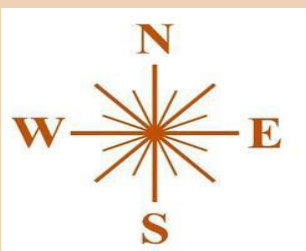


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Workforce Management Plan

2023 - 2027



Central Darling
Shire Council

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Acknowledgement of Country



Photo courtesy of Martin Bass

Council respectfully acknowledges the traditional owners, the Barkindji people, as the custodians of this land. We pay respect to all Aboriginal community Elders, past and present, who have resided in the area and have been an integral part of the history of the region.

We acknowledge the ongoing connection that Aboriginal people have to this Country, especially water and recognise Aboriginal people as the original custodians of this land. We thank them for their generosity in sharing their aspirations for the future and hope that this plan will affect change for communities of the shire.

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The Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

As part of the New South Wales Government's commitment to a strong and sustainable local government system, legislation was enacted in October 2009 that introduced a planning reporting tool for local government known as the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework.

The following diagram identifies the various components of Central Darling Shire's integrated planning and reporting framework and how they are linked to each other.

STRATEGY/PLAN	PURPOSE	CURRENCY/ EXPIRY
COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN (CSP)	Peak plan providing community perspectives about priority issues to address and goals to work towards across the shire as a whole.	10 years
TOWN AND DISTRICT IMPROVEMENT PLANS	Plans describing the improvement priorities and needs of each town and surrounding district within the shire.	10 years
RESOURCING STRATEGY	Strategy comprising three plans (see below) to ensure council is able to adequately resource its ongoing activities and operations whilst working towards the CSP's long-term goals	
• Long-term Financial Plan	Documenting council's projected income and expenditure and modelling to ensure long-term financial sustainability	10 years
• Asset Management Plan	Providing a comprehensive account of the service standards and maintenance requirements and schedules for all council assets.	10 years
• Workforce Management Plan	Identifying council's anticipated human resource priorities and activities to meet the goals and targets of the Delivery Program	4 years
DELIVERY PROGRAM	Plan documenting council activities, projects and initiatives during each council term, to work towards the long-term goals described in CSP	4 years
OPERATIONAL PLAN	Annual plan programming ongoing activities, projects and initiatives and budget to achieve Delivery Program goals and targets	1 year
ANNUAL REPORT	Report documenting council activities in relation to its statutory responsibilities and reporting on progress of projects and initiatives outlined in the Operational Plan	1 year

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The diagram below identifies the various components of the Central Darling Shire's IP&R framework and how they are linked to each other.



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Our Workforce Management Plan

The Central Darling Shire Council Workforce Management Plan (the “Plan”) is designed to ensure that our workforce is structured and appropriately skilled to meet the community aspirations described in the Community Strategic Plan (“CSP”), and associated plans. It also guides the Council in its initiatives to attract and retain the right staff and in identifying priorities and needs in skills development and training for staff.

The strategies and actions outlined in this Plan will contribute to an engaged and productive workforce that can support the objectives set out in the Community Strategic Plan, while maintaining our commitment to delivering quality the services to our community.

Snapshot of Central Darling Shire Council

Central Darling Shire is the largest Shire in NSW, and yet has the smallest population. It covers an area about the size of the main island of Tasmania and yet has a population of less than 2,000 people. The Shire is extremely diverse with four main communities – Wilcannia, Menindee, Ivanhoe and White Cliffs. Each of these communities are different in their commerce, geography and Indigenous and European cultures.

The administration centre of the Shire is based in Wilcannia, which is situated on the Barrier Highway, approximately 198 kms east of Broken Hill, 470 kms north of Mildura and 260 kms west of Cobar.



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Our values

Through a collaborative approach and strong commitment, the values that will support our mission and guide us in achieving our vision are:

- Energising leadership
- Customer service and contribution to community
- Innovation and continuous improvement
- Equal opportunity and caring for individuals
- Political harmony
- Teamwork
- Ethical behaviour

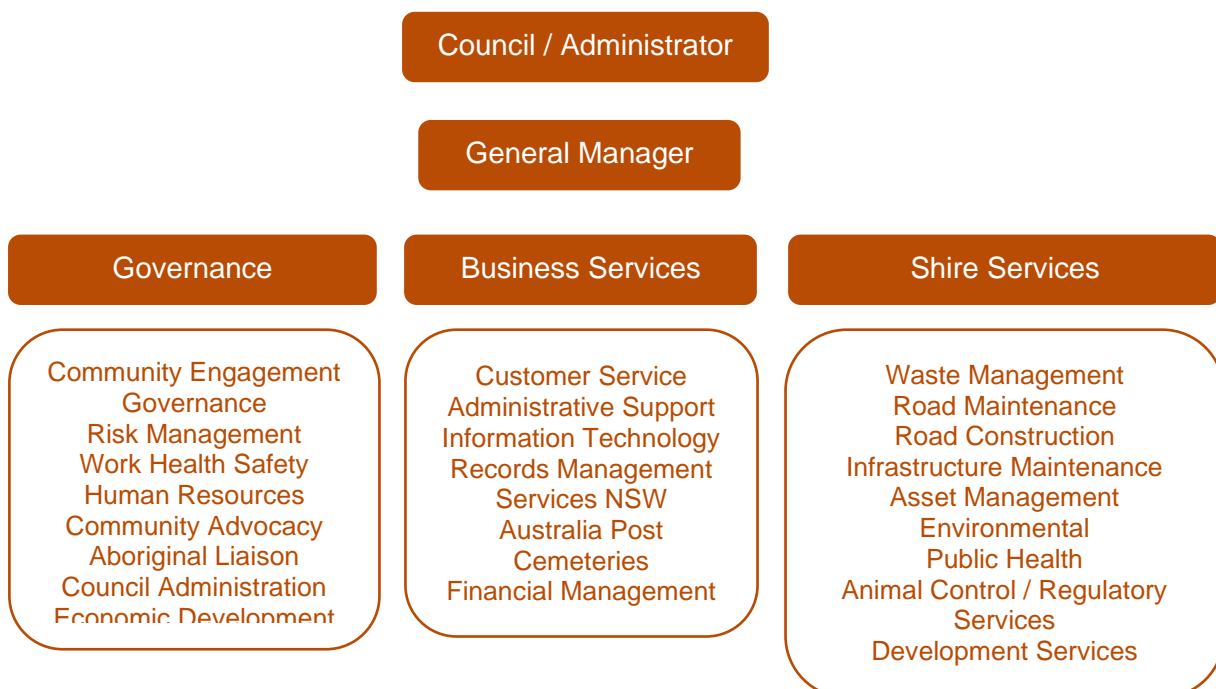
Current Workforce Structure

Central Darling Shire's organisation structure incorporates three directorates.

Under the direction of the General Manager, these directorates plan and deliver all services to the Shire according to local priorities and needs, and relevant state government acts and legislation. The diagram below provides an outline of the service delivery responsibilities of each directorate.

The General Manager is supported by an Executive Assistant, Human Resource Officer, Risk and WHS Officer, Governance Officer and Community Engagement Officer.

In the absence of an elected council, the Administrator is appointed by the state government and fulfils an oversight role similar to that of elected councillors.



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Workforce Overview

As at 31 December 2022, our workforce comprised a headcount of 64 staff, which consists of:

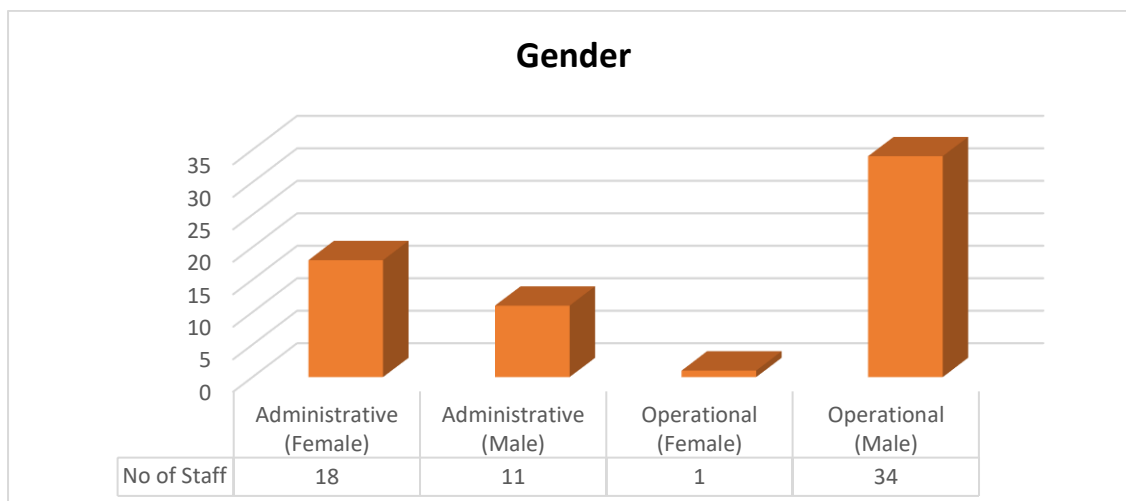
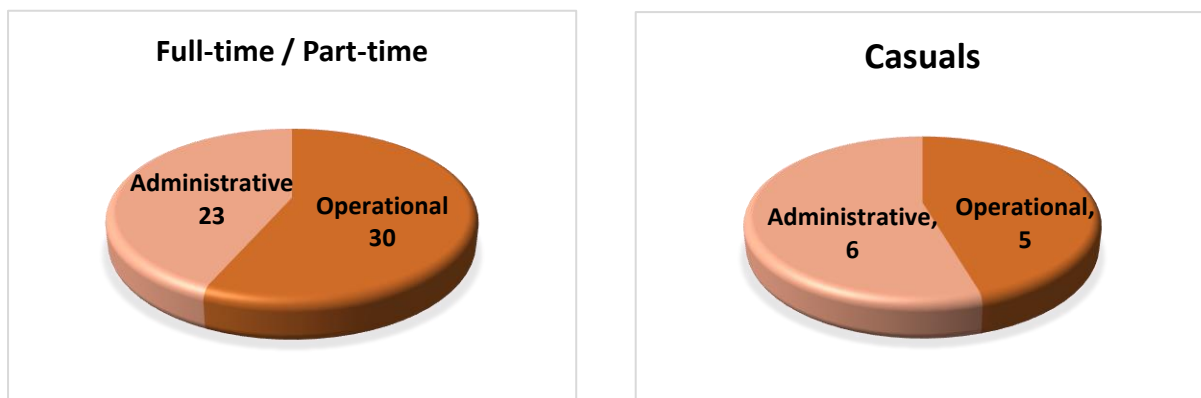
- 50 – Permanent full-time / part-time staff
- 3 – Fixed term full-time / part-time staff
- 11 – Casuals (excluding swimming pool attendants)

Our staff are based in, and operate across, the following locations:

- Ivanhoe
- Menindee
- White Cliffs
- Wilcannia
- A number of remote locations

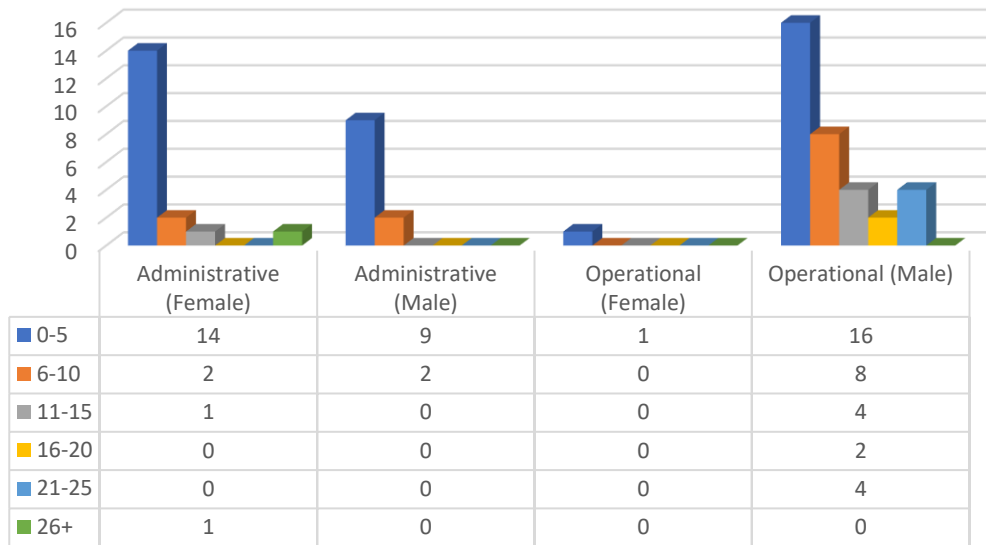
Workforce Profile

The information below is a snapshot of the profile of our workforce as at 31 December 2022:

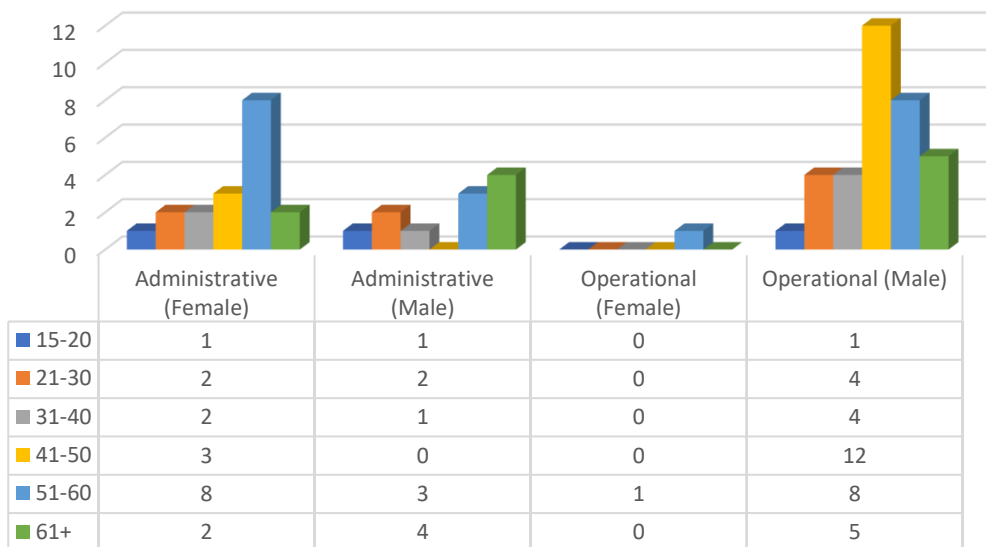


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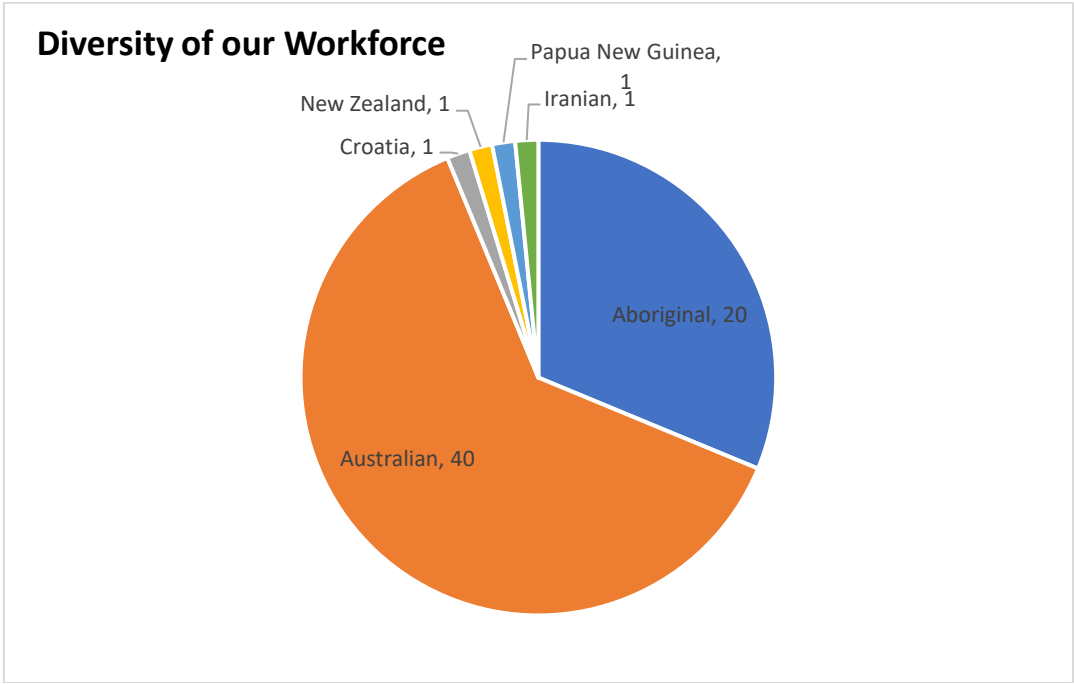
Years of Service



Age



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Our workforce resides in the following locations, with staff who work remotely being required to attend the Shire on a frequent basis:

Central Darling Shire (Ivanhoe, Menindee, Wilcannia, White Cliffs)	53
Other NSW locations (regional and metropolitan)	8
Victoria	1
South Australia	1
Queensland	1

Workforce Capability

At the time of preparing this Workforce Management Plan, there has been limited information captured to provide an indication of the skills and qualifications for our workforce.

As work progresses to develop robust HR systems and processes, such information will be captured and used in of developing and growing our workforce from within the Shire.

We are committed to developing our workforce to ensure a sustainable future for all who reside and work in the Shire.

Turnover

Staff turnover during the 2021/22 Financial Year has been calculated at 3.60%. This is below the average for local government in NSW.

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Excess Annual and Long Service Leave

Our staff continue to have excess leave balances. The inability to backfill (internally or externally) is a contributing factor to our staff being hesitant to take leave.

Steps are currently underway to reduce the excess leave entitlements to ensure our staff are able to take their leave in a timely manner.

Challenges and Opportunities

Like many councils in regional NSW, we have many challenges that will impact on our ability to maintain current services. For Central Darling Shire, the challenges and opportunities include:

Ageing Workforce (Internal Factors)

With 72% of our workforce over the age of 40, working in the operational (outdoor) area, and the physical demands of the activities being performed, there are risks to the safety, health and wellbeing of our staff.

The opportunity for us is to work with our staff to develop safe systems of work that will minimise the impact on the health and wellbeing of our staff.

With less than a quarter (17%) of our workforce being under the age of 30, there is an opportunity for our organisation to explore opportunities around traineeships and/or apprenticeships. This will assist in developing the young people in our Shire to gain ongoing employment.

Technology and Change (Internal Factors)

Our council continues to explore cost effective technology to improve efficiency and effectiveness in delivering its services to the community. The challenge in implementing and using technology across the organisation is the limited capability our operational staff have in the use of technology.

There is an opportunity for staff to be trained in the use of basic technology to perform key functions, which will in turn build confidence, skills and capability in the individual staff member.

Sustainable Workforce (Internal and External Factors)

While Council experienced a low turnover for the 2021/22 financial year, a large proportion of staff 79%, have been with us for 10 years or less.

The origins of our staff include 8% overseas, 31% Aboriginal, 61% Australian, with 83% residing in the Shire towns and villages.

Recruiting for qualified professionals to assist the organisation deliver sound governance and infrastructure activities continues to be a significant challenge.

During 2021/22 the organisation found recruiting to all positions, whether professional or operational, challenging. This has been attributed to a number of reasons, including the work readiness of people seeking employment with the organisation, housing availability and/or the lack of infrastructure and facilities to attract families to the Shire.

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The professional areas which the organisation find's challenging, is the attraction of qualified professionals in the areas of engineering, finance, human resources, work health safety and governance. One way council has successfully addressed this challenge is the exploration of options around attendance onsite combined with remote working.

Other occupations where the organisation find challenging to recruit include administrative/executive support and truck drivers.

In addition, initial discussions within the community have identified that local government is not seen as attractive to younger workers. We have commenced discussions with key government agencies, including the Wilcannia Central School, to identify opportunities to grow a sustainable workforce from within the community.

Governance (Internal and External Factors)

An ongoing challenge for our organisation is the need to keep abreast of legislative changes and to adhere to relevant requirements as it relates to governance in general, work health safety and human resource management.

To address this challenge, the organisation has successfully appointed appropriately qualified and skilled professionals to establish appropriate systems and processes to ensure that the organisation meets its legislative obligations.

From a workforce management perspective, the organisation has developed a HR Framework, with the strategies at both operational and strategic levels currently being implemented. Progress of the HR framework is regularly monitoring by the Management Executive Group.

Housing / Accommodation (External Factor)

Management and technical professionals have access to subsidised housing in Council owned housing/accommodation. However, access to suitable private housing/accommodation across the Shire for staff remains a constant challenge and is a barrier to engaging quality staff across all areas of the workforce.

To address this challenge, the organisation will need to explore both alternative employment methods as well as explore other options for housing/accommodation.

Services and Facilities (External Factor)

Anecdotal evidence acquired through external recruitment processes, particularly for professional staff, has identified that the limited services and facilities available for families in the Shire has impacted upon their decision to apply and/or accept positions. The availability of reliable connectivity for some candidates is also a factor in their decision as to whether to apply and/or accept a role.

From an attraction perspective, there is an opportunity for Council to explore improved services and facilities with the aim of attracting people with young families and/or businesses.

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Workforce Capability (Internal and External Factor)

It is important that our employees have the right skills and abilities to meet the actions and strategies outlined in the Community Strategic Plan, and associated plans. Through aligning our learning and development programs to our strategic focus, the organisation is able to guide expected behaviours and provide our staff with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to enhance their ability, progress future work requirements and career progression.

At present, there is no formal training plan or program in place for staff other than for compliance related requirements (eg licences, Code of Conduct, WHS, etc).

There is an opportunity for our organisation to develop an organisation wide training plan in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (State) Award that aligns with other legislative requirements. This will ensure that the learning and development meets the required compliance requirements and is appropriately targeted and financially sustainable.

In terms of skill shortage areas, our organisation has identified all positions as being difficult to recruit, however the following critical positions have been identified:

- Engineering – Civil, Utilities, Roads, Project
- Water Treatment Plant Operators
- Truck Drivers
- Administration / Customer Service Officers
- Finance Officers

In addition, there is limited access to tradespeople (eg plumbers, electricians, etc) across the Shire. The challenge the organisation has in this area is that we are unable to take on apprenticeships in this area without a qualified tradesperson being available. This is a legislative requirement for engaging traineeships/apprenticeships.

To address this gap, the organisation needs to explore the concept of “growing from within the community”. This can be achieved through the development of a tailored program that can be taken into schools at around Year 8. As the students’ progress through their schooling, then there are opportunities to combine a traineeship/apprenticeship with their studies. Initial discussions with Wilcannia Central School have identified a strong partnership opportunity to achieve this outcome.

Being a remote location, access to quality face to face training is a challenge. Therefore, it is important that we explore options of partnering with our neighbouring councils to provide quality training in key areas. There is also a potential opportunity for our council to source cost effective online programs.

Leadership Capability (Internal Factor)

Another area of focus for us in the next 12-24 months is the development of our leadership team.

Strong and accountable leadership brings the best out of staff which in turn motivates and engages staff to be the best they can be.

To address the gap in our leadership capability, there is an opportunity to provide coaching, training and support for members of the Management Executive Group. The next level of leaders (our supervisors) would also benefit from development, along expanding the program to our potential upcoming leaders.

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Workplace Culture (Internal and External Factors)

Research indicates that a positive workplace culture has a significant impact in retaining staff and attracting high calibre staff.

Currently our organisation lists the following as staff benefits:

- Access to a Rostered Day Off each month (indoor staff)
- Access to a Rostered Day Off each fortnight (outdoor staff)
- Access to an Employees Assistance Program (3 free sessions per year)
- Long Service Leave after 5 years
- Access to flexible work options
- Learning and development opportunities

Anecdotal evidence indicates that our organisation would benefit from a brand refresh. With a significant number of new employees who have joined Central Darling over the past 2 years, it is timely to engage them in refreshing our brand.

Workplace behaviours contribute to a positive environment in which staff can be productive and enjoy coming to work. Anecdotal information gathered through staff workshops and feedback has identified that behaviours across the organisation have seen staff not wishing to attend work. This in turn contributes to higher levels of unplanned absenteeism across the board.

In addition, recent changes to the industrial relations framework have seen the introduction of a “positive duty of care” now placed on employers to ensure that their workplace is safe for people to come to work.

While there are provisions contained within the Local Government (State) Award and the Model Code of Conduct for Staff on expected conduct in the workplace, we are committed to developing a tailored program, procedures and initiatives that ensures our staff continue to work in a safe environment.

As part of developing our workplace culture, it will be important for us to take time out to recognise our staff. At present there is no program in place other than to recognise years of service, and for many staff, recognition will be challenging. Therefore, we will need to work with the current staff to identify what a recognition program may look like.

Diversity and Inclusion (Internal and External Factors)

Our workforce comprises of 61% Australian, 31% Aboriginal and 8% non-Australian staff. We also have one staff member who identifies with a disability.

We are committed to building a diverse and skilled workforce that reflects the diversity of our community.

To achieve this, we are committed to developing a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan that will assist our organisation in being a better place to live, work and do business.

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Workforce Strategies

Detailed below are several focus areas and identified strategies to address the challenges and opportunities outlined in this Plan.



Focus Area 1 – Recruitment, Selection and Retention

Strategy - *Recruit, select and retain the right workforce to ensure the long-term supply of skills and resources.*

Actions / Initiatives:

1. Review, develop and streamline Council's recruitment and selection policies and procedures for effective and efficient recruitment of new employees.
2. Explore position specific recruitment programs for difficult to recruit positions.
3. Work with staff to identify options to provide additional rewards such as flexible working hours, flexitime, private use of fleet vehicles, additional leave entitlements, etc.
4. Conduct an annual staff satisfaction survey and use outcomes to update and refine the Workforce Management Plan
5. Develop and implement strategies and programs that promote Council as an employer of choice
6. Participate in the Local Government NSW Remuneration Survey to benchmark council's salary system against similar councils
7. Participate in the Local Government NSW HR Metrics survey to benchmark council's employee retention and separation rates against similar councils
8. Complete a Housing Assistance Framework that can be used to attract employees
9. Review and refine the employee exit interview policy and process
10. Maintain a positive ongoing relationship between Council and the United Services Union (USU).



Focus Area 2 – Workforce Development

Strategy – *Provide a supportive and productive environment that grows our workforce in knowledge and capability.*

Actions / Initiatives:

1. Review and update the organisation structure to ensure that it delivers on the Community Strategy Plan and other legislative requirements.
2. Identify professional positions that are difficult to fill and develop alternative options to attract applicants such as working remotely
3. Prepare controls so measure productivity for remote positions
4. Prepare a skills profile for all professional staff positions to ensure that recruitment processes match applicant skills, experience and qualifications with position requirements

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5. Develop succession plans for key roles to transfer and safeguard corporate knowledge and upskill employees
6. Develop and implement annual staff performance review processes
7. Undertake a skills gap analysis to identify future skills and organisational learning and development requirements
8. Prepare new simplified position descriptions and identify key skills and specific attributes required for all staff roles
9. Investigate funding for local employment such as apprenticeships and traineeships, particularly for indigenous positions
10. Develop and implement recruitment and training strategies to attract and retain local people
11. Support work experience and community and school careers events
12. Utilise outcomes of employee satisfaction survey to review and update the Workforce Management Plan
13. Develop an induction program for all new employees including corporate systems, WHS and compliance training
14. Develop staff reward and recognition program to acknowledge good performance and positive achievements



Focus Area 3 – Workforce Health and Wellbeing

Strategy – *A workplace that supports the safety and wellbeing of our workforce.*

Actions / Initiatives:

1. Continue to monitor staff leave balances to ensure staff take adequate leave.
2. Continue to improve WH&S protocols and monitoring
3. Ensure a safe workplace through the completion and reporting of actions from Council's Safety Plan and implementation of the Work Health and Safety Management System.
4. Explore opportunities to promote the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for staff
5. Ensure a safe workplace through the completion and reporting of actions in Council's Safety Plan and implementation of the Work Health and Safety Management System
6. Ensure offers of suitable duties for workers commencing recover at work programs are based on workers skills, experience, and operational need
7. Explore opportunities to minimise the risk of injury to workers in the operational workforce.

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Focus Area 4 – Workplace Culture

Strategy – *A positive workplace culture where staff are the integral drivers of our success.*

Actions / Initiatives:

1. Review the CDSC Vision and prepare a set of values that aligns the Delivery Program with the 2021/2031 Community Strategic Plan.
2. Initiate staff training to ensure broad understanding of Council’s corporate values and the NSW Local Government Code of Conduct
3. Align human resources policies and procedures, training activities and performance management with council’s corporate values
4. Develop programs and initiatives to reinforce zero tolerance of workplace bullying, harassment and discrimination of employees
5. Identify opportunities to support employee-led initiatives that reinforce positive organisational culture and values
6. Develop and implement processes to encourage safe and confidential feedback from staff regarding workplace issues and organisational improvements



Focus Area 5 – Diversity Equity and Inclusion

Strategy – *A workplace that displays positive practices and behaviours, with improvement in accessing and participating in employment within our organisation.*

Actions / Initiatives:

1. Develop a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The monitoring, evaluating and reviewing process is an ongoing and important process in ensuring the progress of this plan. It will enable the organisation to assess what is working and what is not, making any necessary adjustments to plans and/or strategies and then address in a timely manner new workforce or organisational issues which might have arisen.

We will monitor our progress through regular updates provided through the Management Executive Group and Council.

Document History

Date	Summary of Amendments	Council Adopted
March 2023	Document created	