



# Coonamble Shire Council

## Workforce Management Plan

2017 – 2020

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*Council acknowledges the traditional owners of the land, the Weilwan People and pays its respect to Elders both past and present.*



# Link to Council’s Community Strategic Plan

In 2009 a new planning and reporting framework for NSW local government was introduced. These reforms replace the former Management Plan and Social Plan with an integrated framework.

In 2011 Council produced its first suite of documents, which have been reviewed and updated in 2017. These documents consist of:

- Community Strategic Plan “Coonamble Shire 2026”
- 4 year Delivery Program
- Annual Operational Plan
- Long Term Financial Plan
- Asset Management Strategy
- Workforce Management Plan

The long term Community Strategic Plan represents the highest level document.

Supporting the Community Strategic Plan is the Delivery Program, a four year strategic document listing the actions Council plans to implement to achieve the community’s needs. Council has then developed an annual Operational Plan and annual Budget, highlighting what strategies and projects can be undertaken in the coming financial year.

The Resourcing Strategy, referred to in the diagram below, consists of the Long Term Financial Plan, Asset Management Strategy and **Workforce Management Plan**. These documents support the Delivery Program and Operational Plan by addressing the financial, physical and human resources required.



Council’s 4 year Workforce Plan 2011/12 – 2015/16 has been reviewed and updated in 2017 to reflect Council’s current strategic plans and is now the *Workforce Management Plan 2017 – 2020*.

# Introduction

Workforce planning is an important process that focuses on taking a “snapshot” of the current workforce and forecasts future human resource needs, in line with the Council’s strategic plans. Part of this process is to identify gaps or challenges that may be faced, resulting in the development of strategies to bridge these gaps and build a sustainable and resilient workforce into the future while taking into consideration financial imperatives and constraints.

The Workforce Management Plan 2017 – 2020 is a four year document which builds on Council’s previous four year plan. It is part of Council’s Resourcing Strategy and was developed in order to support the Delivery Program 2017 – 2020. In essence the plan aims to provide human resources to support the delivery of Council’s responses to the Community Strategic Plan Coonamble Shire 2032.

## Community Vision

“Coonamble Shire is a connected, respectful and diverse community, working together in a healthy natural environment that supports our vibrant local economy.”

## Plan Development

In order to review and update the Workforce Management Plan, the following processes were undertaken and will continue to support the successful implementation of Council’s strategies.



Consultation activities were undertaken (and will continue under the monitoring and evaluation phases) with staff at various stages. Consultation activities related to the review of the Community Strategic Plan. Three staff sessions were held seeking input related to staff retention, current challenges and future planning for the workforce. Consultation activities with staff were also completed through the use of Council committees and internal communication methods. The executive level of Council management were surveyed on the needs of their respective workforce in relation to the Delivery Program, assessment of the current workforce, challenges to be faced and possible strategies.

# Coonamble Shire Profile

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Coonamble Shire has an area of 9,955 square kilometres and is located on the traditional Indigenous land of the Wailwan and Gamilaroi people. Coonamble Shire is part of the Orana Region of Central Northern NSW and is bounded by the Shires of Walgett to the north, Warrumbungle in the east, Gilgandra to the south and Warren in the west. The Shire is made up of the three townships of Coonamble, Gulargambone and Quambone. The population of the Shire, 4292 (LGA 2014), has remained static over the past 15 years however the Shire is following the national trend of a decreasing and ageing population. The Coonamble Shire reported 29.1% of the population identifying as indigenous at the 2011 census.

The Gross Revenue generated by the Coonamble Shire economy is estimated at \$390.584 million, representing 2.67 % of the \$14.653 billion in gross revenue generated in the Orana region. The majority of the Shire's agricultural resources are devoted to dry and broad-acre farming and grazing.

Education at Higher School Certificate level is available, as is limited tertiary training. Hospital and medical services are generally available locally or by transfer to specialist services in regional centres. Sporting and some child and aged care, indigenous, youth and other social or community services are available.

It is estimated that 1,458 people work in the Coonamble Shire, representing 3.32 % of the 43,968 people working in the Orana region. According to Census data the private sector is the largest employer, by a significant margin with a substantial number working in public service professions. The unemployment rate has been consistently higher (2-3% higher than national average of 5-6%) over the past 3 years.

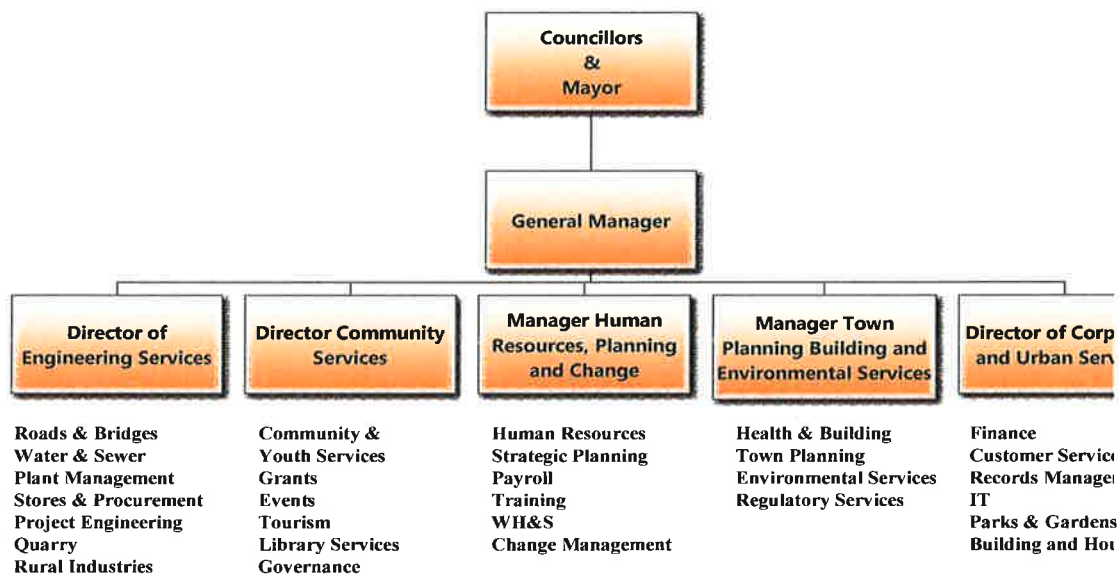
Wages paid in the area are estimated at over \$90 million dollars, with the majority of businesses employing between 0-19 staff. As the Coonamble Shire Council employees over 100 staff and pays wages over \$6 million dollars, this makes the Council a significant contributor to the local economy, as well as an important source of community support through employment and career generation.

*Source: Latest REMPLAN data incorporating Australian Bureau of Statistics' (ABS) June 2016 Gross State Product, 2013 / 2014 National Input Output Tables and 2011 Census Place of Work Employment Data.*



# Workforce Profile

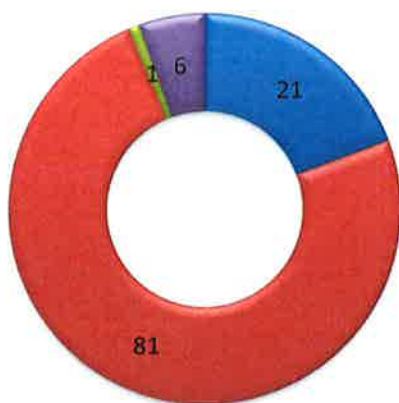
## Organisational Chart



## Workforce – Key Stats

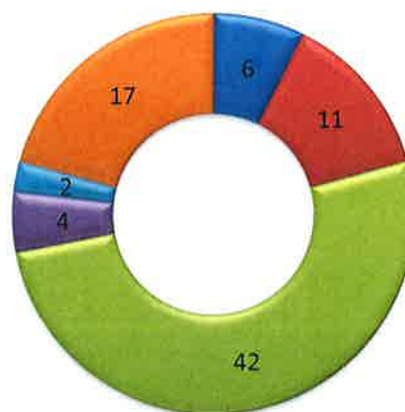
Coonamble Shire Council employs 109 staff including 82 permanent and 27 casual and temporary staff members (at 28 February 2017). Coonamble Shire Council’s organisational structure, including current vacant positions, is 96 FTE. The majority of the causal workforce is employed in the Community Services area, involved in the delivery of youth services and after school activities. Many of the employees in this area have secondary employment and involved in the educational and child care sectors.

Summary by Employment Type



■ Casual ■ Full-time ■ Part-time ■ Temporary

Permanent Workforce by Directorate



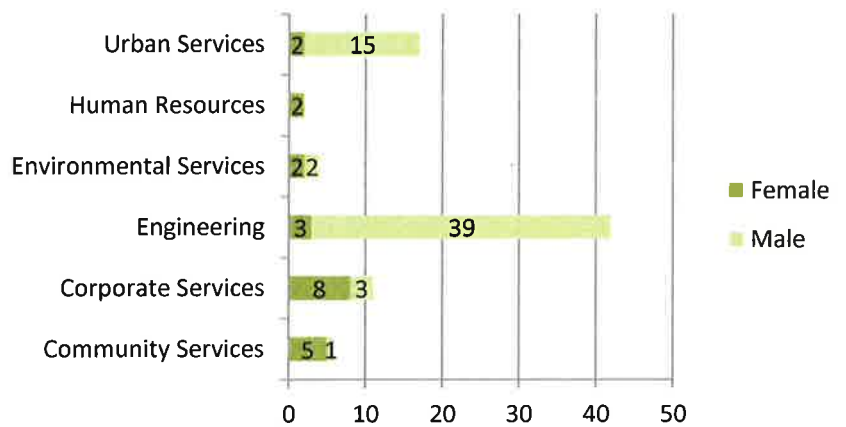
■ Community Services  
 ■ Corporate Services  
 ■ Engineering  
 ■ Environmental Services  
 ■ Human Resources  
 ■ Urban Services

As expected, the Engineering and Urban services Directorates are still male dominated with the majority of females working in the Corporate and Community Services areas.

Employee age is distributed relatively evenly, with the largest number of staff being between 46-60 years old. This represents a small change from 2011 when a number of older staff retired and staff between 21-30 years were employed. There is a lack of staff between 15-20 years, as many traineeships roles are currently vacant.

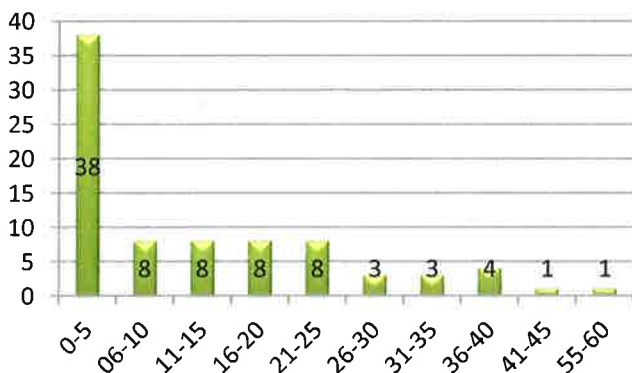
In 2011, the Council underwent a restructure, which increased the number of staff in the 0-5 years of service range. The graph below represents a larger number of staff in this range, however 15 people in this group are currently in their 4-5<sup>th</sup> year of service. A number of staff either retired or sought other employment during the past 5 years making the length of service demographics unbalanced, increasing the importance of retaining staff to ensure successful succession planning.

**Permanent Workforce by Gender and Directorate**

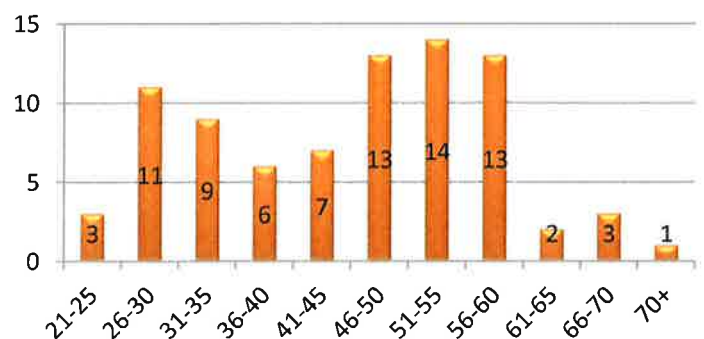


In the past five years staff turnover numbers have been consistently higher than the ideal. The majority of staff have left in their first 0-3 years which has been identified as an issue to address. During this period a number of staff retired, grant funded and temporary works positions finished and Council’s Vacation Care facility closed.

**Length of Service of Permanent Workforce**



**Age of Permanent Workforce**





# Challenges and Opportunities

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## **External Factors**

### **Local Government Reform**

In recent years the NSW Government announced reforms for Local Government through the Destination 2036 and “Fit for the Future” process – involving forced amalgamations and the creation of Joint Organisations. These reforms caused uncertainty for the wider workforce and impacted on recruitment activities for senior staff. However there are opportunities for the Council to take advantage of resource sharing within the Orana region to increase efficiencies and productivity in the long-term, as Councils are expected to “do more with less”.

### **Ageing Population**

As the national trend continues towards an ageing population, the workforce is also ageing and the overall number of people in the workforce will decrease accordingly. This will impact the service levels of Council as demand increases for health and age related services, as well as creating issues related to managing the safety, health and well-being of an ageing workforce.

### **Workforce Trends**

As mature members of a workforce retire, an organisation is at risk of not “moving with the times”. This can be through resisting generational change trends such as younger generations tending to have a short length of service with any one employer, expect greater flexibility in working arrangements and utilise a wider range of devices / technology both in their work and personal lives.

## **Internal Factors**

### **Ageing Workforce**

Council has an ageing workforce which has an impact on the number of employees expected to retire in the next 5 years, issues regarding safety, health and well-being, increased requests for phased retirement / flexible working arrangements and the potential

of losing vital historical information which has not been adequately documented, as well as being able to source suitable skilled replacements.

### ***Recruitment and Retention / Skills Shortages***

Unfortunately Council has experienced a higher than average turnover of staff in the last five years, with the majority of employees being in the 0-3 years of service range. This has led to an increase in recruitment activities. The retention of skilled and suitable staff is an issue facing Council that needs to be addressed. Feedback through exit interviews has indicated that Council could be performing better in the area of communication, leadership and having competitive wages and salaries.

Council has experienced difficulties in sourcing and attracting experienced and qualified staff to what can be seen as a remote location. Usually professional positions are specialised, limiting the potential pool of applicants available. Council is also hampered by economic / financial factors and unable to compete with metropolitan areas / private enterprise in regards to remuneration.

### ***Technology***

The Council made a concerted effort in 2011 to update the technology and software applications used, however past this point, Council has not developed the use of technology in the past five years. There is some limited use of tablets and drones by professional staff and most staff use smart phones in some capacity – mainly for daily communication.

### ***Diversity***

Council follows the traditional gender demographics i.e. engineering dominated by males and childcare / youth services are mainly female employees. Council does have a small number of staff working non-traditional roles. 13.4% of the workforce identify as indigenous, which is below the 29.1% for the Coonamble LGA, however not all staff chose to declare due to personal choice. Council employs a small percentage of staff whose English is a second language. Council does not request or collect information on staff with disabilities, however the percentage would be small.

## **What Did Council Staff Say?**

During consultation activities Council staff identified the following issues to be addressed in the next four years:

- Improved internal and external communication
- Lack of skilled workers and succession planning
- Improved training program required
- Keeping up with technology changes
- Changing Council priorities / Local Government Reform

What does Council do right?

- Sense of job security
- 9 day fortnight
- Work performed is contributing to the community
- “Good teams” and good relationships with co-workers
- Proximity to home
- Equipment and training provided

## **Future Needs**

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### ***Critical Roles and Service Levels***

Over the next four years' service levels are expected to remain static, with a big IF..... Local Government Reform could make a big impact on services delivered. Resource sharing in the Orana region could be a viable option for Council under a Joint Organisation structure. Participation in joint activities through professional working groups and alliances should be investigated.

An increased emphasis on asset management, and infrastructure planning and maintenance is expected in relation to civil construction projects, RMS contracts, increased urban services standards and water and sewer replacement programs.

While the majority of skills and experience can be sourced from the existing workforce, with some use of contractors required, training and professional development to support these projects are critical as well as the development of technologies to support existing

processes. This is especially important in the community development area as grant funding opportunities cannot be fully exploited and community capacity building programs are being forced to prioritise due to limited human resources.

Critical job roles for have been identified as:

- Water and sewer technical roles
- Line management / Operational Overseers – Roads and Urban Services
- Asset Management / Engineers
- IT Support staff
- Community Development / Youth Services staff

### ***Workforce Key Initiatives***

- **Implementation of Communication Strategy:** Addressing communication issues internally and increasing relationships between Directorates and staff through consultation mechanisms.
- **Succession Planning:** Through identification of positions that are most at risk or have no clear succession plan and delivering training and professional development activities to existing staff. Phased retirement options should be considered in partnership with coaching and mentoring activities with existing staff.
- **Cadetship / Graduate Programs:** Developing, implementing and recruiting staff for professional / specialist roles and ensuring steps for retention are in place.
- **Traineeships / Apprenticeships:** Continue School to Work Program, with an emphasis on retaining young workers.
- **Recruitment and Retention:** Review of vacant positions for currency, possibility of flexible working arrangements, matching the market in salary and benefits to ensure competitiveness and incorporate feedback from exit interviews if appropriate. Investigate housing options available. Resource sharing within Orana region.
- **Leadership and Management:** Continued development and implementation of the Leadership and Professional Development Program for management staff and key talent.

- **Diversity:** Implementation of action plans outlined in the Equal Employment Equal Employment and Opportunity Management Plan, Multicultural Policies and Services Plan and Disability Inclusion Action Plan.
- **Training:** Continue to deliver technical and skills gap training.
- **Technology:** Development of both staff and Council's capacity to utilise new and emerging technologies with a view to practical applications.
- **Health and Wellbeing:** Development of Health and Wellbeing Program with an emphasis safety and key initiatives for an ageing workforce.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

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The Workforce Management Plan is not a document in isolation. The strategies in this plan form the basis of Human Resource programs supporting the Council's service levels and infrastructure / asset management. The implementation of these strategies has been incorporated in the Council's Delivery Program 2017-2020.

The Workforce Management Plan will be monitored through annual review and performance reported in the Council's Annual Report. The evaluation of the strategies developed will be measured through this process, as well as using key workforce demographic indicators and Council's service levels.

## Links to Delivery Plan 2017 - 2020

Actions addressing workforce planning are contained in the Delivery Program 2017 – 2020 and subsequent annual Operational Plans. Workforce planning activities have also been integrated in the:

- Equal Employment and Opportunity Management Plan
- Multicultural Policies and Services Plan
- Disability Inclusion Action Plan

A summary of key human resource programs from the Delivery Program are as follows:

CSP Strategies	Council Delivery Program Actions	Responsible Business Unit	Measures	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
P1.3 Leverage the skills and knowledge in our community to promote social interaction and facilitate knowledge sharing	P1.3.3. Provide Community Development Workers to facilitate community building	HRPC	Community development staff engaged	■	■	■	■
P4.2. Improve interaction across social cultural and age groups	P4.2.4. Implement principals of multiculturalism across Council business	HRPC	Multicultural Services Program Plan reviewed annually	■	■	■	■
P4.3. Promote role models who demonstrate community respect	P4.3.1. Provide Aboriginal Cultural Awareness training to all staff and Councillors.	HRPC	Aboriginal cultural awareness training provided	■	■	■	■
I4.2. Ensure long term management and protection of our community assets	I4.1.12. Improve staff capacity in the usage of asset management systems	HRPC	Staff competency increased	■	■	■	■
EC3.1. Leading organisations provide cadetships and graduate employment opportunities	EC3.1.1. Continue to provide the School to Work program, offering options for work experience and Traineeship/ Apprenticeship employment with Council	HRPC	School to Work placements provided	■	■	■	■
EC4.2. Identify local employment opportunities and promote these across the community	EC4.2.1. Continue to facilitate School to Work program	HRPC	School to Work placements provided	■	■	■	■
EC4.2. Identify local employment opportunities and promote these across the community	EC4.2.2. Continue to recruit using EEO best practice principles	HRPC	Recruitment adheres to EEO guidelines	■	■	■	■



CSP Strategies	Council Delivery Program Actions	Responsible Business Unit	Measures	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
EC4.2. Identify local employment opportunities and promote these across the community	EC4.2.3. Promote job opportunities on line and through local agencies.	HRPC	Job opportunities advertised locally and on website	■	■	■	■
L1.2. Promote opportunities for leaders to learn the features of good leadership	L1.2.2. Encourage staff to develop leadership skills	HRPC	Increase in staff leadership qualities	■	■	■	■
L1.4. Encourage and promote a high level of leadership in the community	L1.4.3. Provide high quality customer service to the community	CS,CUS, ES, TPBE, HRPC	Minimum complaints received	■	■	■	■
L1.4. Encourage and promote a high level of leadership in the community	L1.4.6. Maintain consultation process with workforce	CS,ES, CUS, TPBE, HRPC, GMU	Consultative Committee and WH&S Committee functioning	■	■	■	■
L1.4. Encourage and promote a high level of leadership in the community	L1.4.7. Ensure compliance with legislation for WH&S	HRPC	Reduction in number of workplace accidents/incidents	■	■	■	■
L1.4. Encourage and promote a high level of leadership in the community	L1.4.8. Review recruitment & retention strategies	HRPC	Increased workforce capacity	■	■	■	■
L1.4. Encourage and promote a high level of leadership in the community	L1.4.9. Ensure compliance with legislation for Equal Employment Opportunity	HRPC	Review EEO Policies and Plans No EEO complaints	■	■	■	■
L1.4. Encourage and promote a high level of leadership in the community	L1.4.11. Continue to progress workforce planning	HRPC	Workforce succession plan complete	■	■	■	■
L1.4. Encourage and promote a high level of leadership in the community	L1.4.12. Progressively address training needs and upgrade Training Plans	HRPC	Staff training plans developed	■	■	■	■
L1.4. Encourage and promote a high level of leadership in the community	L1.4.13. Continue with employee exit interview process	HRPC	Exit interview process implemented	■	■	■	■
L2.2. Increase representation to community leader roles	L2.2.1. Continue to develop the leadership capacity of staff	HRPC	Increase in leadership capacity of staff	■	■	■	■

Business units: **CS** –Community Services, **CUS**- Corporate & Urban Services, **ES**- Engineering Services, **TPBE** – Town Planning, Building & Environmental Services, **HRPC**- Human Resources, Planning & Change, **GMU**- General Manager's Unit.