. Despite this, Australia's population continues to increase slowly throughout the projection period, due to the contribution of NOM.

In contrast to the 2004-based set of ABS population projections released in November 2005, no series shows population decline for Australia before the end of the century.

1.2 Population Ageing

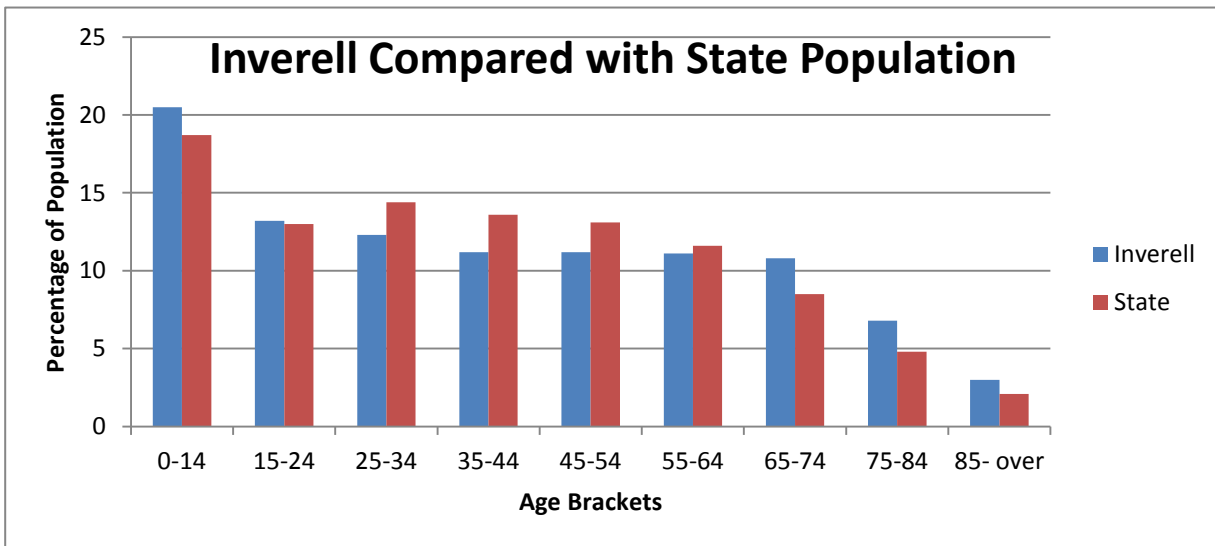
The ageing of Australia's population is expected to continue over the projection period. This is the result of sustained below replacement levels of fertility combined with increasing life expectancy at birth. The median age of Australia's population (37.3 years at 30 June 2012) is projected to increase to between 38.6 years and 40.5 years in 2031 (Series A and C respectively) and to between 41.0 years and 44.5 years in 2061 (Series A and C).

In 2012 people aged 65 years and over made up 14% of Australia's population. This is projected to increase to 22% in 2061 and to 25% in 2101 (Series B). The proportion of people aged less than 15 years is projected to decrease from 19% in 2012 to 17% in 2061, and 16% in 2101 (Series B)

There were 420,300 people aged 85 years and over in Australia in 2012, making up 2% of the population. This group is projected to grow rapidly throughout the projection period, to 5% by 2061 and to 6% by 2101.

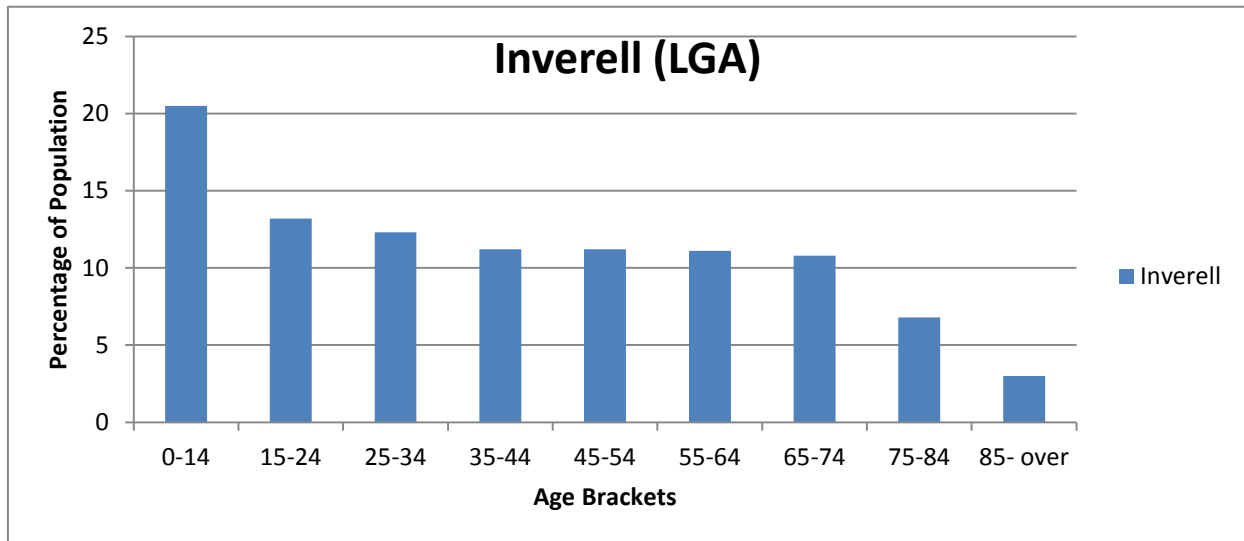
The following charts demonstrate the demographics of the Inverell Shire population.

1.3 Inverell compared with State – Percentage of Population by Age - 2014



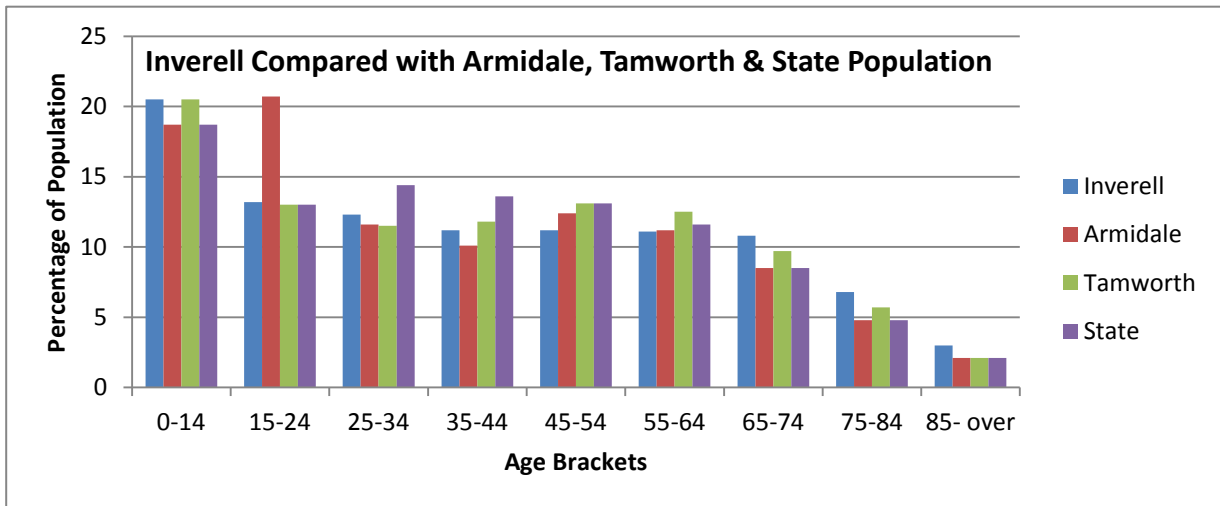
This chart demonstrates that while Inverell has an ageing population and there are deficiencies in the 25 to 54 year age groups, there is strong employment potential for future employment developing with Inverell recording a much higher than average 0 to 14 population.

1.4 Inverell – Percentage of Population by Age - 2014



In meeting its employment needs, Council like other organisations need to develop strategies to take advantage of the knowledge and experience contained in the 55 to 74 year age group.

1.5 Inverell compared with Armidale, Tamworth and State – Percentage of Population by Age - 2014

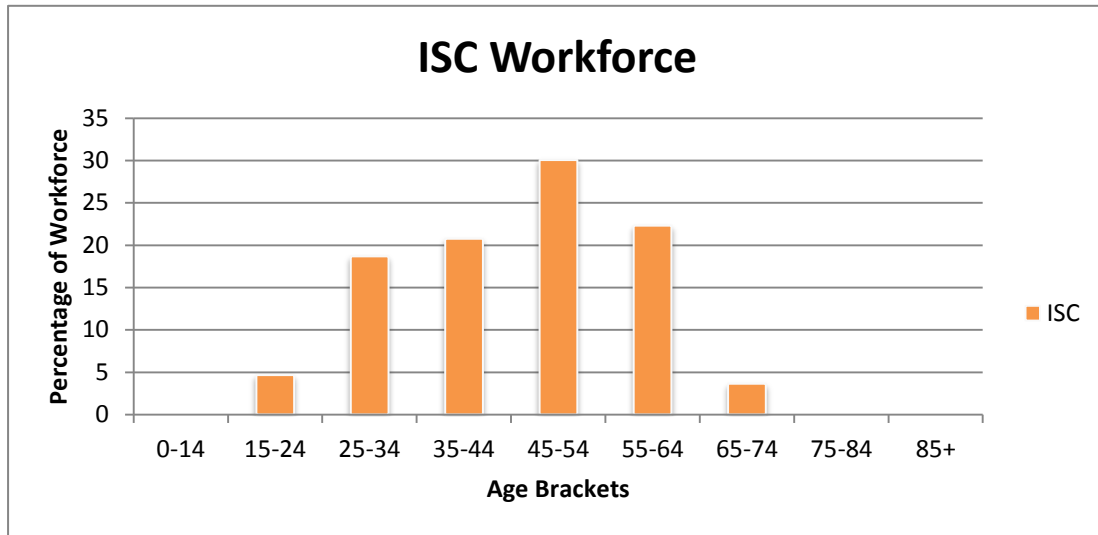


The disproportionate rate of 0-14 year olds, as compared to other age brackets, exemplifies the strong pool of potential employees who will be ready to enter the workforce in the near future. The large number of constituents in this age bracket may be a result of external factors influencing individuals decisions to have offspring, and as such, it may not be a notable trend in the future. However, based on the information contained in this table it appears that Inverell is better placed in respect of its up and coming potential employee pool than its nearby regional counterparts.

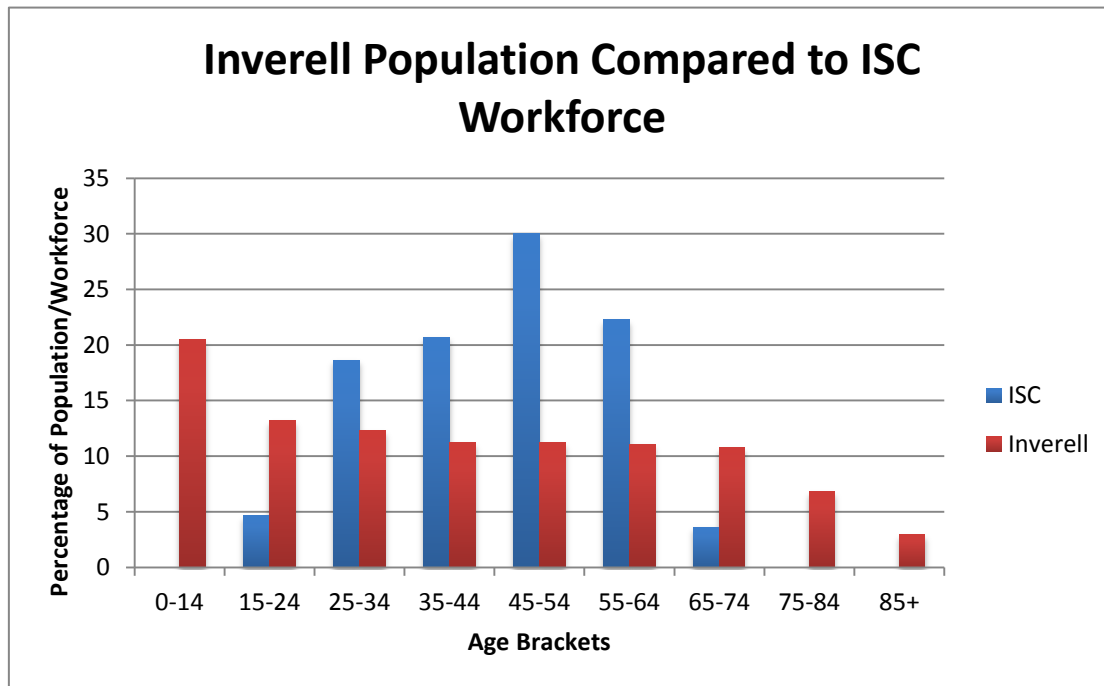
2. INVERELL SHIRE COUNCIL WORKFORCE DEMOGRAPHICS

The following information is provided in respect of Council's current workforce:

2.1 Inverell Shire Council - Percentage of All Employees by Age Range – December 2016

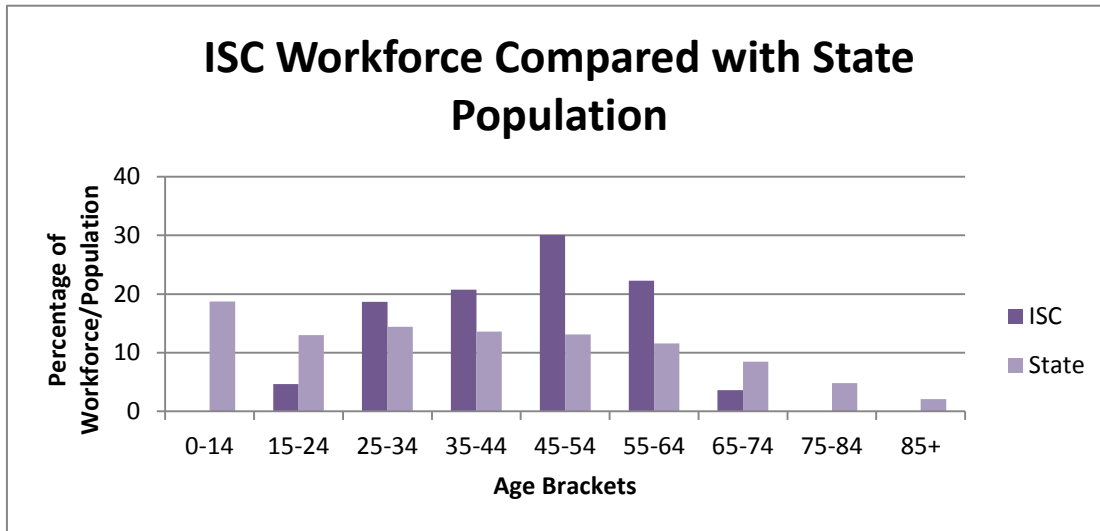


2.2 Inverell Population (2014) compared to ISC Workforce (2016)



A review of the demographics of Council’s current workforce as at December 2016, shows that the average age of Council’s employees is 47.6 years. The age of Council’s employees range from 20 years to 68 years. (This does not include Council’s School-based Trainees).The largest representative group of employees are aged 45 to 54 years, followed by 56 to 64 years olds. Council has noted that over the last two years, a number of employees have made the choice to continue in employment beyond the traditional age 65 years retirement age.

2.3 ISC workforce (2016) compared with State Population - Percentage of by Age – 2014



2.4 ISC Age Profile by Department 2016

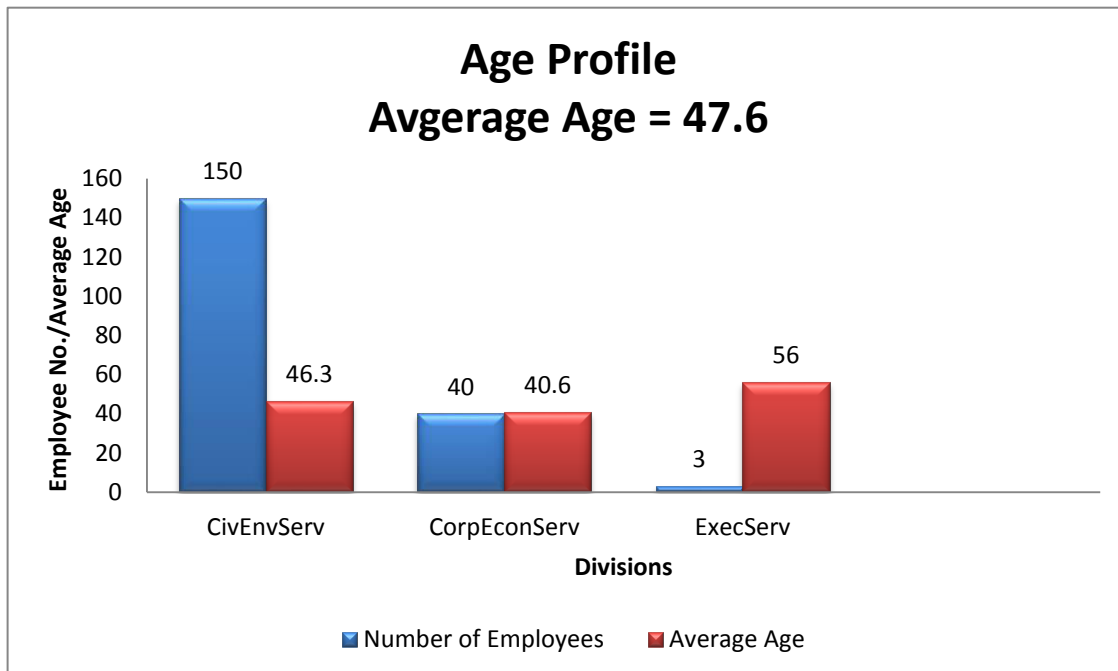
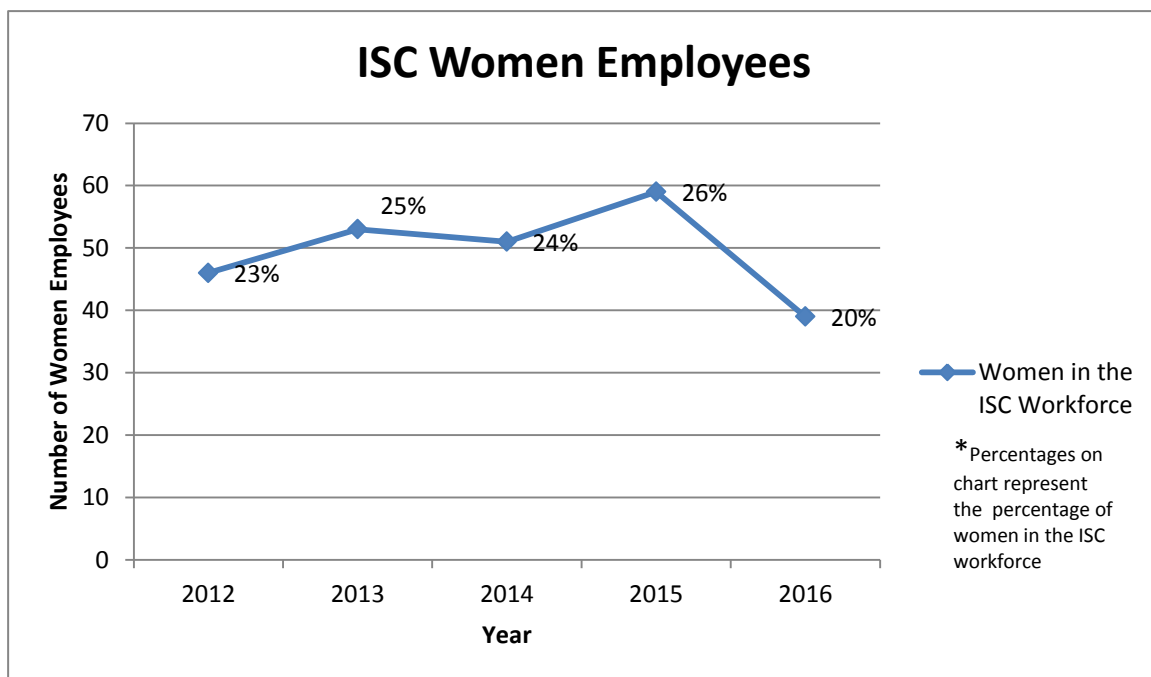


Chart 2.4 demonstrates the dominance of the Civil and Environmental Services department as an employer of the ISC. With an average age of 47.6 years across the organisation, Council must be strategically prepared for increased employee resignations as its employees leave the workforce. This may be achieved by capitalising on the up and coming employee pool highlighted from pages 9-10.

2.5 Women in the ISC workforce

The Inverell Shire Council prides itself as an Equal Opportunity Employer (EOE). As such, the organisation provides a range of positions that require skills achievable by individuals of all genders. Decreasing the disproportionate gap between male and female employees is an important issue for the organisation as it endeavours to fulfil positions based on merit alone.



The above graph asserts the number of women employed by the Inverell Shire Council from 2012. The overall decrease in this figure is reflective of the strategic decisions made by Council to offload external community entities, coincidentally dominated by female staff. Whilst this figure is not desirable, increases in the number of female employees from 2012-2015 reflect Councils commitment to being an EOE, and are positive indicators that closing the gender employment gap is an achievable goal.

2.6 Skills Shortage Impact on Council

The shortage of skills is not limited to Local Government but affects all sectors of the local economy, both in the private and public sector.

This situation exists as employers are unable to fill or are having considerable difficulty in filling vacancies from an occupation, or specialised skill needs within that occupation, at current levels of remuneration, conditions of employment, reasonably accessible location/s and the willingness to work under existing market conditions.

Council has experienced at times challenges in filling positions in the areas of:

- Engineering;
- Building Surveying;
- Business Services.

At this point in time Council has not experienced any significant difficulties in filling positions in other areas.

3. WORKFORCE PLAN

3.1 Aims and Objectives

The major aim of this Workforce Management (and Succession) Plan (WMP) is to enable Council to:

- Monitor the demographic features of its workforce;
- Analyse trends to enable the development and implementation of Workforce Management Strategies;
- Effectively manage the issue of an ageing workforce;
- Effectively manage skills shortage issues;
- Develop and Implement Succession Plans for all senior and other identified key positions;
- Identify areas where there is a shortage or potential shortage of specialised and technical skills.

This Workforce Management Plan in meeting this aim, focuses on the development and implementation of strategies within five key areas:

- Accommodating and Caring for Council's existing Workforce;
- Workforce Recruitment;
- Succession Planning and developing / maintaining workplace knowledge and skills;
- Workforce Retention;
- Developing and implementing processes to ensure the delivery of best practice outcomes in workforce management.

3.2 Consultation

This Workforce Management Plan was developed through a consultation process. Continued consultation will occur with all stake holders to facilitate the on-going development and implementation of this Workforce Management Plan.

This consultation has identified that actions need to be taken in the following areas in managing Council's current and future workforce planning needs;

- Promote Employee wellbeing, health and safety;
- Attract young workers, graduates and trainees;
- Enable phased retirement for older workers;
- Provide for Flexible work practices;
- Facilitate programs which enable leadership and careers development;
- Encourage women to apply for Council vacancies in the Civil and Environmental Directorate of Council;
- Encourage participation in job rotation schemes.

In order to effectively address these matters on a continuing basis, annual reviews of the action plans developed in these matters will be undertaken. These will be lead by the Human Resources Section.

3.3 Communication

The initiatives contained within this Workforce Management Plan will be comprehensively communicated to all Council's employees via the various communication channels used by Council for dissemination of information.

3.4 Caring for Council's Existing Workforce

Council recognises the need to assist its employees where possible, in maintaining their health and wellbeing, as a means of delivering quality community outcomes. In addressing the range of issues before Council in this regard, Council has implemented the following initiatives to assist its employees;

- Flexible Working Hours schemes;
- An Employee Assistance Program;
- A Discretionary Training Policy to provide assistance to employees for continuing education;
- Access to Salary Sacrifice arrangements (Significant benefit to new staff relocating to the Shire);
- Phased retirement options (as per the Local Government Award);
- Pre-retirement Contracts for Contract Staff.

In aiding employee well-being, Council focuses on providing workplaces that offer a range of modern office accommodation and facilities which in addition to providing for Council's operational needs, assist in maintaining an environment that delivers strong employee health, safety and well-being outcomes.

3.5 Workforce Recruitment

Council is strongly aware that it is operating in a competitive labour market and that effective, targeted, efficient recruitment strategies are required to meet Council's continuing workforce requirements.

In ensuring that Council is able to access a sufficient pool of applicants and quickly move them into employment with Council, the following activities will be undertaken;

- Continue to ensure that Inverell Shire Council maintains its industry standing as a strong, financial and growing regional Council;
- Continue to promote Inverell as a lifestyle destination;
- Continue to monitor:
 - Where Council's employment candidates come from;
 - Which is the most cost effective and efficient medium for attracting candidates to apply for positions, in targeting Council's advertising for vacancies;
- Continue to ensure that Council's recruitment and selection processes are timely and professional;
- Candidates are aware of recruitment time frames and process completed in a timely fashion;
- Continue to collaborate with local high schools that assist local schools career advisors;
- Continue to conduct and participate in the annual Inverell Careers Expo, providing static and active displays;

Where necessary appoint external recruitment agencies to assist in the recruitment process.

3.6 Succession Planning

Council acknowledges it may face in the medium and long term, a number of workforce succession planning challenges. These include;

- An ageing workforce (as depicted in the Graphs at Pages 7-10);
- A shortage of specialised skills in certain areas, such as civil engineering, planning and business management (both development and strategic);
- Increasing competing career opportunities both inside and outside the Inverell Local Government Area;
- An increasing mobile younger workforce;
- A change in the workload for certain sections within Council as State and Local Government priorities change.

Noting these challenges, Council's succession planning will provide for strategies which:

- Enable the filling of Senior Management and key positions in a timely fashion;
- Facilitating the in-house career advancement of identified employees;
- Ensure the retention of existing knowledge, skills and experience;
- Provide for higher level, vacant positions to be filled by existing Council employees, creating cost savings, efficiencies and ongoing productivity;
- Make it attractive for entry level vacant positions to be filled by external applicants to increase the employment pool available to Council.

Accordingly, in ensuring the timely filling of key positions with appropriately skilled and qualified employees across all sections of the organisation, Council will utilise the following succession planning strategies:

- Strategy 1 – The provision of a range of full time permanent, full-time fixed term and casual staff positions;
- Strategy 2 - The engagement of employees on a contractual basis with attractive employment conditions;
- Strategy 3 - The provision of continuing opportunities for existing appropriately skilled employees to act in the higher key positions;
- Strategy 4 - The appointment of existing appropriately skilled employees to higher key positions – this may entail the incumbent being required to obtain further/higher skills identified in Training Plans;
- Strategy 5 - The sharing / borrowing of appropriate employees from neighbouring Councils;
- Strategy 6 - The implementation of a Council wide Mentoring Program;
- Strategy 7 - The establishment of an Inverell Shire Council Scholarship Scheme which will sponsor outstanding employees to undertake Post Graduate studies with a view to becoming Senior Managers;

- Strategy 8 - Setting target numbers of Trainees, Apprentices or Cadets for all Groups at 5% of Group numbers;
- Strategy 9 - Provide job rotation schemes, to provide opportunities for employees to gain a broad range of experience and skill's across the organisation.

In respect of this matter, Council has for some time already had in place a number of strategies targeted at succession planning. These comprise the following;

- The continual intake of trainees, apprentices and school based trainees providing job opportunities to (primarily) local young persons – this provides a pool of young experienced and qualified people able to apply for permanent positions on completion of their training. Council has established a target of 5%.
- The employment of School Based Trainees – working part time at Council while continuing High School studies. The majority of these trainees have progressed to permanent employment with Council.
- The accommodation of TAFE and High School students requesting work experience placements. This provides an opportunity for the participants to be exposed to the Local Government Industry.
- Presentations to the local High Schools, where the students learn about Local Government and employment opportunities with Council.
- Local Government Information Evenings for local education providers, their Teachers and Career Advisors are held in conjunction with the annual Inverell Careers Expo. Council co-ordinates, conducts and participates in the Annual Inverell Careers Expo.
- Inverell Shire Council adopt a School Scheme allowing High School students to undertake projects under the direction of Council subject matter experts, and on completion, delivery of a presentation outlining the project.

In supporting Council's succession planning, Council has identified its Critical and Key Positions for its continuing operations in Council's Organisational Structure.

3.7 Workforce Retention

Council, in conjunction with its Succession Planning, is aware that effective Workforce Management includes as a major element, employee retention. This is particularly relevant for Council's critical and key positions. In considering suitable retention strategies, Council has considered:

- Who is currently in our organisation;
- What motivates them to stay; and
- Who does Council need and want to attract to the organisation, and once they are here how are they retained.

In pursuing these matters, Council's employee retention strategies will focus on providing its employees with a supportive, safe environment. This environment will foster a sense of belonging, empowering employees and provide them with the direction and resources needed to perform Council's activities in the community to the best of their ability.

Council will recognise long term and/or outstanding employees in its organisation, as a major step in addressing employee retention. Council has implemented a Staff Retention Scheme and long service recognition ceremony (service medallions) to assist in this matter. Council reviews its organisational structure to ensure that Councils workforce and workplace matches the contemporary and emerging needs and requirements of Local Government and the community. These reviews provide for a potential expansion in the opportunities available for employee career progression, particularly into positions of leadership, and for the continuing transfer of corporate knowledge.

Some of the activities Council will be undertaking to maximise its employee retention in the short to medium term are:

- Investigation of further flexible working hours schemes;
- Investigation of alternate leave arrangements, including cashing out of leave and possibly the purchase of additional leave (subject to legal requirements);
- Investigation of additional salary sacrifice arrangements for staff;
- Investigation of transition to retirement schemes for older workers noting Inverell Shires ageing population. (Council has already had some workforce management planning success in this area);
- Investigation of employee wellbeing support programs/policies and/or procedures.

3.8 Delivery of Best Practice Outcomes in Workforce Management

In delivering best practice outcomes in Workforce Management, Council will undertake the following activities:

- Council will conduct an “Annual Workforce Analysis’ as a means of identifying any existing or potential workforce gaps. This will include, but not be limited to:
 - Age profiling of the workforce,
 - Workforce turnover rates, both total and in each individual area;
 - Identification of skills/training gaps;
(This work will be undertaken in conjunction with Council’s Annual Competency Reviews).
- Council will, following its annual workforce analysis, prepare a “Workforce Forecast” of its ten year workforce needs;
- Identify new technologies which may be implemented which will assist employees in the conduct of their work;
- Council will review and where appropriate implement new Workforce Management Strategies developed by others both inside and outside of the local government industry;
- Council will monitor and evaluate this Workforce Management Plan on an annual basis. This evaluation may include:
 - Meetings with Management;
 - Focus Groups;
 - Analysis of workforce data;
 - Exit Interviews;
 - Employee and Customer Surveys;
 - Organisation Performance Assessments.

3.9 Council’s Current Employee Benefits which aid Workforce Management Planning

In addition to providing modern and functional facilities to its employees, the following is a summary of current employee benefits which aid and assist Council’s workforce planning;

Recognition and Reward

- Service Awards – apply once 15 years service is achieved;
- Salary increases – Award and/or Senior Executive Service;
- Staff Retention Scheme.

Salary Sacrifice/Packaged Benefits

- Motor Vehicles – option of packaging vehicles for contract staff and selected key positions;
- Provision of Phones – Subsidies available from the provision of phone services for contract staff and selected key positions;
- Access to Superannuation Salary Sacrifice arrangements;
- Additional Benefits for new employees relocating from outside of the area.

Health and Wellbeing

- Access to annual flu vaccinations for interested staff
- Employee Assistance Program
- Social Club
- Domestic and Family Violence Employee Support Program

Career Advancement

- Study Assistance under Council's discretionary training policy (financial and paid leave for residential schools and exams);
- Conferences and Seminars – opportunities to attend conferences and seminars which are relevant to the employees position;
- Access to in-house training.