



Workforce Planning Guidelines for Local Government in Tasmania

June 2016

Guidelines

UTS:CLG
CENTRE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT



Foreword

Workforce planning in Tasmania as a whole, and in the local government sector in particular, is essential to meet the needs of communities and deliver a growing, prosperous Tasmania. As the level of government best placed to meet community needs, councils are in a unique position to identify the skills, knowledge and expertise needed to effectively tailor services, generate economic and employment opportunities and support the overall prosperity of their local and regional communities.

Planning a future workforce to deliver vital services needs to be clearly linked to local, regional and state-wide priorities. Councils have a key role to plan for their own workforces as part of strategic planning but also play an important role in partnering with a range of local, regional and state level organisations to identify and support conditions for economic growth.

Workforce planning brings important benefits to councils and their communities and these guidelines are intended to help local government plan at a local, sub-regional and regional level to support the future growth of a vibrant Tasmanian economy.

Acknowledgements

These guidelines were written by SallyAnn Hunting and Roberta Ryan at the University of Technology Sydney, Centre for Local Government as part of a project to improve Tasmanian local government understanding of the benefits of workforce planning and build capacity to enable better workforce planning.

The project was funded by a grant from Skills Tasmania (Tasmanian Department of State Growth) and developed in partnership with the Local Government Association of Tasmania and Burnie, Circular Head and Waratah-Wynyard Councils.

In addition, the following councils formed the Reference Group to help shape and tailor the guidelines to the unique context in Tasmania:

- > Break O'Day Council
- > Burnie Council
- > Circular Head Council
- > Glamorgan Spring Bay Council
- > Hobart City Council
- > Kingborough Council
- > Waratah-Wynyard Council.

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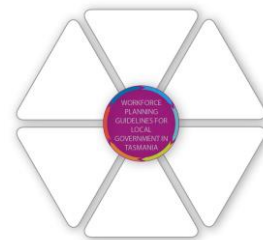
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Executive Summary

Overview

Local government plays a key role in the Tasmanian economy. It does this in two ways: first it is a direct employer and, in some areas, it is often a major employer; secondly, local government shapes the context within which businesses, industries and economies operate.

The Role of Local Government project a joint initiative between the Tasmanian government and the Local Government Association of Tasmania (LGAT) defines several key roles for local government including strategic leadership, land use planning, economic development, service delivery and asset management and all of these roles play an important part in employment and economic growth.

In 2016, the University of Technology Sydney, Centre for Local Government, undertook a project to improve sector understanding of the benefits of workforce planning and build capacity to enable better workforce planning. The project was funded by a grant from Skills Tasmania (Tasmanian Department of State Growth) and developed in partnership with LGAT and Burnie, Circular Head, and Waratah-Wynyard Councils.

These workforce planning guidelines are a key output from the project and have been informed by extensive stakeholder engagement with councils in Tasmania.

The Tasmanian context

These guidelines have been developed for local government in Tasmania to address the specific issues facing the state, its regions and the current workforce.

The population in Tasmania is ageing and 32% of Tasmanians are aged over 55 years old, compared to 27% in the rest of Australia¹. Current trends indicate that more than one in four Tasmanians will be aged 65 or older by 2050². This will impact not only services such as aged care and disability service but also on the Tasmanian workforce.

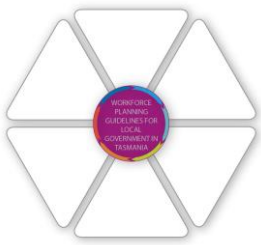
Currently, there are 29 councils in Tasmania, divided into three regions: North West; North; and South. The three regions in Tasmania have different economic strengths and challenges. The South has a focus on public administration, tourism and has a growing retail and construction sector. The North also has a strong tourism sector but also a large food and agribusiness sector and resilient manufacturing sector. The North West has experienced a significant decline over time in traditional industries such as mining and forestry and is shifting towards agriculture, aquaculture, manufacturing and processing³.

Significant efforts are underway to foster state-wide growth in a range of industries including tourism, aquaculture, and agriculture. However, demographic trends indicate the strongest

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2015. *Australian Demographic Statistics (3101.0)*. Available at: www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/3101.0Mar%202015?OpenDocument

² Tasmania Department of State Growth 2015. *Population growth strategy: Growing Tasmania's population to 650,000 by 2050*. Available at: www.stategrowth.tas.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0014/124304/Population_Growth_Strategy_Growing_Tas_Population_for_web.pdf

³ Information sourced from: Australian Government Department of Employment Data 2015. Available at: www.employment.gov.au/employment-research-and-statistics; Centre for Sustainable Organisations and Work 2015. *Labour Market Profile: North West Tasmania, Australia*. Available at mams.rmit.edu.au/inp2k7237uvl.pdf; Northern Tasmania Development 2015. *Regional Futures Plan: Directions Paper*. Available at www.northerntasmania.org.au/client-assets/Regional_Futures_April2015.pdf



growth in employment across Tasmania is likely to be in health care and social assistance, education, retail and construction industries, with the South having the highest projected employment growth. There will be low growth in agriculture overall and a continuing decline in mining and manufacturing.

Unemployment rates in Tasmania are comparable to the rest of Australia which suggests that the labour market is competitive, making it challenging to attract skilled employees. Youth unemployment is particularly high and localised, especially in the South East (19.6%) as well as Launceston and North East (16.9%)⁴. The North West has had historically high overall unemployment rates and currently youth unemployment is at 12%⁵.

The Tasmanian local government workforce

The Tasmanian local government workforce has a lower proportion of females (40%) and an ageing workforce with a high proportion of males over 50 years old⁶. In the future, certain occupations such as works crews, environmental health officers and directors/managers are estimated to have higher turnover⁷. Males predominantly work in managerial, professional and outdoor workforce roles whereas females work mainly in administrative and community-based roles.

Overall, females have higher qualification/education levels and there are shortages in the supply of skilled workers such as planners, engineers and urban designers. This impacts on the supply of appropriately skilled labour and presents opportunities for councils to think innovatively about how they might work in partnership with other organisations to increase or maintain the supply of skills.

The policy context

Currently, councils are considering the voluntary council amalgamation and strategic resourcing program which was announced in early 2015⁸ and the Local Government Division is overseeing a targeted review of the *Local Government Act 1993*, aimed at improving governance arrangements within councils⁹. In addition, the state government is currently reforming the Tasmanian planning system and developing a single state-wide scheme to ensure land is appropriately allocated for growth and that services and infrastructure can be delivered efficiently and effectively now and in the future. This includes considering where land will be made available for residential, industrial, business and commercial development¹⁰.

⁴ Brotherhood of St Laurence 2016. Australia's Youth unemployment hotspots: Snapshot. Available at: library.bsl.org.au/jspui/bitstream/1/9004/1/BSL_Aust_youth_unemployment_hotspots_Mar2016.pdf

⁵ Department of Employment 2016. *Labour Market Portal: Tasmania – West and North West Area Profile*. Available at: lmip.gov.au/default.aspx?LMIP/LFR_SAFOUR/TAS/WestNorthWest

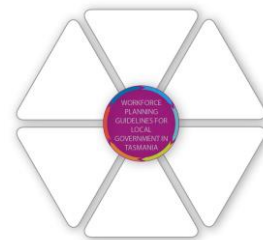
⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011. *Census data*.

⁷ Local Government Association of Tasmania 2014. *Tasmanian Local Government Workforce Report: Staff turnover – Resignation and retirement*. Available at: www.lgat.tas.gov.au/webdata/resources/files/Tasmanian_Local_Government_Workforce_Report_2014_version_7.pdf

⁸ Department of Premier and Cabinet 2015. *Voluntary Council Amalgamations: Voluntary Council Amalgamations Regional meetings*. Available at: www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/local_government/voluntary_council_amalgamations

⁹ Local Government Division 2016. Targeted review of the Local Government Act. Available at: www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/local_government/targeted_review_of_the_local_government_act_1993

¹⁰ Tasmania Department of State Growth 2015. *Population growth strategy: Growing Tasmania's population to 650,000 by 2050*. Available at: www.stategrowth.tas.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0014/124304/Population_Growth_Strategy_Growing_Tas_Population_for_web.pdf



The state government also aims to increase the population to 650,000 by 2050 from 517,000 in 2016. This is supported by investment in job opportunities, encouraging international students to study in Tasmania and investment to encourage overseas and interstate migration¹¹.

The state government is also investing in infrastructure, with \$410 million in 2015-16 for roads and rail (50%), health and hospitals (25%), education and schools (8%) and housing, tourism, recreation and culture (5%)¹². In addition, there is also over \$1.1 billion of funding in forward estimates for infrastructure projects¹³.

Another influencer on economic development is the *Tasmanian Visitor Economy Strategy* which requires state and local government to collaborate and participate in regional economic development planning and establish a clear understanding about how local government can interact with and facilitate the visitor economy¹⁴.

In summary

To drive local and regional level economic growth and prosperity, Tasmania needs a well-equipped workforce across all employment sectors. To support the delivery of planned economic and population growth, local government needs to work in partnership with a range of other government and non-government organisations. In addition, councils need to rethink their employment strategies and better position their employment offerings in order to retain and attract workers to meet their own service delivery needs¹⁵.

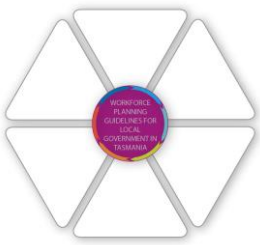
¹¹ *ibid.*

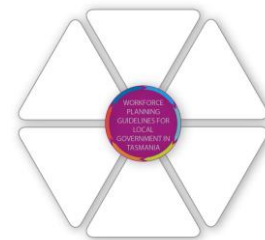
¹² Tasmanian Government 2015. *The Budget: Budget paper No. 1*. Available at: [www.treasury.tas.gov.au/domino/df/df.nsf/LookupFiles/2015-16-Budget-Paper-No-1.pdf/\\$file/2015-16-Budget-Paper-No-1.pdf](http://www.treasury.tas.gov.au/domino/df/df.nsf/LookupFiles/2015-16-Budget-Paper-No-1.pdf/$file/2015-16-Budget-Paper-No-1.pdf)

¹³ *ibid.*

¹⁴ Tasmanian Government and Tourism Industry Council Tasmania 2015. *Tasmanian Visitor Economy Strategy*. Available at: www.t21.net.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/37723/T21-Strategy-web.pdf

¹⁵ Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government 2013. *Future-proofing Local government: National Workforce Strategy 2013-2020*. Available at: opus.lib.uts.edu.au/bitstream/10453/42140/3/Future-Proofing-LG-National-Workforce-Strategy.pdf





About these guidelines

What are these guidelines about?

These guidelines will help Tasmanian councils, in collaboration with their government and non-government partners, develop workforce plans at local, sub-regional and regional levels to identify workforce needs for the future and create strategies to address these needs.

What are the benefits of workforce planning?

Councils who develop evidence-based workforce planning are more competitive in the labour market and better able to meet community needs for service delivery. Importantly, workforce planning:

- > Strengthens organisational capacity to deliver strategic and operational plans
- > Incorporates analysis which leads to better understanding of the workforce profile which improves current and future capability and performance
- > Enables councils to better respond to either planned or unplanned change
- > Consolidates strong career paths and clear strategies for staff development
- > Creates the 'right mix' (right skills, right time, right place) which creates better efficiency, effectiveness and productivity.

What is a workforce?

A workforce includes people and organisations working to deliver goods and services. This can include paid staff (permanent, temporary, full-time, part-time and casual staff), contractors, consultants, volunteers and other providers (outsourced services).

What is workforce planning?

Workforce planning is an ongoing process to ensure that organisations have the right people in the right place at the right time to carry out the activities which will ultimately meet their goals. Workforce planning is an important part of local government strategic planning because without the right resources (assets, money and people) councils cannot meet the needs of their communities.

The right people not only includes the number of people, skill sets and abilities but also an organisational culture which supports thinking, planning and implementing change to create a workforce capable of responding to the challenges of the future.

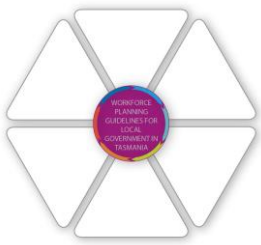
Workforce planning is a continuous process which is different from operational human resource planning because it covers a much longer timeframe, is integrated into strategic planning, is focused on trends which affect the availability of the workforce and implements strategies to ensure organisations continue to deliver the services the community needs.



Workforce planning is:

A continuous process of shaping the workforce to ensure that it is capable of delivering organisational objectives now and in the future.

Source: Australian National Audit Office 2001. *Planning for the workforce of the future: A better practice guide for managers.*



Why is workforce planning important?

In addition to asset management planning and financial planning, workforce planning is a critical component of long-term strategic planning. In Tasmania, local government workforce planning is especially important given future challenges for employment such as an ageing population, youth unemployment and competition from other public and private sector organisations, especially for managerial and professional level staff.

Workforce planning can identify what people and skills are needed to support service delivery now and into the future and importantly take action to fill any gaps. It can also help address issues such as:

- > The need to provide services efficiently and effectively
- > The impact of an ageing workforce, for example, in outdoor and maintenance staff
- > Skills gaps due to changes in technology or a shortage of applicants for certain jobs, for example, planners, engineers and environmental health officers
- > Succession planning from middle to senior management positions, especially for a growing cohort of senior women within local government
- > Likely requests for more flexible working conditions in the future.



Workforce planning is important even in for small organisations

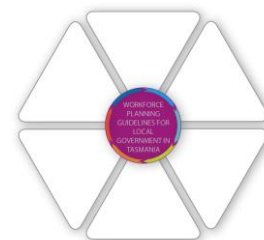
The Shire of Plantagenet in WA employs 66 full and part-time employees, representing approximately 2.9% of the employment in the local government area. The Shire has a strong relationship with its workforce. Most staff are long-term employees and live and work in the tight knit community. All appreciate the connected, professional and personal approach by management.

The Shire faces a number of long term challenges relating to its workforce and the implementation of its Corporate Business Plan including:

- An ageing workforce
- Hard to attract and retain skilled and qualified staff
- Meeting community service and infrastructure expectations
- Funding required positions
- Changes in technology and machinery
- Changing occupational safety and health requirements and the potential impacts on productivity and budget.

Through workforce planning, the Shire identified a range of strategies to address these challenges and meet future workforce needs. One strategy includes continuing to develop and foster resource sharing arrangements with neighbouring councils to continue to ensure that service levels can be met.

Source: Shire of Plantagenet Workforce Plan 2013/14 – 2017/18. Available at: www.plantagenet.wa.gov.au/pdf/Shire_of_Plantagenet_Workforce_Plan_2013-14-2017-18.pdf



How workforce planning contributes to community and economic development

Workforce planning is a strategic process which responds to local, sub-regional, regional and state-wide conditions. As such, it supports local government service delivery and the achievement of strategic goals and objectives. Local government in Tasmania has a legislated role for community development but this is not explicit and form and resourcing varies across the state. Councils implement a wide range of policies and programs which either directly provide or facilitate services to support community health and well-being.

Economic development is not a legislated requirement for local government in Tasmania however, the objective of growth and the provision of local jobs is often explicit in local government strategic plans. Councils can create 'conditions' for economic growth through land use planning and provide support for local businesses but often relies on regional and state-wide partnerships with other organisations and levels of government to drive economic growth.

How to use these guidelines to prepare a workforce plan

The output from workforce planning is a workforce plan which is a key strategic document.

These workforce planning guidelines have been divided into six steps with evaluation throughout and will lead to the development of a workforce plan. The steps can be read sequentially or by dipping in as needed.

These guidelines include:



Instructions to complete your Workforce Plan at Appendix A



Additional tools and resources



Case study examples

At the start of each step there is a summary, details of activities involved in the step and the outputs.

At the end of each step there is a checklist to help tick off whether everything is in place before moving on to the next step.

The steps for the development of a workforce plan are shown in Figure 1.

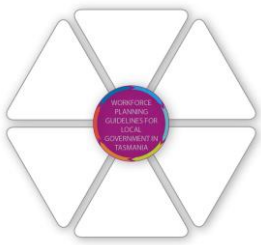
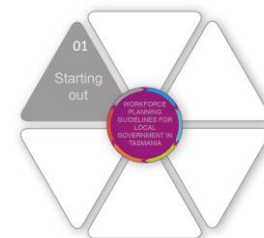


FIGURE 1 THE SIX STEPS TO WORKFORCE PLANNING





Step 1: Starting out

About this step

This step involves developing a project plan, including timelines and responsibilities, to ensure that all activities (data gathering, analysis and decision-making) are conducted effectively and efficiently in order to produce a robust workforce plan. This step involves:

Key activities	Section	Key outputs
Define scope and scale	Section 1.1	Project plan
Allocate resources	Section 1.2	
Align with other plans	Section 1.3	
Identify and engage stakeholders	Section 1.4	
Identify data and information sources	Section 1.5	
Build intra- and inter- organisational commitment	Section 1.6	
Develop a project plan	Section 1.7	

1.1 Define scope and scale

Given both the specific contextual issues and policy framework in Tasmania and the characteristics of the local government and broader workforce in Tasmania, councils may need to think about which scope and scale is relevant for workforce planning. For example, for the sustainability of their own operations, councils may need to analyse the resources needed to meet local services and then look locally, sub-regionally regionally, state-wide or wider to fill the gaps. In an economic development role it may be appropriate to think more broadly than council level and enable conditions to drive economic at a local, sub-regional or regional level.

- > **Scope:** Refers to the range of services provided by local government and how the way they are provided influences the resources needed. For example, planning services could be provided by team of two locally-based planners but economic or community development might need a broader collaboration of organisations
- > **Scale:** Refers to the spatial scale for workforce planning i.e. local, sub-regional, regional or state. For example, workforce planning could occur at a council area or at a regional scale. At a regional scale the workforce plan should be linked to other regional planning processes and governance structures for example, the local government regional authorities.

The concept of scope and scale is shown in Figure 2.

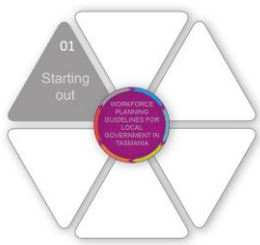
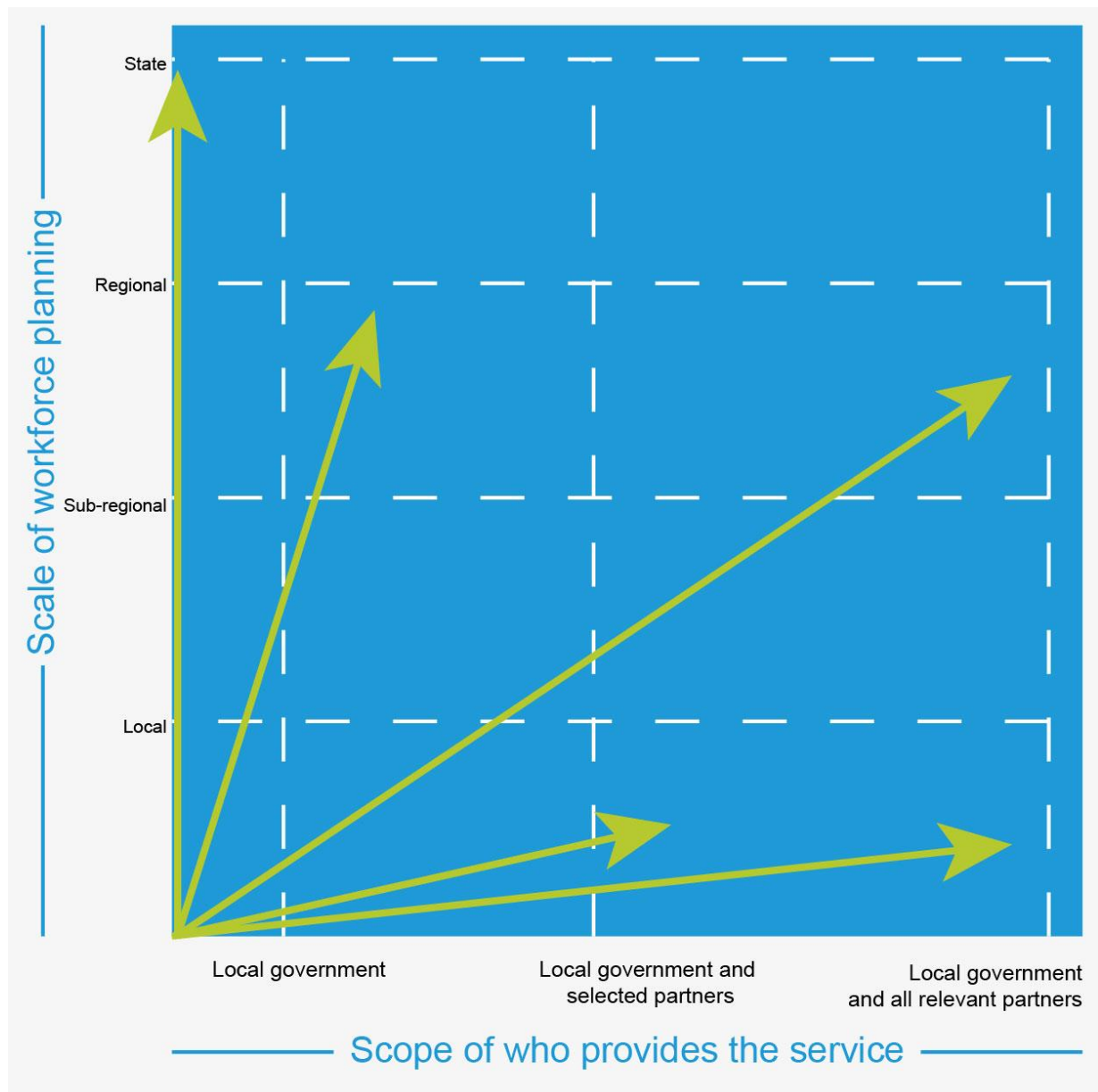


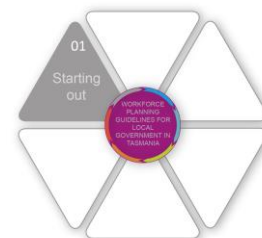
FIGURE 2 SCOPE AND SCALE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT WORKFORCE PLANNING IN TASMANIA



The scope and scale decision is fundamental because it:

- > Drives the collection of existing knowledge about the current and future workforce needed to deliver the service
- > Requires the development and implementation of different solutions
- > Significantly alters which stakeholders are involved in decision-making about workforce planning and who drives implementation of strategies for workforce planning.

Neither one scope or one scale is 'better' than another. The scoping/scaling question is driven by particular issues at the local, sub-regional or regional level and the need to resolve them.



Regional workforce planning in Goldfields-Esperance, WA

The Goldfields-Esperance Workforce Development Plan 2013-16 was developed by the Goldfields-Esperance Workforce Development Alliance in collaboration with the Department of Training and Workforce Development. It aims to address region-wide issues around changing demographics, employment opportunities and industry sector shifts.

The Plan identifies seven priority issues for the region: competition for skilled labour; fly-in fly out issues; regional perceptions; housing; health; education; and additional sub-regional themes.

Each issue has at least one priority action, with a single lead agency responsible for each action. Lead agencies include the WA Departments of Health and Education (through their local representatives on the alliance), local governments, regional chambers of commerce and local industry groups.

Source: Goldfields-Esperance workforce development plan 2013-2016. Available at: www.dtwd.wa.gov.au/workforceplanninganddevelopment/regionalworkforcedevelopmentplans/Documents/GOLDFIELDS_DEV_PLAN_WEB.PDF



Complete Section 1.1 of the Workforce Plan template at Appendix A.

1.2 Allocate resources

Scope and scale (see Section 1.1) will also determine the resources required to develop a workforce plan and implement it. At council only level, workforce planning can be tasked by Human Resources in conjunction with other departments. However, it needs executive level direction and involvement, led by a Steering Committee. In smaller councils this will most likely be the existing executive management team.

Regional workforce planning needs to be resourced with an understanding of which organisations are able to be involved, their respective roles and their levels of contribution to support planning and coordination activities. Regional workforce planning may require a central point of coordination to support governance, data gathering and decision-making.

Developing an initial workforce plan (at whatever scope and scale) may be resource intensive depending on the type and quality of the information available and the number of stakeholders involved. However, subsequent plans can be just updated on an annual basis for changes in conditions and context.

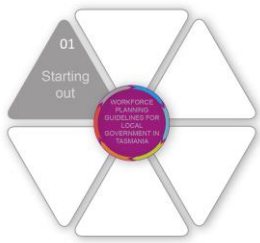


Complete Section 1.2 of the Workforce Plan template at Appendix A.

1.3 Align with other plans

Workforce plans are not documents in isolation but need to be aligned with and referenced to other relevant plans as appropriate. They relate to current and future contexts which, in turn, are dependent on scope and scale. For example:

- > Council plans at the local level should align with the financial and asset management plans and all three should relate to the strategic plan
- > Local government plans at a sub-regional or regional level should align with service delivery needs at that spatial scale
- > Regional/state based workforce planning across sectors should align with regional/state based economic development, community development, training and education plans and service delivery needs.



Importantly, the timeframe for the various plans should be aligned, with workforce plans being long term strategic plans which could run for up to ten years.



The importance of integration

Tweed Shire Council's Resourcing Strategy sets out the plan to manage workforce assets and finances all in one document. The workforce planning section takes a holistic approach to strategic planning acknowledging that workforce, assets and finance need to work together in order to ensure the future of the organisation.

The Shire considers it is essential that the workforce plan aligns with community objectives and the council's delivery program, in order to realise the objectives of its 10-year Community Strategic Plan (to 2023). This is achieved by cross-referencing the strategies used to achieve workforce planning objectives with the strategies detailed in the Community Strategic Plan.

For example, Workforce Planning Objective 1 is to maximise employee diversity. This links directly to Key Objective 1.3.1 in their Community Strategic Plan which states that *Council's organisation will be resourced to provide the essential services and support functions to deliver the objectives of this Plan*. By making these linkages, the connections between wider organisational goals and the strategies outlined in the workforce plan are very clear.

Source: Tweed Shire Council Resourcing Strategy 2012-2018. Available at: www.tweed.nsw.gov.au/Download.aspx?Path=~/Documents/Council/Management Plans/TSC06563_Resourcing_Strategy_2014_2018.pdf



Complete the Section 1.3 of the Workforce Plan template at Appendix A.

1.4 Identify and engage stakeholders

As with all planning processes, open, collaborative and inclusive approaches work best. Key stakeholders need to be identified and engaged either as people who need to be involved in completing the workforce plan and/or as people affected by the workforce plan. Again, scope and scale (see Section 1.1) will determine who the stakeholders are, their role, their importance in the process and their varying levels of influence.

Key questions to ask include:

- > Who are our stakeholders, based on the scope and scale of our workforce planning?
- > What is their role in relation to workforce planning?
- > Who are the key decision makers?
- > How can they be best involved?
- > What are their attitudes to workforce planning?
- > What is their knowledge and understanding of workforce planning?
- > How much time can they commit to the process?

Examples of internal and external stakeholders are shown in Table 1.

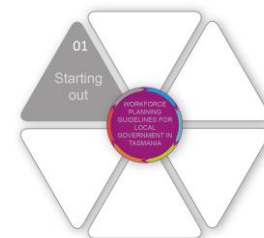


TABLE 1 EXAMPLES OF INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS AND THEIR ROLES

Internal stakeholders	Role	External stakeholders	Role
General Managers	Local and regional leaders Advocates and implementers for workforce planning	Local businesses and industries	Input into what local workforce within and outside local government might be needed in the future
Elected members	Leaders and champions for local communities	Consultants and contractors	Potential filler of workforce gaps
Senior and middle managers	Assessment of options for workforce needs to meet service delivery Source of data and knowledge	Education and training providers	Supply of well-trained, qualified staff (initial and continuous education)
HR Professionals	Potential internal enabler of workforce planning	Local government regional organisations i.e. Cradle Coast Authority, Northern Tasmania Development, Southern Tasmanian Councils Authority	Collaborative approach and priority setting of workforce plan recommendations
Other staff	Provider	LGAT	Provider of quality information and input into planning Support for local government professionals Advocate for workforce planning
Unions	Support to workforce and input into local and regional employment	LGPro	Support for local government professionals Advocate for workforce planning
		Local Government Division	Provider of quality information and input into planning Policy setting Advocate for workforce planning
		Other state government departments	Provider of quality information and input into planning Policy setting

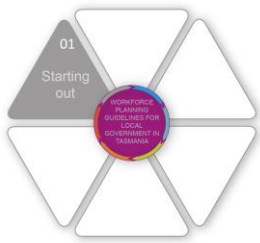
The broader the scope and scale the more important it is to work to create high levels of trust between the stakeholders and allocate sufficient resources to coordinate a larger group of people (see Section 1.2).



A template to help identify stakeholders and their roles is at Appendix B.

A template to help identify the relevant levels of interest and influence and what level to engage with them is at Appendix C.

Then complete Section 1.4 of the Workforce Plan template at Appendix A.



1.5 Identify data and information sources

Regardless of scope and scale (see Section 1.1), effective workforce planning needs to be informed by an evidence base of reliable and trusted data. Some of this may already be available and some may need to be collected.

Key sources of contextual knowledge will be:

- > Strategic plans at various scopes and scales (council, local government regional authorities, state departments)
- > Current population information (ABS) and future population projections (regional and state-wide plans)
- > Current service provision and future service needs (local government strategic and operational plans)
- > Current employment levels (local government and other) and future workforce needs (state government departments, local government internal systems)
- > Current information about the council workforce (this may be from a management system or kept in spreadsheet or in manual databases).



Complete Section 1.5 of the Workforce Plan template at Appendix A.

1.6 Build intra- and inter-organisation commitment

For workforce planning to be effective there needs to be senior level buy-in within and across the organisations involved. These leaders need to drive cultural change within councils in order for staff and stakeholders more broadly to understand why workforce planning is important within the context of strategic planning. There needs to be a clear statement of intent (despite no regulatory framework in Tasmania) that workforce planning is good practice.

In addition, elected members can also contribute to build commitment to regional workforce planning via their roles within LGAT and the local government regional authorities.



Getting buy-in from senior management

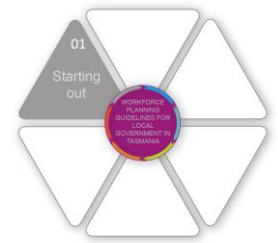
In 2012, the Department for Local Government in Western Australia held a senior management forum to help get local governments ready to fulfil the new requirements for developing workforce plans. This forum brought together CEOs, senior staff and elected representatives to discuss the benefits of workforce planning.

A lack of high-level commitment for strategic planning, and in particular workforce planning, can be a real challenge to realising the benefits taking a strategic approach. This forum addressed this challenge by introducing participants to the benefits of workforce planning in order to strengthen support for staff who were responsible for developing these plans.

Source: Tan, S.F. & Scott, V. 2013, 'Lessons Learned from Building Capacity for Workforce Planning in Western Australia', *Public Works Explore New Territory Conference*, Public Works Explore New Territory Conference, IPWEA, Darwin, NT.



Complete Section 1.6 of the Workforce Plan template at Appendix A.



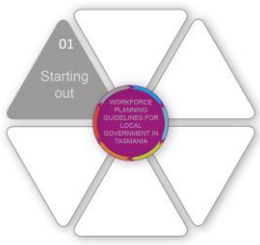
1.7 Develop a project plan

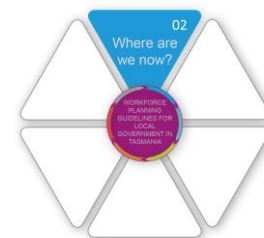
A project plan based on the six steps in these guidelines should be drafted to support the development of the workforce plan. The project plan should include timeline for development, key deliverables, resourcing and the governance process for approving the workforce plan.



Complete Section 1.7 of the Workforce Plan template at Appendix A.

Checklist: Step 1	✓
Have we defined the relevant scope and scale?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have we allocated the right resources?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are the internal and external stakeholders and their roles identified?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have we engaged the relevant stakeholders?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have we identified potential sources of knowledge, information and data?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are all the organisations involved committed to workforce planning and the process to develop the workforce plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do we have a summary project plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did we complete the relevant sections in the Workforce Plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>





Step 2: Where are we now?

About this step

This step involves gathering information about the existing situation (at the relevant scope and scale) in order to assess current gaps or influencers on the ability to meet service delivery needs. This step involves:

Key activities	Section	Key outputs
Review the current external context	Section 2.1	Analysis of the current situation and identification of known gaps
Analyse strategic plans and service provision	Section 2.2	
Review the profile of the current workforce	Section 2.3	
Summarise where we are at now	Section 2.4	

2.1 Review the current external context

It is important to understand the current national, Tasmanian, regional and local contexts and assess how they influence service delivery and workforce planning (regardless of scope and scale). Factors which influence the current workforce include:

- > Economic, political, social and environmental factors, for example, the profile of the current population in Tasmania and the current local government workforce
- > Policy, legislative and regulatory changes, for example, the state government growth agenda and the current review of local government planning
- > New technology, for example, the NBN which may impact on work practices
- > Community needs, for example, a population which requires more aged care and disability services
- > Issues in the job market which affect the ability to attract, train and retain staff, for example, lack of planners and lack of funded apprenticeship/cadet positions.

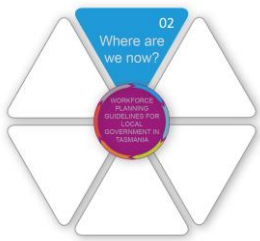


The following resources could be helpful to understand the Tasmanian context.

Tasmania Chamber of Commerce and Industry 2015. *Tasmania Report 2015*. Available at: www.tcci.com.au/getattachment/Home/TCCI-Tasmania-Report-2015-FINAL.pdf.aspx

Tasmanian Government 2016. *The Budget: Budget paper No. 1*. Available at: [www.treasury.tas.gov.au/domino/dtf/dtf.nsf/LookupFiles/2015-16-Budget-Paper-No-1.pdf/\\$file/2015-16-Budget-Paper-No-1.pdf](http://www.treasury.tas.gov.au/domino/dtf/dtf.nsf/LookupFiles/2015-16-Budget-Paper-No-1.pdf/$file/2015-16-Budget-Paper-No-1.pdf)

Regional Development Australia 2013. *RDA Tasmania: Regional Plan July 2013-June 2016*. Available at: [www.rdatasmania.org.au/client-assets/documents/documents-and-reports/RDA Tasmania Regional Plan 2015 - 2016 FINAL.pdf](http://www.rdatasmania.org.au/client-assets/documents/documents-and-reports/RDA_Tasmania_Regional_Plan_2015_-_2016_FINAL.pdf)



The sandwich effect

Greater Hume Shire recognises that Australian family needs are rapidly changing. Women are remaining in the workforce in increasing numbers and more men are becoming involved with the responsibility and care of their children. Organisations are responding to both child centred parenting and a growing concern about the future burden of caring for Australia's ageing population. The shift to an ageing population places new pressures on Australian families to bear the burden of doing the work of caring for family members whilst at the same time performing paid work.

The Shire calls this *the sandwich effect* where staff in the 40-55 year old category are caring for their own children and grandchildren whilst at the same time caring for parents and building key organisational strategies in response.

Source: Greater Hume Shire Workforce Management Plan 2012-2016. Available at: www.greaterhume.nsw.gov.au/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=o9kNkvC5_JE=&tabid=114



Use the framework at Appendix D to identify key influencing factors.

Then complete Section 2.1 of the Workforce Plan template at Appendix 1.

2.2 Analyse strategic plans and service provision

Workforce planning needs to support the implementation of strategic plans (whether local, regional or state-wide) and the services and activities delivered as part of these plans. A review of current plans and service provision will highlight:

- > The key strategic documents and their associated goals
- > Where the goals are dependent on workforce outcomes
- > Where workforce planning can support the achievement of the goals.

Understanding the needs of the community as part of service delivery is critical to this analysis, especially if the current needs or service levels are not being met because of workforce issues. This involves analysing:

- > What services and levels of service are provided
- > What the community thinks of them
- > How they are currently provided
- > Opportunities to improve services or levels of service via changes to workforce.

Service delivery reviews are separate exercises which councils undertake to better understand the services and levels of service required and to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of service provision. They can be a valuable, separate process in conjunction with workforce planning but are not considered as part of these guidelines.



The following resource, now in its second edition, can be used as a template to conduct a service delivery review.

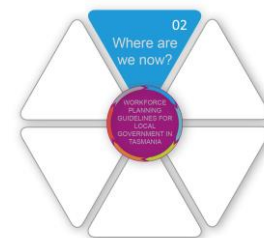
Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government 2015. *Service Delivery Review: A How to Manual for Local Government, (2nd Ed)*.

Available at: opus.lib.uts.edu.au/handle/10453/42148



Complete the strategic plans and service provision framework at Appendix E.

Then complete Section 2.2 of the Workforce Plan template at Appendix A.



2.3 Review the profile of the current workforce

A review of the current workforce profile develops knowledge which helps understand factors internal to councils which influence the ability to deliver strategic goals such as:

- > Number and organisation: The number of staff and the organisational structure
- > Profile: The split between age, gender, diversity and employment status (including contactors and volunteers)
- > Capability and capacity: Qualifications, skills levels and hours worked
- > Critical roles: Those (local, regional, state-wide) which are hard to fill, hard to retain, need lead time to grow and are known skills shortages.

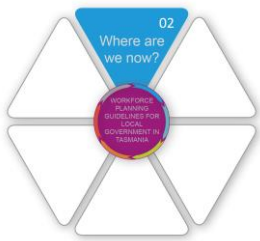
Workforce planning is not just about the roles of the staff, it is also about understanding the tasks which make up the roles.

2.3.1 Data collection

The review requires baseline data as a starting point. This may be available via the HR system, manual systems, existing reports or may need to be gathered. Potential data sources are shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2 POTENTIAL DATA SOURCES FOR WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

Dependent on scope and scale		
Element	Data	Potential source
Number and organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Number of people, including headcount and full-time equivalent > Staff location > Number of short-term staff, including temporary, casual and contractors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Internal documents > Organisation chart > Staff survey
Profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Age > Gender > Diversity including cultural, disability, cultural > Length of service > Grades/salary bands, classifications including apprentice/trainee > Recruitment and retention rates > Turnover including, retirements and resignations > Employment status (full and part time) including permanent, temporary, contractor, consultancy etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Internal documents > ABS data > LGAT Tasmanian Local Government Workforce Report 2014: Staff turnover – Resignation and retirement state and local level www.lgat.tas.gov.au/webdata/resources/files/Tasmanian_Local_Government_Workforce_Report_2014_version_7.pdf > Salary benchmarking with other councils > ACELG profile of the Australian local government workforce report opus.lib.uts.edu.au/bitstream/10453/42142/3/Profile-of-the-Local-Government-Workforce.pdf > Department of Employment, Tasmania labour market review trends lmip.gov.au/default.aspx?LMIP/Publications/LabourEconomicsOfficeLEORReports/Tasmania
Capacity and capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Hours worked > Sick/carer leave/ accrued holidays > Skills levels and known skills gaps > Qualifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Internal documents > Staff survey > Individual performance reviews



Dependent on scope and scale		
Element	Data	Potential source
Critical roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Roles with long vacancy periods or high turnover or key person dependencies > Roles operating under shared services model due to skills shortages > Known skills shortages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Internal documents > State government reports on skills shortages



Complete Section 2.3.1 of the Workforce Plan template at Appendix A.

2.3.2 Workforce profile analysis

After collection, the data can then be used to identify key issues or trends and also assess whether there are any current workforce gaps which need to be highlighted.



Upper Hunter Workforce Plan to address volatility in labour demand and an ageing community

The Upper Hunter Workforce Plan was launched in 2014 and is collaboration of six councils in NSW. The councils partnered with a number of stakeholders from government and industry to identify priority action areas to meet future workforce challenges.

This five-year workforce plan focuses on workforce supply and demand over the next ten years and takes into consideration the high and volatile demand for workers and skills, mainly due to the energy and resources sectors, and the longer term workforce implications of an ageing population. The plan identified several issues affecting the region including: an increase in the number of residents commuting to jobs in adjacent council areas; limited jobs growth and a narrow range of job opportunities in the non-mining council areas; and an ageing workforce.

Challenges which need to be addressed include improving regional access to higher education; further development of vocational education and training; a need for improved flexibility in industry training; and encouraging more training activity in small and medium sized businesses.

Source: www.singleton.nsw.gov.au/index.aspx?NID=1376



Complete the workforce analysis framework at Appendix F.

Complete the current supply, current demand and current gap columns in Table 1 of the gap analysis framework at Appendix I.

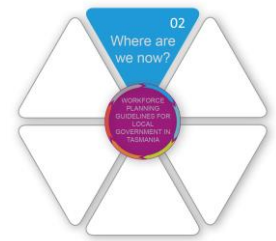
Then complete Section 2.3.2 of the Workforce Plan template at Appendix A.

2.3.3 Critical roles

Workforce planning can be highly effective when it focuses on the most critical areas. With smaller councils who have fewer resources to allocate to workforce planning, being aware of the critical roles is vital.

Critical roles include those which are:

- > Mission critical: Are core to service provision or strategic and operational plan delivery
- > Hard to fill: Where vacancies exist for over six months or the location or the nature of the role makes it unattractive



- > Known skills shortage: Where local/regional skills are unavailable and/or roles which require specialist skills and/or a long lead time to train.



Mission critical positions

As part of their succession planning activities, Bellingen Shire Council identified a number of positions which are critical to its operations. If these positions are left unfilled in the short term this could have a detrimental impact on service delivery and the achievement of organisational goals.

These critical positions have been identified at all levels, not just at management and senior levels. Many are considered critical for a variety of reasons, including community/customer demand or due to the specialised nature of the position. Some of these mission critical positions include:

- Works Department: Works Supervisor, Project Manager, Ganger – Bitumen
- Engineering: Workshop Supervisor
- Corporate Services: Accountant, Revenue Supervisor
- Environmental Health and Planning: Ranger, Land Information Officer.

Source: Bellingen Shire Council Workforce Management Plan 2012-2016. Available at: [www.bellingen.nsw.gov.au/sites/bellingen/files/public/images/documents/bellingen/Council/Integrated Planning/bsc-wmp-120425.pdf](http://www.bellingen.nsw.gov.au/sites/bellingen/files/public/images/documents/bellingen/Council/Integrated%20Planning/bsc-wmp-120425.pdf)



Complete the critical roles framework at Appendix G.

Complete the critical role column in Table 1 in the gap analysis framework at Appendix I.

Then complete Section 2.3.3 of the Workforce Plan template at Appendix A.

2.4 Summarise where we are at now

A high level summary from the data collected and analysis performed in Steps 2.2 to 2.4 will create a narrative for understanding and analysing the current situation.

Key questions to consider when writing this section are:

- > What are the main external influences on our workforce?
- > Which strategic plans and services are highly dependent on workforce planning?
- > How is risk mitigated to ensure delivery on strategic plans?
- > What is the overall position for the local government workforce?
- > Are there any emerging workforce patterns?
- > Are there any gaps in the current supply of staff?
- > What is the turnover rate and why? What is expected in future years?
- > What are the opportunities for promotion?
- > Are staff interested in up-skilling or/and moving horizontally?
- > What are critical roles? Do we have succession plans in place for these roles?
- > Is there a need to redesign job roles for some critical job groups?

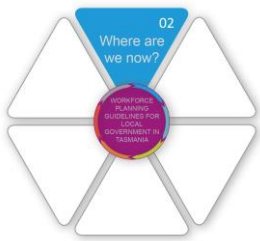


Table 3 may help to summarise the current situation.

TABLE 3 SUMMARY OF CURRENT SITUATION

Supply	Demand	Compare
Analysis of current supply of staff and skills Analysis of adequacy of current supply (wherever sources from)	Analysis of demand for staff and skills based on current needs to implement strategic plans and deliver services	Current known gaps in staff and skills



Complete Section 2.4 of the Workforce Plan template at Appendix A.

Checklist: Step 2	✓
Do we understand the external influencers for workforce planning?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do we understand where our ability to implement our strategic plans and deliver services is impacted by workforce issues?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do we have sufficient data to analyse our current workforce?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are we able to collect this information on a regular basis?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do we need any further information?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did we sufficiently identify key issues and trends with the current workforce?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did we complete the relevant sections in the Workforce Plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>



Step 3: Where might we be in the future?

About this step

This step involves taking all the information gathered to date and using it to develop scenarios about the future. Developing a picture of what the future might look like provides a valuable context for forecasting future supply and demand for labour which then allows councils to plan to fill gaps in the workforce needed. This step involves:

Key activities	Section	Key outputs
Forecast the external context	Section 3.1	Analysis of the future situation
Analyse future demand for services	Section 3.2	
Identify the workforce to meet demand	Section 3.3	
Summarise where we might be in the future	Section 3.4	

3.1 Forecast the external context

When forecasting the external influencers it is important to understand how the current context (identified in Section 2 and documented using the framework in Appendix D) will change over the next one to three to ten years.

Key questions to ask are shown in Table 4.

TABLE 4 QUESTIONS TO ASK TO FORECAST THE FUTURE EXTERNAL CONTEXT

Factor	Questions
Political <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Social policies > Government spend 	What are the key government policies which are likely to continue as is or change? e.g. education, health provision, community development How will the current reform context affect the future? e.g. amalgamation options versus resource sharing How will the current infrastructure focus affect the future? What will be the impact of the National Disability Insurance Scheme on local service provision?
Economic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Growth policies > Infrastructure policies > Unemployment rates 	What will the economy look like? Where will the key jobs growth be (industry sector and location)? What sectors of the economy will require what types of labour and in what regions? How will infrastructure affect workforce mobility?
Social <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Demographics e.g. ageing population > Education levels > Lifestyle trends 	What might the Tasmanian population look like? How might this impact on the job market? How might this impact on the demand for certain services? What are the expected skill levels in the job market? What will education levels look like?
Technology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > New back end technology > Customer service technology > NBN > Impact on working from home 	What are the likely changes in technology? How are these changes likely to affect the workforce? How will demand for services online change over time? How will technology help collaboration over spatial scales?



Factor	Questions
Legal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Changes to legislation e.g. planning laws > Employment conditions > Health and safety > Risk management 	<p>How will changes to planning legislation affect local and regional planning?</p> <p>Are there likely to be changes in employment conditions for certain sectors?</p> <p>What might environmental health legislation look like in the future?</p> <p>How might the risk profile change over time?</p>
Environmental <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Impact of climate change > Environmental health > Waste disposal > Tourism > Competition for skilled workforce 	<p>How will climate change and extreme weather events impact on economic development and service delivery?</p> <p>How will the impact of climate change in other parts of Australia affect Tasmania? e.g. growth in viticulture</p> <p>How will tourism impact on biodiversity?</p> <p>Which sectors will compete for talent?</p> <p>How will this affect the supply of labour?</p>

With changes in current state-level policies, there are likely to be significant changes from the current context in terms of:

- > Demographics: Most likely an ageing population and an ageing workforce
- > Employment sectors: A shift from mining and agriculture to service industries such as tourism, health care, disability services and education
- > Regional growth: Change in patterns of regional growth between the North, North-West and South
- > Migration: Potential increase in inter-state and overseas migration
- > Technology: The introduction of the NBN in Tasmania and increasing new ways of education and outsourcing may change the way people work and how they interact with each other and government and non-government organisations.



Useful sources of information include:

Department of Employment 2016. *Regional Projections: 2016 Employment projections for the five years to November 2020*. Available at: lmip.gov.au/default.aspx?LMIP/EmploymentProjections

Department of Premier and Cabinet 2013. *Facing the future: A baseline profile on older Tasmanians*. Available at: www.dpac.tas.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0018/216018/Facing_the_Future_Fact_Sheets.pdf



Complete Section 3.1 of the Workforce Plan template at Appendix A.

3.2 Analyse future demand for services

The future may create challenges for service provision regardless of whether those services are provided at a local, sub-regional or regional level. External context changes (Section 3.1) will impact both on the types of services required and the scale at which they are provided. Examples of potential changes in services are shown in Table 5.

TABLE 5 POTENTIAL CHANGES IN SERVICES

Service	Potential change in services
Asset management	<p>Increased maintenance following recent increased infrastructure spend</p> <p>Increased roads and infrastructure with population growth and additional tourism</p>
Community development	<p>Increased settlement services with planned migration</p> <p>Drive for social cohesion and place-based solutions</p> <p>Building community resilience</p>
Economic development	<p>Changes in land use planning</p> <p>Increased demand for a mix of different housing types and housing affordability</p> <p>Increased demand for development application services</p> <p>Changes in ePlanning services</p> <p>Greater demand on services with an increase in tourism</p>
Community services	<p>Increased aged care services</p> <p>Increased disability services (especially under National Disability Insurance Scheme)</p> <p>Increase in demand for outreach for youth and people without jobs</p> <p>Increased support for people whose first language is not English</p> <p>Increased shift from state and federal government for place-based services</p>
Environmental management	<p>More weed control required with warmer weather due to climate change</p> <p>Increased emergency services management with increased extreme weather events</p> <p>Increase in policies and programs to mitigate/adapt to climate change</p> <p>Increase in environmental education</p> <p>Increased demand for better waste management as awareness of sustainable living develops</p>
Strategic planning	<p>Increase in collaborative planning at different scales for different services e.g. local, sub-regional, regional, and state-wide planning for building and planning services</p>

In addition, the push for more efficiency and effectiveness to create financial sustainability (particularly at local government level) will most likely see a move towards shared services, such as resource sharing, and alternative forms of service delivery such as outsourcing.



Complete Section 3.2 of the Workforce Plan template at Appendix A.

3.3 Identify the workforce to meet demand

The future external context (Section 3.1) and potential changes in services (Section 3.2) will create challenges for the local government workforce such as:

- > People working later into their lives
- > More people wanting flexible working hours, including working from home
- > An increase in people needing to care for older parents



- > An ageing local government workforce
- > A large percentage of local government employees retiring with potential loss of knowledge and therefore a high demand for effective skills transfer
- > Transition to retirement with a reduction in the number of days worked over time
- > Competition from other sectors, especially for professional staff such as planners, engineers, aged care and disability support staff.

Although there are regional differences in Tasmania, the changing external context and future demand for services may require:

- > Increases/decreases in numbers of staff required (demand)
- > Changes in organisational structure profile, capacity/capability and critical roles.

It may be useful to consider various scenarios for the future supply and demand and assess the likelihood of the impact on the workforce of the various alternatives. This need not be too complex but will allow some critical and systems thinking around the alternate futures.



Complete the potential future scenarios framework at Appendix H. Select the most likely scenario.

Then complete the future demand column in Table 1 in the gap analysis framework at Appendix I.

Then complete Section 3.3 of the Workforce Plan template at Appendix A.

3.4 Summarise where we might be in the future

A high level summary from the thinking and analysis undertaken in Steps 3.2 to 3.4 will create a narrative for understanding and analysing the future and the impact on the future workforce.

Key questions to consider when writing this section are:

- > What will be the most likely future context?
- > How might context impact on service delivery?
- > How might the demand for services change in the future?
- > What might the structure and method of service delivery be in the future?
- > How might this impact the future workforce in terms of organisation, numbers, capacity and capability?
- > What might the workforce need to look like in one, three, five and ten years from now?

Table 6 may help to summarise the future situation.

TABLE 6 SUMMARY OF FUTURE SITUATION

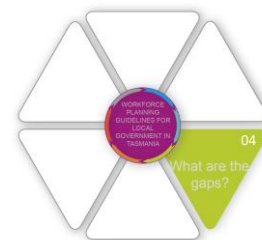
Supply	Demand	Compare
Projections of staff numbers, capabilities and skills likely to be available without workforce planning	Future responses to external influencers	What will be needed in the future with likely staff numbers, skills and capabilities
	Future demand for services	
	Future demand for staff, numbers, capabilities and skills	
	Future organisation structure	



Complete Section 3.4 of the Workforce Plan template at Appendix A.

Checklist: Step 3	✓
Have we been able to forecast the future external context and how it might impact on our workforce needs?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do we understand what services we need to provide or enable and at what spatial scale?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have we have been able to forecast future demand for numbers and skills?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have we identified the types of roles, numbers and skills required for the future over a one, three, five and ten year period?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do we need any further information?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have we been able to summarise where we might be in the future?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did we complete the relevant sections in the Workforce Plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>





Step 4: Where are the gaps?

About this step

This step involves identifying current and future gaps in the workforce and the order in which the gaps should be prioritised for action. Depending on the relative risk, not all gaps may be filled so this step is a valuable part of risk management in workforce planning. This step involves:

Key activities	Section	Key outputs
Assess the gaps	Section 4.1	Gap analysis and prioritisation of gaps
Understand the risk of not addressing the gaps	Section 4.2	
Set priorities	Section 4.3	
Summarise the gaps	Section 4.4	

4.1 Assess the gaps

Gap assessment involves looking at three types of linked gaps:

- > Numbers and roles (Section 4.1.1)
- > Skills (Section 4.1.2)
- > Profile (Section 4.1.3).

4.1.1 Numbers and roles gaps

Numbers and roles are usually expressed in terms of FTEs and have already been calculated in Appendix I as part of Step 3. Gaps often indicate a deficit or surplus or where there is likely to be high turnover/retirements, for example, for outdoor workers. Consider roles which may no longer be required, those which are harder to perform as people age, critical roles or new types of roles not yet existing, for example, in information technology. Ensure that contractors, volunteers and casuals are included in this assessment.



Complete the future gap column in Table 1 in the gap analysis framework at Appendix I.

Then complete Section 4.1.1 of the Workforce Plan template at Appendix A.

4.1.2 Skills gaps

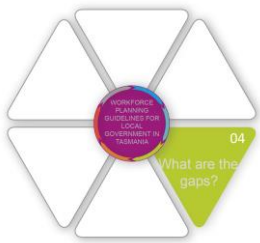
Skills gaps include the capabilities needed in the workforce in the future which either need to be sourced or where staff can be upskilled. These gaps can often be technology related and difficult to predict. In the absence of the right local or regional skills, inter-state or overseas recruitment can help meet the gaps.



Overseas recruitment to meet skills gaps

Many local governments have difficulties in recruiting because of the lack of skilled professionals in both urban and regional Australia. Recruiting from overseas may help address this problem.

The Temporary Business (Long Stay) – Standard Business Sponsorship (Subclass 457) is the most commonly used visa used by employers to sponsor overseas workers to work in Australia on a temporary basis. The visa is valid for a period of four years and is renewable. During this time the employee may apply for a permanent residency visa. The visa holder can be accompanied by their family members who are also able to work in Australia. The visa is linked to the sponsor itself, which helps ensure a mutually beneficial long-term investment.



Complete the rows and columns in Table 2 in the gap analysis framework at Appendix I.
Then complete Section 4.1.2 of the Workforce Plan template at Appendix A.

4.1.3 Profile

The analysis of the current workforce (Section 2.3.2) may highlight significant trends to address such as ageing or gender imbalance in certain roles or where the workforce does not reflect the community. It may be important to address these trends if it impacts on service delivery or on recruitment or retention.



Working toward gender equity

Like most councils, the outdoor staff at Penrith City Council in NSW were all men. In 2003, council managers decided to investigate and find out what was blocking women from applying for outdoor positions. They found that the entry level requirement of previous experience for an outdoor position meant that many women could not apply or indeed younger men.

Management altered their approach to recruitment. Now interested applicants fill out an application and complete an aptitude test. Based on the outcome of this test applicants are selected for interview. The aptitude test levels the playing field and opens the door to female applicants and younger male applicants who have not previously worked in outdoor positions.

Source: Tan S. F. 2012, *Workforce Planning and Development: Capacity Building Opportunities*. Available at: opus.lib.uts.edu.au/bitstream/10453/42028/1/Workforce-Planning-and-Development.pdf



Complete the rows and columns in Table 3 in the gap analysis framework at Appendix I.
Then insert all the gaps from Section 4.1 into the gap section of the action list at Appendix J.
Then complete Section 4.1.3 of the Workforce Plan template at Appendix 1.

4.2 Understand the risk of not addressing the gaps

Risk assessment looks at the gaps in supply and demand and considers:

- > The likelihood of not being able to fill the gap (rare, unlikely, possible, likely, almost certain) AND
- > The consequence of not being able to fill the gap (insignificant, minor, moderate, major, catastrophic) AND THEN
- > Rates the risk as being low, medium, high or extreme.

All gaps should be assessed against the risk of not addressing them and appropriate priority given, especially to those of extreme or high risk.

An example of a risk matrix is at Figure 3.

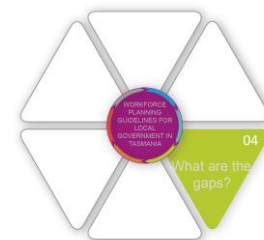


FIGURE 3 EXAMPLE RISK MATRIX FOR WORKFORCE GAPS

	Consequence of not being able to fill the gap				
	Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
Likelihood of not being able to fill the gap					
Almost certain	Medium	High	High	Extreme	Extreme
Likely	Medium	Medium	High	High	Extreme
Possible	Low	Medium	High	High	Extreme
Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
Rare	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium

Likelihood of not being able to fill the gap	Chance	Probability	Frequency
Almost certain	Is expected to occur frequently, in most circumstances	>90%	Is expected to occur now
Likely	Is expected to occur occasionally	50-90%	Is expected to occur in the next month
Possible	Could occur, capable of happening, foreseeable	5-50%	Could occur at least once in the next 2-12 months
Unlikely	Might occur sometime but not expected	<5%	Might occur at least once in the next 2-5 years
Rare	May occur only in exceptional circumstances	<2%	Might occur at least once in the next 5-10 years

Note: Figure 3 was adapted from Burnie City Council's risk matrix.



Record all risks in the risk section of the action list at Appendix J.
Then complete Section 4.2 of the Workforce Plan template at Appendix A.

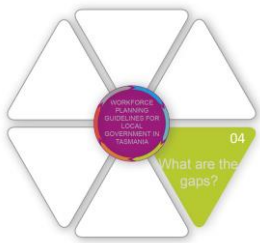


Assessing Risk

In April 2013 the Swan Hill Regional Workforce Development Strategy Committee developed a regional workforce strategy. The strategy supports local people to develop skills and qualifications needed by the region's employers, improve the region's ability to attract people with skills in demand and increase employment opportunities for local people who are under-represented in the workforce.

The process included a SWOT Analysis for four industry groups in the region. This analysis drew on local research, ABS data and consultation findings and led to the identification of the key workforce risks for each industry as well as for the regions workforce as a whole. Once these challenges were identified strategies were developed to mitigate these risks and an action plan was prepared.

Source: Swan Hill Region Workforce Development Strategy Steering Committee 2013. *The Swan Hill Region Workforce Development Strategy: The Process*. Available at: www.swanhill.vic.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/WFDS_The_Process_Final_Aug_2013.pdf



4.3 Set priorities

With limited resources, it may not be possible to address all the gaps. This means that the gaps should be prioritised based on a combination of criteria such as:

- > Gaps which are most critical in order to achieve long term strategic plan outcomes
- > Gaps which might be easier to address such as quick wins
- > Gaps which are related to short term operational issues
- > Where there are significant consequences of not addressing the gap
- > Where the risk of not filling the gap is high (see Section 4.2).



Who are your competitors?

Greater Hume Shire faces a particular challenge being a rural shire in close proximity to the large regional centres of Albury/Wodonga and to a lesser extent Wagga Wagga.

Its workforce plan sets priorities to recruit effectively in areas such as Asset Management and Environment and Planning by providing more competitive working conditions.

In addition, the Shire has to compete for community services staff against other providers operating in their local government area. This is compounded by the fact that the majority of council's community services programs are externally funded and positions are offered on a contract basis which can be unattractive to applicants looking for long-term employment.

To attract community services staff, the Shire has set priorities to target women, carers and older workers to fill the gaps.

Source: Greater Hume Shire 2012. *Greater Hume Shire Workforce Management Plan 2012-2016*. Available at: www.greaterhume.nsw.gov.au/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=o9kNkvC5_JE=&tabid=114



- Record the priorities in the priority section of the action list at Appendix J.
- Then complete Section 4.3 of the Workforce Plan template at Appendix A.

4.4 Summarise the gaps

A high level summary will ensure that all gaps have been identified, assessed and then prioritised. It is important to be able to articulate which gaps will be addressed first and why and how/when the remaining gaps might be filled.



- Complete Section 4.4 of the Workforce Plan template at Appendix A.

Checklist: Step 4	✓
Have all the gaps (numbers, roles, skills and profile) been documented?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the risk of not addressing the gaps understood	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have the gaps been prioritised?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there a summary of the gap analysis?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did we complete the relevant sections in the Workforce Plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>



Step 5: Strategies to address the gaps

About this step

This step involves taking the priority gaps identified in Step 4 and identifying strategies and actions which can be practically implemented to deliver the future workforce needs. Depending on scope and scale, the actions may require a coordinated approach within councils and/or between councils and other partners in workforce planning (see Section 1.4). The step involves:

Key activities	Section	Key outputs
Identify strategies and activities to address the gaps	Section 5.1	Action list
Determine the costs of actions	Section 5.2	Implementation plan
Develop key partnerships for success	Section 5.3	Workforce plan
Draft an implementation plan	Section 5.4	
Finalise the workforce plan	Section 5.5	

5.1 Identify strategies and actions to address the gaps

Once the various strategies and activities have been identified, an action list should be developed to make a clear link between the gaps and how they will be filled. The action list should:

- > Identify the gaps and strategies and actions to address the gaps
- > Assign responsibility for completing the actions
- > Identify key partners for success (see Section 5.3)
- > Include a timeframe for completing each action
- > Allocate a budget to each action
- > Establish key performance indicators to measure the effectiveness of the actions.



Managing skill gaps through learning and development

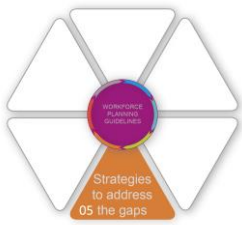
To meet its current and future operational requirements Randwick City Council in NSW continues to review the learning and development needs of its staff. The organisation's Learning and Development strategy is based on individual staff learning and development plans and evaluation of their staff training needs analysis. The challenge is to be able to effectively address the learning needs of their staff in the areas of literacy, language barriers, computer literacy, intergenerational diversity and learning styles.

Council consists of employees covering 40 professions and trades based over twelve sites. The Learning and Development Strategy establishes a clear framework to ensure that Council equips staff with the capabilities they require to do their jobs well.

Source: Randwick City Council 2013. *Resourcing Strategy, Workforce Plan 2013-23*. Available at: www.randwick.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0014/10472/Workforce_Plan.pdf

The action list should be developed collaboratively with internal and external stakeholders (depending on scope and scale, see Section 1.1) to ensure buy-in and reduce the risk that the action will not be implemented or fully implemented.

Key questions to ask include:



- > Are there strategies for each priority gap/issue, including critical roles?
- > Do the strategies address the identified supply gaps (under or over supply)?
- > Have the strategies been prioritised?
- > Is the timeframe for implementation realistic?
- > Have sufficient resources (people and money) been allocated for implementation?

Table 7 provides examples of strategies and actions to fill the gaps and meet the needs for workforce planning.

TABLE 7 EXAMPLES OF POTENTIAL GAPS/ISSUES, STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

Potential gap/issue	Potential strategy	Potential action
Competition for talent	Attraction	Employer of choice initiatives Skilled migrant program (interstate and international) Collaboration with local schools, colleges and universities to ensure supply Using social media to recruit from younger labour pools Offer attractive terms and conditions (although can be hard with fixed remuneration rates) e.g. match or beat benchmark salaries and offer discounts/options with other services e.g. leisure facilities, gym memberships
Target certain groups (skills, age, culture) to fill gaps and future proof	Recruitment	Cadetships, traineeships, apprenticeships Green army and work for the dole Graduate training program Cultural diversity to reflect community profile Better selling/advertising of the attractiveness and variety of local government for graduates Target non-traditional talent pools e.g. women, single parents, people with disability and volunteers Target specific local and regional employers Paid referral fee if sourced from existing employees
Lack of promotion opportunities/job satisfaction/low turnover	Retention	Reward, recognition, appreciation Restructuring Internal promotion, job rotation Secondments and collaboration with other councils or organisations to create opportunities to learn and develop Support attendance at seminars and workshops
Retain good staff	Organisational practices	Training needs analysis (formal and on the job) Financial support for TAFE and university courses Learning and development plans Career pathways including retraining Coaching and mentoring Knowledge management Succession planning Performance management



Potential gap/issue	Potential strategy	Potential action
Work life balance	Flexible work arrangements	Phased retirement especially for ageing outdoor workforce where health and safety issues exist Work from home Carers leave policies
Improve skills levels to fill gaps	Training and development	Leadership training for managers Skills development for graduates Ongoing professional development New technology training Online learning
Competition for staff	Regional strategies	Policies and programs at regional level Resource sharing for hard to fill roles but needs to be strategic not ad hoc Shared services Collaborations Alternative service delivery e.g. smart specialisation



Dynamic range of attract, train and retain strategies in regional WA

The City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder is located in the Western Australian Goldfields and is 600km from Perth. The City faces many challenges due to its location. It is the major population centre in the region's resource industry and plays an important role in WA's mining industry.

The city offers a comprehensive range of services but some services struggle from time to time to attract and retain high quality employees. As a result, the City recognised this challenge and implemented a plan to address these challenges. It has a dynamic attraction and retention strategy for employees and continually reviews and updates staff benefits. Where the City is unable to attract and retain employees from Australia, it considers recruiting from overseas on short-term employment visas.

In addition, the City supports training, mentoring and succession planning to 'grow' staff from within. The workforce planning process monitors what the City is currently activating to keep up with demand and actions needed to ensure that future needs are met.

Source: City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder, 2013. *City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder Workforce Management Plan 2013-2017*. Available at: www.ckb.wa.gov.au/Your-Council.-Your-City-Files/PDF/Workforce-Plan.aspx



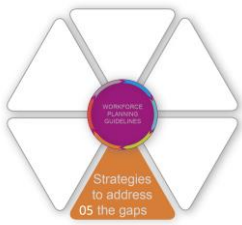
The LG Professionals Australia Australasian Management Challenge is one of the major annual professional development opportunities for employees in the local government sector. Each year more than 100 teams from Australia and New Zealand enter the Challenge. Each year ahead of the Challenge day, teams are required to prepare a Pre-Challenge task.

In 2015, teams were asked to answer the following question by preparing a four-minute video:

What value proposition(s) can your council offer to attract and retain a relevant and credible workforce? How do these value propositions demonstrate that your council understands, and has the skills to respond to, the unique qualities of your community now and into the future?

Of the more than 100 entries that were received, 14 were deemed to be standouts by the judges.

Watch a selection of the videos (including one from Kingborough Council) at: www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLx93VHryOTadoaxo_mPX6rumcpC6DRkKp



Use the following resource to understand how to attract, train and retain Generation Y employees:

Bridging the Gap: An employers guide to managing and retaining the new generation of employees

Available at: www.mccrindle.com.au/resources/whitepapers/Bridging-the-Gap_EMPLOYERS.pdf



Complete the strategy and action sections in the action list at Appendix J (apart from the key partners section, see Section 5.3 below).

Then complete Section 5.1 of the Workforce Plan template at Appendix 1.

5.2 Determine costs/benefits of actions

Potential actions need to be costed to determine the cost/benefit of addressing gaps. This will require a high level of input from the finance team and includes:

- > Determining net costs for each activity and the funding source for example, from operating budget, grants or co-funding from local businesses
- > Determining the short and long term financial impact to determine affordability and sustainability
- > Identifying hard and soft benefits
- > Comparing scenarios which might achieve the same outcomes such as the cost of recruitment compared to the cost of up-skilling compared to the cost of outsourcing
- > Undertaking a cost benefit analysis, which include the opportunity cost of not proceeding with a strategy or action.



Complete the remaining sections of the action list at Appendix J (apart from the key partners section, see Section 5.3 below).

Then complete Section 5.2 of the Workforce Plan template at Appendix 1.

5.3 Develop key partnerships for success

The development of ongoing partnerships is vital for success, especially for sub-regional, regional or state-wide workforce planning.

Partnerships can be led by a range of stakeholders (see Section 1.4) including councils, local government peaks, such as LGAT and LGPro Tasmania, state government departments and local government regional authorities. Education providers and businesses can also work together to meet supply and demand needs. In addition, key individuals such as local members of state parliament and federal government representatives can often be instrumental in economic and workforce development policy and programs to support workforce planning.

Ongoing collaborative networks and partnerships have implications for scope and scale because their existence makes for good governance and the ability to transfer knowledge and learning to different spatial scales to and to different issues.



Skills ecosystems: Sutherland Hire Hub for Economic Development Precinct

Skills ecosystems are self-sustaining networks for workforce skills and knowledge in an industry or region. Skills ecosystem recognise the deep interdependence of co-located industries. This is especially important in regional Australia because collaboration will develop sustainable and robust skilled labour pools. Skills ecosystems harness the expertise found within local government, education and training organisations,



regional business and communities.

The Southern Sydney Institute of TAFE and Sutherland Shire Council instigated the precinct called the *Sutherland Shire Hub for Economic Development (SSHED)*, funded by Council with assistance from Commonwealth Government's Small Business Incubation Program, NSW state government, the University of Wollongong and the Institute. Council's Economic Development Committee developed two strategies to support local economic development.

1. The establishment of the SSHED small business accelerator at the Institute. The SSHED won Australian Business Incubator of the Year for innovation in business development. 76 new jobs have been created and ten companies now have over \$1 million in turnover
2. The University of Wollongong Loftus Education Centre was co-located in the SSHED precinct. This provided a stimulating environment for the growth of business skills and workforce development which resulted in increased economic activity.

Source: TAFE NSW Sydney Institute n.d. *Sutherland Shire Hub for Economic Development (SSHED) Precinct*. Available at:

[Irrpublic.cli.det.nsw.edu.au/IrrSecure/Sites/Web/13289/ezine/year_2006/jul_aug/skill_ecosystem_sutherland.htm](http://rrpublic.cli.det.nsw.edu.au/IrrSecure/Sites/Web/13289/ezine/year_2006/jul_aug/skill_ecosystem_sutherland.htm)



Cadets and apprentices

Carrathool Shire Council in NSW has 91 FTEs. The council has an ageing workforce and developed a range of strategies to improve the attraction and retention of younger workers. A key element of these strategies is succession planning via the trainee and cadetship program.

Council introduced School Based Trainees in 2011 and this program has worked relatively well. The objective is to retain trainees and cadets following completion of their formal studies. The benefits associated with trainee and cadetships include:

- Provision of local youth employment opportunities
- The opportunity to support an organisational culture of learning and career development
- Employment through a group training company provides strong mentoring and motivational elements
- The traineeship period provides the Shire with the opportunity to identify strengths of the trainees and to place them where they can be effective within the team
- Distance education has improved in recent years and makes cadetships a viable and practical means of addressing the skills shortage
- Cadetships involve degree level qualifications and are under a bond arrangement with incentives provided to encourage a long-term employment relationship
- Employees who complete traineeships are encouraged to pursue further studies towards diploma or degree level qualifications
- Cadets can perform many of the para-professional duties and release qualified staff to concentrate on the more intensive aspects of their positions.

The Shire has also partnered with the TAFE Riverina Institute and the local Charles Sturt University campus to provide higher education opportunities for staff. The Shire also sponsors students from the local community to study at Charles Sturt University to retain young people locally.

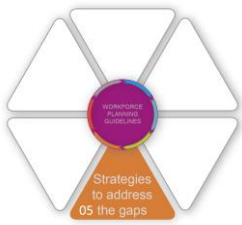
Source: Carrathool Shire Council 2012. *Carrathool Shire Council Workforce Management Strategy 2012-16*. Available at:

[www.carrathool.nsw.gov.au/sites/carrathool/files/public/images/documents/carrathool/Publications/Integrated Planning and Reporting/csc_workforceplan.pdf](http://www.carrathool.nsw.gov.au/sites/carrathool/files/public/images/documents/carrathool/Publications/Integrated%20Planning%20and%20Reporting/csc_workforceplan.pdf)



Complete key partners section in the action list at Appendix J.

Then complete Section 5.3 of the Workforce Plan template at Appendix 1.



5.4 Draft an implementation plan

An implementation plan should be drafted to identify all the actions which will be taken in a specific timeframe, for example, in the current financial year. The implementation plan should include details of expected outcomes and the expected versus actual outcomes should be evaluated based on agreed performance indicators.



Complete the implementation plan at Appendix K.

Then complete Section 5.4 of the Workforce Plan template at Appendix A.

The Steering Committee should regularly review progress on implementing the various actions in order to make sure change is on track and that gaps are being filled in the timeframe required. This review is important to ensure that any changes to the assumptions in supply and demand are addressed and the workforce plan is adjusted accordingly.

5.5 Finalise the workforce plan

By the end of this step, the workforce plan at Appendix A will be complete. It will:

- > Include various sources of knowledge and data and the analysis of this information
- > Clearly identify the gaps which need to be filled and strategies and actions to address the gaps
- > Analyse the cost/benefit of the actions
- > Include performance indicators to measure whether the planned actions were effective at reducing the gaps over time
- > Assess how successful the workforce plan has been at identifying the current and future issues and putting in place strategies to manage risk and support the implementation of the overall strategic plan.

The final version of the workforce plan should be reviewed by the relevant Steering Committee and any key partners should be made aware of the actions they are involved/responsible for.



Ensure all sections of the Workforce Plan template at Appendix A are complete.

Checklist: Step 5	✓
Did we identify the possible strategies and actions to address the gaps?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Were the strategies and actions prioritised and costed to reduce risk?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are key internal and external partners for implementation identified and engaged?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have we allocated resources and budget to implement the actions?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have performance indicators been established for each action to monitor success?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did we finalise the workforce plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have we set up a process to review the progress of implementation?	<input type="checkbox"/>



Step 6: Monitoring and evaluation

About this step

Workforce planning is ongoing and iterative. The workforce plan responds to ever-changing internal and external environments and so the workforce plan and the process by which the plan is drafted needs to be reviewed. In addition, the outcomes from the workforce plan need to be evaluated to ensure that the actions are meeting the identified gaps on time and within budget. This step involves:

Key activities	Section	Key outputs
Evaluate the drafting process	Section 6.1	Evaluation results
Undertake regular monitoring	Section 6.2	Learnings shared across networks
Evaluate the success of the workforce plan	Section 6.3	
Share learnings	Section 6.4	

6.1 Evaluate the drafting process

Following the finalisation of the workforce plan, the process by which it was developed should be evaluated to see whether and how the process can be improved. This will also assist with further iterations of the workforce plan.

Key questions to ask include:

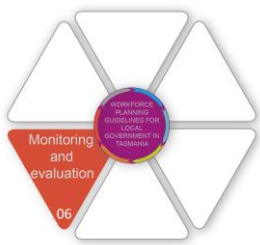
- > Was the scope and scale of the workforce plan appropriate?
- > Did we allocate the right resources (staff, time and budget) to complete the workforce plan?
- > Was the right governance structure in place?
- > Did we correctly identify the key stakeholders and engage them in a way to get the right level of input?
- > Did we have the appropriate/sufficient information on which to base our assumptions?
- > What information were we less confident about?
- > Were we able to record the information in a way to facilitate analysis and decision-making?
- > Were we able to build strong commitment to workforce planning as part of long term strategic planning?
- > Were we able to gain buy in for the strategies and actions from key partners?
- > What were the unexpected outcomes from the workforce planning process?



Complete Section 6.1 of the Workforce Plan template at Appendix A.

6.2 Undertake regular monitoring

The workforce plan is a product of the current context (internal and external) and the forecast future needs. If either of these change the workforce plan may need to be adjusted to ensure it remains relevant. This is especially important if:



- > The risk of not filling the gaps changes, for example, it becomes increasingly difficult to replace retiring outdoor workers
- > There is a change in critical role classification
- > There is a capability drain, for example, staff leave the local government sector because of the lack of career progression opportunities
- > There is a change in the service or level of service provision which cannot be met by existing staff, for example, increasing needs for disability service provision under the NDIS
- > There are changes in strategic plans, for example, due to underlying policy changes or changes in community needs.

The Steering Group should review the assumptions underlying the workforce plan on an as-needs basis and/or annually.



Complete Section 6.2 of the Workforce Plan template at Appendix A.

6.3 Evaluate the success of the workforce plan

The annual review by the Steering Committee should also assess how successful the workforce plan has been at filling the gaps and meeting workforce needs.

Key questions to ask include:

- > Did the workforce plan achieve the required change?
- > Do any gaps still exist?
- > How effective was the process of filling the gaps?
- > Did any other factors prevent the gaps from being filled?
- > Were the gaps filled within the timeframes set?
- > Did we have sufficient resources (staff and budget) to implement the actions required?
- > How did key stakeholders view the process of change and the changes implemented?
- > Are systems in place to collect information to assess whether the workforce plan actions have been successful?
- > What did we learn and what might we change in the future?

Depending on the cost/benefit realisation period (see Section 5.2) there may be a delay in recognising the financial results of the actions and this should be recognised.



Information to gather to support the evaluation process could be sourced from:

- Management meetings/Steering Committee meetings
- Employee and community surveys
- Focus groups
- Workforce data
- Progress reports
- Organisation performance assessments
- Management reporting/measurement.



Complete Section 6.3 of the Workforce Plan template at Appendix A.

6.4 Share learnings

In order to build capacity about workforce planning, councils in Tasmania should try to share their experiences with others because communication across the sector:

- > Ensures that other individuals and organisations (such as industry, non-government and government organisations) can benefit from your experiences
- > Increases the likelihood of your approach informing workforce planning in other jurisdictions in Tasmania and Australia
- > Allows you to take part in an important discussion about what constitutes an effective workforce plan and builds evidence-based practice
- > Promotes debate and reflection, informed by evidence, and improves professional practice, supports other local government staff and provides an opportunity for networking and the creation of communities of practice.

Examples of opportunities to share learnings include:

- > LGPro Tasmania HR Managers forum
- > LGAT meetings and conferences
- > Local government regional authority forums
- > LGPro Australia Management Challenge
- > Local government newsletters, LGAT newsletters
- > Papers at local government conferences
- > Briefings with Skills Tasmania and/or the Local Government Division.



Complete Section 6.4 of the Workforce Plan template at Appendix A.

Checklist: Step 6	✓
Did we evaluate the drafting process?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is regular monitoring scheduled to anticipate or respond to changes in the underlying assumptions?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have we evaluated the overall success of our workforce plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are ongoing processes in place to collect monitoring and evaluation data?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have we shared our learnings with others?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have we planned the next annual review of the workforce plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>

