

# WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT PLAN 2023-2026

## General Manager Message

Strathfield's Community Strategic Plan focuses on five priority areas to ensure Strathfield Council is attending to the community's priorities. These are:

- Connectivity
- Community Wellbeing
- Celebrating Culture and Place
- Liveable Neighbourhoods
- Responsible Leadership.

The strategies identified will enable Council to reach our goal to evolve towards a workforce that is adaptable and responsive to the Community's needs in the future resulting in improved infrastructure, service delivery and overall community satisfaction.

Our Workforce Management Plan will continue to adapt year on year to respond to the challenges Council faces with the emergence of new technology, an ageing workforce, skill and gender gaps and the need to attract and retain skilled leaders and employees.

Council can only succeed with the right people in the right jobs. We acknowledge and understand that to successfully deliver for the community a major focus needs to be on our people.

Michael Mamo  
**General Manager**  
February 2023

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# Introduction

The Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework requires Councils to review and develop strategies pertaining to financial, asset management and workforce planning which form the Council's Resourcing Strategy.

The Workforce Plan details priorities and actions to ensure we have a workforce capable of delivering the outcomes identified in the Strathfield Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program.

The Workforce Plan has been developed to address the challenges the providing appropriately qualified and experienced staff today and in the future with four priority areas of focus being Leadership, Talent, Capability and Adaptive and Resilient Culture.

Council, its employees and the community will receive the following benefits from workforce planning:

- a diverse workforce is employed with the required skill sets to meet future workforce needs;
- Council is responsive and adaptable to changing business requirements, challenges and opportunities;
- workforce capacity, capability and resilience is built in the organization;
- staff turnover is reduced and talent retained to sustain a high performance workforce;
- corporate knowledge is retained and accessible;
- an agile, high-performance culture is enhanced linked directly to delivery of the Community Strategic Plan through the Delivery Program and Operational Plans.

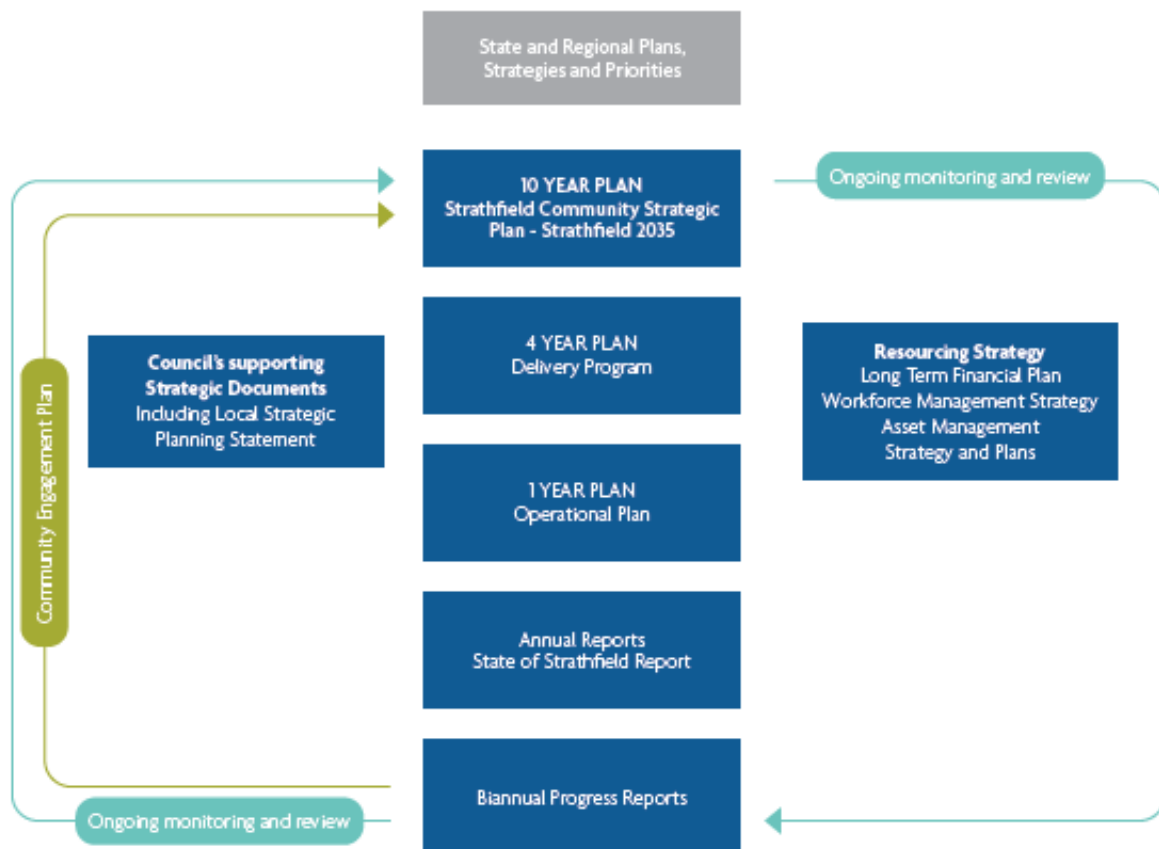
## Workforce Strategy Priority Areas

1. **Leadership** – encouraging open and honest communication among leaders and employees to enhance employee engagement and help drive high performance at Strathfield Council.
2. **Talent** - Having skilled individuals at all levels of the organisation is critical in creating and sustaining a high-performance workforce.
3. **Capability** - Developing leaders and employees is important to improve employee engagement, enhance Council's performance and position Council to serve the community of the future.
4. **Adaptive and Resilient Culture** - A best practice approach to leadership creates a sustainable, durable and high performing culture which contributes to engaging Council's staff and to best contribute to the organisation in a volatile and challenging social environment experiencing changes like climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Statement of desired workplace culture

Council recognises the importance of organisational workforce culture in achieving the goals of the Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program. Council is committed to the continuous development of our workplace culture, not only to maintain the already high level of achievement but also to be aiming for ever improving achievement through increased staff engagement with their roles and the community we serve.

An important initiative in this regard has been the constant focus and expenditure on training, education and development of the necessary skills and abilities of staff to take leadership roles in the workplace that build teamwork and encourage staff to go beyond expectations and do things differently to ensure the community receives best value from their rates.



## **Purpose of the Workforce Management Plan and its place in the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IPR) process**

The Workforce Management Plan, Long Term Financial Plan and Asset Management Strategy and Plans make up the Resourcing Strategy, which supports and enables the implementation of goals and actions in the Delivery Program 2022-2026 and the annual Operational Plan, which operates under the auspice of the Community Strategic Plan. The relationship of these plans is shown in the IPR process diagram.

Workforce planning is a continual process of identifying the strengths and opportunities for enhancement of the workforce; identifying threats and risks posed by internal or external factors; identifying future workforce requirements; and reviewing the effectiveness of strategies that ultimately aim to enhance and develop the collective capacity and capability of the workforce to deliver services to the communities within the Strathfield Area. **This current plan has been reviewed for delivery for the 2023 calendar year. A further review and update will be provided to our community in 2024.**

### **Review cycle**

The People and Culture Section monitors and reviews their activities to ensure that outcomes are on track. This enables the workforce to be flexible and adaptable to meet emerging challenges, with an annual review undertaken to establish whether the planned goals have been able to be met.

The following pages set out Council's structure; profiles the current workforce; identifies challenges that Council's workforce is projected to face in coming years; and specifies a series of strategies to enhance Strathfield Council's efficient, effective, adaptable and resilient workforce.

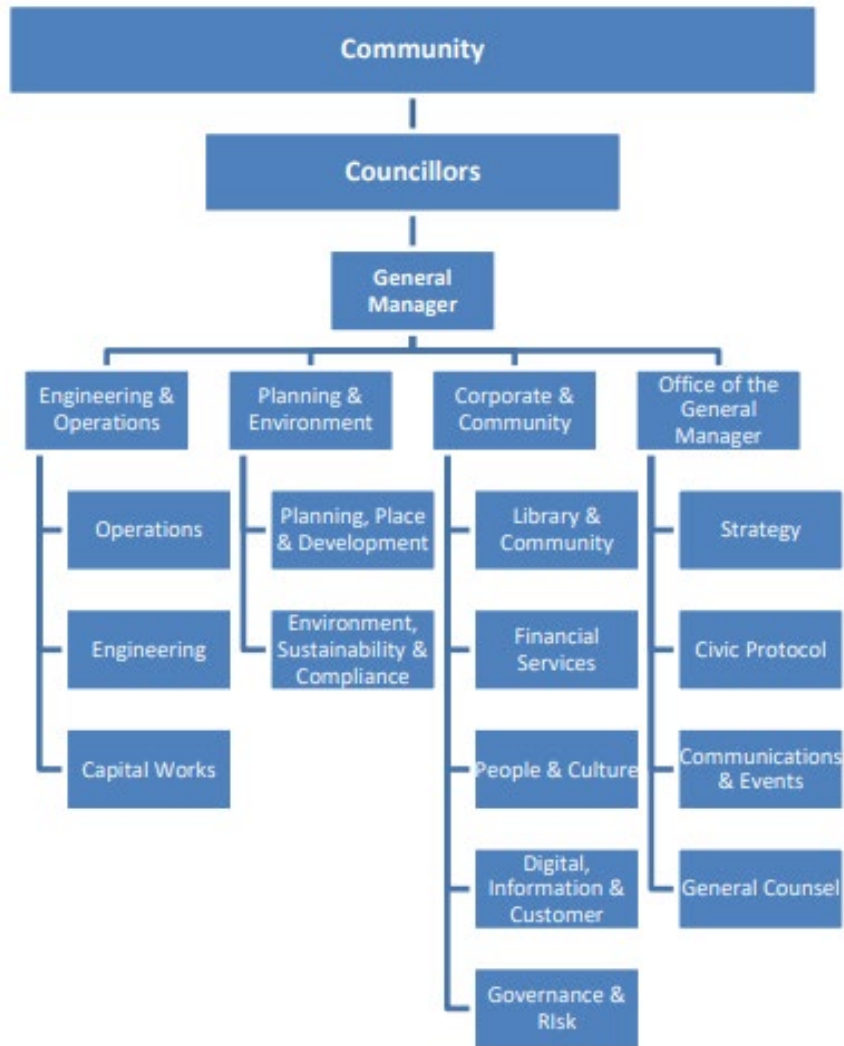
### **Strathfield Council Functional Organisational Profile**

Council undertakes the full range of activities of other Local Governments in NSW. The diversity of undertakings, the skill sets, qualifications, certifications and licenses are as broad as any organisation operating in Australia today. The structure below aims to deliver those services optimally and is subject to ongoing review.

# Organisational Structure

*\*as at February 2023*

Council's administration is managed by the General Manager under the following organisational structure.



# Analysis of our Current Workforce

## Employees

Strathfield Council's workforce consists of people employed on permanent, fixed term and casual basis, full time and part time and supplemented from time to time with contractors and consultants.

As of October 2022, Council had 177 employees (permanent and fixed term). The establishment for Council is 218 positions.

## Length of Service

Approximately 8.5% of our staff have been employed by Council for more than 20 years, and 71.8% have been employed by Council for less than five years. Furthermore, 10.17% of employees have tenure of more than five years but less than ten years. The average employee tenure is six years.

Length of service	% of staff
0-5 years	71.76%
6-10 years	10.17%
11-15 years	6.78%
16-20 years	2.83%
21-25 years	3.96%
26+ years	4.52%

## Age

Historically, the age profile of our workforce has remained relatively steady, consistent with other sectors and the general population. Our average employee age is 44 years old, with our largest group of employees aged between 36 and 45 years.

Age groups	% of staff
15 to 25 years	6.22%
26 to 35 years	24.86%
36 to 45 years	25.99%
46 to 55 years	20.34%
56 to 65 years	18.08%
65 or older years	4.52%



## Gender

As at December 2022, our workforce is made up of 60 females and 117 males. Council has more female employees in frontline professional, managerial and operational positions, where the ratio of male to female employees has historically been higher. Council has also implemented more flexible working models, which have traditionally appealed more to female staff.

Female employees	60
Male employees	117
Female employees at manager level and above	8
Male Employees at manager level and above	7

## Employee Turnover

In the 2021/2022 financial year, Council saw a voluntary turnover rate of 21%. This was an increase from 9% the previous year. A likely contributor to this increase is that employees are seeking roles with higher pay, which forces Council to compete on salary rather than traditionally relying on better benefits like flexible working arrangements. Another contributor is that Council underwent an organisational-wide restructure in March 2022.

## Living in the Strathfield LGA

Eight percent of Council employees live in the Strathfield LGA while around another 16% live within 10 kms of Strathfield. The vast majority of staff travel for longer than 30 minutes each way to and from work.

## Strategic Issues and Risks facing Staff

This Workforce Management plan sets out our organisational needs, forward planning and resourcing requirements. Key trends and emerging issues considered in the development of our Workforce Management plan include:

- an increase in resident population and expectation of services
- difficulty attracting and retaining niche and/or in-demand skills
- knowledge loss when employees resign or retire
- improving Council's capacity for change.

### Understanding our workforce

Council has recently experienced organisational structural changes, significant recruitment activity, and the promotion of internal staff, resulting in staff movements across the various sections of Council.

Metrics gathered across all areas of Council ensures that Council can:

- keep the number vacancy rates as low as possible
- ensure all employment arrangements are in line with Award and legislative requirements
- maintain adequate numbers of staff in prioritised areas of need
- monitor progress in relation to diversity employment numbers

### An ageing population

Of Council's workforce, almost 23% is 55 years and over.

The challenges posed by an ageing workforce can include:

- ensuring knowledge and skills are maintained and transferred;
- work health and safety of staff;
- older workers feel valued;
- flexible work options are available to ease the transition into retirement;
- that replacement staff are recruited in a timely fashion to ensure a smooth transition.

### Gender diversity and equality

Strathfield Council currently has a workforce made up of 60 females and 117 males, with males therefore making up a large majority of our workforce with a 66% share. Council has made progress in this regard and will continue to seek a balance in gender representation especially in the 'outdoor' areas of Council employment to better reflect the balance within the community we serve.

Executive management consists of 1 male and 3 female members. Senior managerial ranks contain 3 male and 6 female staff (noting, 3 roles are currently vacant within this level of leadership). In essence our ratio at our leadership levels is more so balanced towards females at this stage. Council aims to recruit and promote more females into all levels of Council's operations, to become part of our succession planning process, alongside other diversity objectives.

### **Attraction and retention of qualified and skilled leaders and employees**

The current labour market is very competitive, in that people can pick and choose from a multitude of job opportunities that reflect the competition for jobs and the salary inflation associated with the need to compete for scarce resources. Extensive training and development opportunities are available to staff to upskill and retain our current workforce and it is through succession planning that we can plan our workforce for the future.

### **Teamwork culture**

A collaborative and cooperative culture is a focus to ensure the organisation can move forward with a strong focus on teamwork and cohesion. This will be achieved through training and development activities, clearly defined purpose and goals, an alignment of values and improved productivity.

### **Attracting, recruiting and retaining staff in the face of competition**

Council is especially focused on attracting, retaining, and developing staff to ensure we have a workforce with the right skills, qualifications and experience at any given time. Council faces competition with other Councils and the private sector when it comes to sourcing suitable candidates for employment. As a medium sized Council, we are competing with larger Councils who are able to offer more in terms of remuneration and benefits. In order to retain and recruit new talent, Council has many advantages to offer including:

- compressed working hours arrangements that allow for a four-day working week
- working from home options;
- health and wellbeing initiatives;
- salary sacrifice opportunities;
- generous Award leave entitlements;
- flexible and family-friendly work practices;
- learning and development opportunities;
- the opportunity to work in the public sector and make a difference in our LGA.

### **Alignment of core business functions**

Council reviews the organisational structure regularly, making changes where necessary to ensure it is flexible, resilient, and that it promotes high performance and value in service delivery and customer experience. To use a time-proven definition of efficiency Council aims to have the right people, in the right places, with the right skills, doing the right jobs, at the right time. The structural review process focuses on:

- building on strengths where Council is recognised as doing well by the community;
- core service delivery at levels agreed by the community;
- collaborating and strengthening relationships and effective delivery across Council; and
- employee professional development and improvement.

### **Changing position requirements**

Roles within Council are often impacted by legislative, social and technological factors. Council staff need to be agile and adaptable to ensure we move with the times in a seamless manner ensuring service levels are maintained or improved. Employees are therefore subject to skill enhancement activities both on and off the job while their tools and machinery are also upgraded and modernised. The Local Government Award provides for staff to undertake duties not specifically included in their Position Description as long as they have the competence in that role and this allows Council to be responsive to a changing workplace and environment.

### **A culture of accountability and talent performance**

A lack of leadership skills and accountability across the organisation can create a negative culture and impact on team performance when poor conduct and performance is not managed. Council's focus on learning and development centres on leadership capability, with management at all levels tasked with creating, implementing and driving a high-performance, respectful culture.

## Workforce Plan

This Workforce Management Plan has been costed and factored into the Long Term Financial Plan across all areas of activity including recruitment and selection, on boarding, salary step increases, training and education, separation and termination.

The Local Government Award allows for around a pay increase each financial year, while it is expected that Council's Workers Compensation Insurance costs will increase this year by about 10%-20%, which will be challenging. Claims management and workplace safety will be areas of focus.

There are no major projects factored into the Operational Plan 2022-2023. In 2021, Council acquired an application to manage our Learning Management System, therefore this upcoming operational year is one of consolidation and expanding uses.

## Engagement

Staff consultation and engagement through the Joint Consultative Committee (including Work Health and Safety) facilitates and promotes informed decision making and constructive working relationships between Council, employees and unions.

Council recognises the benefits associated with maintaining and expanding a culture of consultation and engagement in the workplace, which include:

- a more productive workplace based on cooperation and collaboration;
- better and more informed decision-making and successful implementation of ideas;
- attraction and retention of skilled and positive staff;
- a workplace that is better able to cope with change;
- less grievances and less industrial action.

## Strategic Direction

### Supporting the Community Strategic Plan

The Workforce Strategy is a key contributor to meeting the strategic objectives of the Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program, Long Term Financial Plan and Asset Strategies and Plans.

The key areas of Council's plans which directly relate to the Workforce Management Plan include:

### Community Strategic Plan

Theme/Priority Area: Responsible Leadership

- Strategy 5.2 Council effectively and responsibly manages and responds to community needs
  - Goal 5.2.1 Prepare and implement plans and strategies to deliver and resource efficient and accountable services, programs and infrastructure

### Delivery Program (2022-2026) and Operational Plan

Delivery Program Strategy 5.2.1.3

- Ensure Council is properly resourced to meet challenges of implementing the Delivery Program
  - Operational Plan Action 5.2.1.3.1 - Prepare and implement Council's Workforce Plan including EEO Management Plan. Implement actions scheduled for 2022-2023.
  - Operational Plan Action 5.2.1.3.2 - Monitor and provide reporting on current and projected workforce data to plan and ensure Council has staff resources and skills to deliver effective programs and services

Delivery Program Strategy 5.2.2.2

- Promote organisational culture of safety, best practice and continuous quality improvement
  - Operational Plan Action 5.2.2.1.4 - Prepare and implement Work, Health and Safety programs to ensure compliance with statutory requirements. Manage Workers Compensation claims. Provide consultation with staff on WH&S.

### Long Term Financial Plan

The LTFP considers the impact of employee costs in the plans expenditure forecasts, sensitivity analysis and current and forward financial statement estimates.

## Objectives and strategies

Through research and in consultation with the leadership team, four main areas of focus have been identified to ensure we have a strong workforce that performs and meets the expectations of the community that we serve. Our four main strategic priorities include:

- Leadership and Culture
- Talent
- Capability.

Actions have been developed for each Key Improvement Area.

# 1. Leadership and Culture

Strong leaders influence and drive their staff to maximise productivity, efficiency and achieve the goals of Council. A strategic focus is to support and develop the leaders within Council to encourage and guide their staff to achieve great results for the community.

Key improvement area for 2023	Priority	Action	Measurement	Timeframe
Internally led leadership and culture program	Communication	Develop a leadership and culture program that all staff can participate and learn in. This program will contribute to our continued focus on building a highly engaged and service focused workplace.	All staff participate in leadership and culture program as it applies to their roles.	Initially a pilot will be completed during October 2023.
	Values	As part of the leadership and culture program (above), review our current values and enable our staff to have input on how these are best enacted within our workplaces.	Values are reviewed, with outcomes communicated and understood by all staff.	Initial review will take place through the above program. This may take up to 1-year in total to complete this project.
Key improvement area(s) to be planned for 2024-2026	Priority	Action	Measurement	Timeframe
Employee engagement survey	Engagement	Deliver an Employee engagement survey.	Survey delivered, outcomes reported to all staff, action plans devised.	Delivered during 2024 / early 2025.
Reward and recognition program	Engagement	Development and delivery of a Reward and recognition program.	Rewards and recognition program developed and piloted, with a review of pilot completed after 1-year.	Delivered during 2026.



## 2. Talent

Having skilled individuals at all levels of the organisation is critical in creating and sustaining a high performance workforce.

Key improvement area for 2023	Priority	Action	Measurement	Timeframe
Talent	Recruitment and Selection	Develop and implement selection panels' capability to select the right individual for the right job.	Reduce voluntary turnover rate from last reviewed year.	Initially deliverable by December 2023.
	Talent Management and Succession Planning	Develop leaders' accountability for spotting, developing, and retaining the next generation of leaders.	All leaders participate in Leadership Development Program which will include learning on this.	Initially deliverable by October 2023.
Key improvement area(s) to be planned for 2024-2026	Priority	Action	Measurement	Timeframe
Talent	Recruitment and Selection	Develop and implement selection panels' capability to select the right individual for the right job. Develop and implement retention strategies to retain top talent.	Reduce voluntary turnover rate from last reviewed year	Initially deliverable by December 2024.
Diversity and Inclusion	Include an EEO goal in leaders' performance documentation	An EEO goal has been developed and included in all leader's performance documentation.	Ongoing throughout the life of this plan.	Initially deliverable by June 2024.

### 3. Capability and Performance

Developing leaders and employees is vital to improve employee experience, engagement, and performance. Leading to a positive impact on the organisations overall performance and to continue serving the community into the future.

Key improvement area for 2023	Priority	Action	Measurement	Timeframe
Capability and Performance	Induction and Onboarding	Ensure candidates are supported from the moment they apply to Council to the end of their probation period if selected. Implement a probation period program to assist employees through their probation period. Implement Compliance Training Program.	Feedback from staff is positive across all milestones of Council's Induction and Onboarding processes. A probation period program is developed and implemented. A Compliance Training program is implemented.	Initially deliverable by June 2023.
	Performance Management	Enhance performance management process, and clarify performance objectives focusing on outcomes, provide feedback, introduce regular 1-1s. Facilitate performance reviews and implement performance management process.	New performance feedback process implemented by June 2023. End of financial year review completed by October 2024. Number of Performance Feedback documents completed.	Initially deliverable by June 2023.
Key improvement area(s) to be planned for 2024-2026	Priority	Action	Measurement	Timeframe
Capability and Performance	Competencies	Review Competencies for each role. Conduct annual reviews of all staff's competencies.	Number of reviews conducted as a percentage of total positions.	Initially deliverable by December 2023.
Capability and Performance	Salary system	Review current salary system to identify opportunity to enhance approach.	Review of system undertaken.	To be completed during 2025 through 2026.

## Performance and Review

This Workforce Management plan was reviewed and updated in February 2023.

This plan is intended to be delivered over the 4-year period and will be reviewed, updated and enhanced on an ongoing basis to reflect changes within the Council's business environment, societal environment and projected impacts on the capacity of the workforce.

Progress of the Workforce Management plan and its actions will be reported in the 6-monthly Delivery Program report and Annual Report.