

BLAYNEY SHIRE COUNCIL



REVISED WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

2013/14 – 2016/17

**(BASED ON THE SPECIAL RATE VARIATION APPROVED BY COUNCIL
ON 11 NOVEMBER 2013)**

INTRODUCTION

This 2013/14 to 2016/17 Workforce Management Strategy for Blayney Shire Council has been developed in accordance with the NSW State Government's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework requirements.

Blayney Shire Council is faced with a number of challenges for its workforce now and in the future for a number of reasons including;

- A multigenerational workforce
- Significant local labour market competition due to strong regional mining influences
- Impending retirements
- Anticipated skill shortages in key areas
- Attraction and retention capacity and market competitiveness
- Developing and maintaining a skilled, trained and flexible workforce
- Increased community expectations in services and delivery
- External financial, technological and legislative reforms

Council regards its employees as its greatest assets, who deliver services and facilities to the community in an efficient and effective manner.

This Workforce Management Strategy responds proactively to the current and future challenges and will be reviewed regularly to ensure currency with changing circumstances and trends as they emerge.

Council has re-named its Engineering Department to Infrastructure Services and its Environmental Services Department to Planning and Environmental Services to more accurately reflect the nature of the services provided to the community.

Blayney Shire Council employs staff across a diverse range of occupations and employment types. The need to meet higher service and legislative requirements will increase the size and composition of Council's workforce.

This Workforce Management Strategy has been reviewed during November 2013 to reflect the resolution made by Council as to a future Special Rate Variation as discussed in this document. Council has assessed that the current workforce numbers of 66.21 full time equivalent positions in its permanent general workforce and 2 permanent full time positions, plus casual positions as required at the CentrePoint facility will be retained for a period of two years under this plan. Council resolved to reconsider a further special rate variation during its term. This will require a further review of this Workforce Management Strategy based on future advice.

INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

In 2011, following extensive community consultation, Blayney Shire Council developed its Community Strategic Plan (CSP) in accordance with the requirements of the NSW Government.

Following on from the CSP is Council's delivery program, a four year strategic document listing the actions Council plans to implement to achieve the communities' objectives.

In addition Council has and will develop an annual Operational Plan and budget which will detail the strategies and projects to be undertaken each year in order to achieve the community's long term objectives as identified in the Blayney Shire CSP.

This Workforce Management Strategy identifies and addresses the human resources Blayney Shire Council requires to continue its strategic direction and deliver services in an efficient and effective manner during the initial four delivery program.

Council has undertaken a review of all its documents to reflect the changes proposed by the special rate variation adopted by council on 11 November 2013.

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN (CSP)

The consultation process that led to the development of the CSP identified that the community wanted Council to focus on the following objectives:

- Grow the Wealth of the Shire
- A centre for sports and culture
- Preserve and enhance our heritage and rural landscapes
- Develop & maintain Shire infrastructure
- Develop strong and connected communities
- Leadership

This Workforce Management Strategy aligns the community expectations with Council's ongoing activities to better allow for Council to meet the community expectation in its functions.

WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2013/14-2016/17

The purpose of the Workforce Management Strategy is to:

- strategically define Council's human resource requirements to maintain and develop the future success of our Council
- Identify current and anticipated gaps in Council's workforce to allow it to deliver its services to the community.
- Deal with succession planning issues
- Identify career paths for its employees
- Explore our current working arrangements and identify any areas that require adjustment to meet the demands on an ever changing employment environment.
- Ensure we are a responsible employer of choice with a strong long term capability and capacity to attract, engage, develop and retain the right workforce.
- Provide modern, safe, well maintained and supportive human resource systems, strategies and processes.

This Workforce Management Strategy has been developed so as to allow Council the best opportunity to meet the objectives identified in the CSP.

Council engaged extensively with its workforce to gain an understanding of their views as to how the CSP objectives could best be met.

The delivery of this Workforce Management Strategy could be affected by changing external factors such as technology, the economy, demographics and legislation and it may be adjusted to deal with these factors if they affect the way Council undertakes and delivers its services to the community in the future.

The objectives of the community will impact on the type of workforce and resources we need, whilst still undertaking those works that Council needs to provide its community such as effective and

efficient garbage collection services, well maintained road networks and prompt and efficient dealing with development and construction certificate applications.

The financial sustainability of Council was also a major factor in determining how this plan was produced and resourced.

The special rate variation adopted by Council on 11th November 2013 required Council to review its Workforce Management Strategy. Council has considered the required staffing levels needed over the next two years and proposes to retain the current levels in its general staff and at the CentrePoint facility.

This Workforce Management Strategy allows for a clearer direction for the Council and relevant stakeholders. It is also designed to ensure Council matches the stakeholder expectations identified in the CSP.

Planning for the future will also assist in ensuring Blayney Shire Council becomes a more proactive, receptive and responsive organisation. This Workforce Management Strategy contributes substantially to our Resourcing Strategy and recognises that labour costs are amongst the most significant costs to Council's operations.

BLAYNEY SHIRE COUNCIL WORKFORCE STATISTICS AS AT 31/12/2012

To allow us to plan for the future we need to examine where we are now. The baseline for this plan is an analysis of Council's current workforce and the tables below provide employment data as at 31 December 2012.

SNAPSHOT OF COUNCIL'S CURRENT WORKFORCE

Employment by Category

Employment Category	Number of Employees	% of total staff employed
Full time	62	76.54
Part time	3	3.70
Casual	16	19.75
Total	81	

* Council assumed operational control of CentrePoint Sport and Leisure on 1 July 2012. The majority of the staff at CentrePoint are employed on a casual basis.

Employment by Gender

Female	Male
30.86%	69.14%

Age Statistics - Permanent Employees

Age bracket	No. (%) Permanent Employees
<=24	8 (12.31%)
25-34	10 (15.38%)
35-44	18 (27.69%)
45-54	25 (38.46%)
55-64	4 (6.5%)
Total*	65 (100%)
Average age of Council's current workforce	41.29

Staff Turnover as a % of Council's Staffing Establishment (64 Employees)

The table below illustrates Blayney Shire Councils turnover figures from the end of the 2009 financial year to 31 December 2011.

FINANCIAL YEAR ENDING	% STAFF TURNOVER
2013	9.37
2012	3.08
2011	17.46
2010	21.88
2009	26.56

The majority of people who have left employment with Council over this time have been due to resignations as opposed to retirement and Council will use its best endeavours to retain its workforce, recognising the significant investment it makes in its human resources, rather than see employees leave Council or the local government industry.

COMPARISON OF BLAYNEY SHIRE COUNCIL FULL TIME EQUIVALENT EMPLOYEE NUMBERS WITH OTHER GROUP 10 COUNCILS

Blayney Shire Council is classified as a Group 10 Council in accordance with the NSW Division of Local Government groupings of Councils. The groupings compare similar sized Council across a number of areas against each other.

The table below, extracted from the NSW Division of Local Government Publication titled *Snapshot of NSW Local Government - Comparative Information on NSW Local Government Councils 2009/10*, shows that Blayney Shire Council employee numbers have been relatively constant for the last 4 years and that amongst the Group 10 Councils', Blayney Shire Council has the least number of employee compared to similar sized Councils.

Group	Council	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
10	Berrigan	82.00	83.00	79.00
10	Bland	No Data	170.00	170.00
10	Blayney	62.00	65.00	65.00
10	Cobar	170.00	181.00	176.00
10	Cootamundra	70.00	79.30	79.00
10	Dungog	68.00	65.00	66.00
10	Glen Innes Severn	122.00	129.00	127.00
10	Gloucester#	N/A	86.00	86.00
10	Gywardir	155.00	159.00	159.00
10	Junee	65.00	67.00	75.00
10	Kyogle	102.00	94.00	90.00
10	Lachlan	178.00	182.00	191.00
10	Liverpool Plains	135.00	135.00	131.00
10	Murray	81.00	78.00	80.00
10	Narrandera	105.00	103.00	120.00
10	Narromine	75.00	82.00	79.00
10	Oberon	81.00	81.00	79.00
10	Snowy River	124.00	127.70	131.00
10	Temora	74.00	74.00	78.00
10	Tenterfield	93.00	94.00	100.00
10	Upper Lachlan	132.00	132.00	132.00

Group	Council	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
10	Uralla	101.00	115.00	104.00
10	Walgett	99.00	101.00	117.00
10	Wellington	136.00	135.00	130.00
10	Wentworth	100.00	99.00	97.00
10.1	Group average	104.78	108.68	109.64

FUTURE WORKFORCE NUMBERS IDENTIFIED IN THIS WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Department	No. of Positions as per staff establishment as at 1 November 2013	No. Proposed in Workforce Management Strategy subject to future SRV above 6%
Corporate Services	13.03	12
General Manager	4	5
Infrastructure Services	41	51
Planning and Services	8.19	9
Total	66.21	77

RATIONALE FOR STAFFING INCREASES

The Workforce Management Strategy identifies increases to the level of staffing across all Council departments with an emphasis on operational areas. Council regards all staff increases as critical to meet community expectations under the CSP.

Corporate Services

Council undertook a reorganisation of its administrative roles and created an administrative traineeship to develop a person to be skilled in a broad range of administrative tasks. This measure will assist Council during periods of leave and at peak times in particular roles such as during rate notice issue periods.

General Manager

In the General Managers department has engaged a full time role of Risk Officer. The purpose of this role is to audit, oversee and report on all areas of risk Council may be exposed to. Council regards this as an essential role from a governance perspective.

Infrastructure Services

The majority of staff increases proposed in this plan have been identified in Council's Infrastructure Services department. It is this department that is primarily responsible for the development and maintenance of Council's infrastructure such as roads, sewerage, sporting facilities and parks.

Council currently has vacancies within its Infrastructure Services Department and Council will identify if any of these positions as well as new positions created might reasonably be able to be filled on a traineeship basis. This approach is consistent with the objectives of this plan.

Planning and Environmental Services

Council's Planning and Environmental Services Department is responsible for a number of functions including assessing development applications, town planning, building and construction and maintenance of Council's building assets. It is anticipated that staffing increases in this department will in part be funded by the revenues that the department can generate from such areas as building certifications and development activity.

COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS

The Blayney Shire CSP requires Council to establish objectives and long term direction on service standards and delivery. These objectives can only be achieved with sufficient and correctly allocated resources. In relation to the Workforce Management Strategy, the resourcing of internal services such as those within community facilities, environmental practices, economic growth and education will be vital to match the objectives of the community.

High demand for services by our community brings about a need to develop and retain skilled, knowledgeable and specialist employees. The increase in privatisation of some traditionally local government services, such as private certifiers in the building industry, has affected Blayney Shire Council in its need to compete on an ongoing basis to attract and retain employees.

Longer term strategies within the concept of knowledge management will be further explored in the coming years to counteract some anticipated skill gaps at Blayney Shire Council.

The creation of an effective training regime is also considered a must for Council.

TRAINEESHIPS / APPRENTICESHIPS

Where possible, Council will fill vacancies in its workforce by traineeships and apprenticeships.

Council has identified areas where trainees will assist in meeting the current and future objectives. Council would like to ensure its commitment to the local community by providing opportunities to develop its youth to meet the future objectives of the Shire whilst still meeting its obligations to appoint people on merit.

WBC ALLIANCE

The Councils of Wellington, Blayney and Cabonne originally formed the Strategic Alliance in 2003 as an alternative model for local government reform. In 2005 Central Tablelands Water joined the Alliance.

The Alliance is a voluntary cooperative arrangement between the member councils for the purpose of sharing resources and identifying efficiencies.

In terms of permanent workforce, the WBC Alliance currently has one full time position being the Executive Manager.

Member Council's contribute to the funding of shared positions and efficiencies are gained where individually each Council could not justify or sustain these positions but under the WBC Alliance resource sharing model the cost and the use of these resources is shared amongst the member Councils.

Council will explore resource sharing arrangements with its alliance partners to determine if member Councils' are able to temporarily assist each other fill staffing gaps on a short term basis if required.

Council will continue to identify whether any positions can be filled on a resource sharing basis through the WBC Alliance.

CENTROC

Council is a member of the Centroc group of Councils, which exists to advocate and improve operational efficiencies for its members across areas such as compliance and cost savings; procurement, work health and safety, risk management and human resource management. Council will continue to actively participate in the activities of the Centroc group.

BLAYNEY SHIRE COUNCIL 2013/14-16/17

Blayney Shire Council's main workforce issues to be addressed over the (4) four year delivery plan include its ability to deliver service expectations of the community with finite resources and its capacity to maintain a skilled, flexible and motivated workforce.

In developing this Workforce Management Strategy Council paid particular attention to ensuring that the planning process supported the following themes;

- Support and strengthen workforce capability and development
- Develop and promote cohesive best practice people strategies
- Satisfy and engage employees
- Provide a safe and healthy workplace with a high commitment to risk management
- Support Council's ability to deliver future programs and services

Challenges

The challenges Blayney Shire Council will face in implementing these strategies stem from the resources available and the ability to meet the requirements and expectations placed on it by the community, government, economic, environmental and legislative requirements.

Community expectations

Council undertook a community survey in October 2013 to assess the community's priorities and to assess the level of service delivery at that time. The results of this survey are available on the Council's web site. The survey identified that as with many rural based shires, that roads, bridges and infrastructure are a very high priority.

Other areas requiring staff development to meet future service requests include;

- increased service demand due to population and development increases
- requests for additional and non-core services
- increased use of technology in replacement of face to face customer service and communication
- increased access and requests for information

Reporting

Blayney Shire Council will report annually on the effectiveness of the measures identified in this Workforce Management Strategy to determine success rates.

Council will continue to research and implement work practices to maximise its return on its workforce investments.

CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Council has an employee consultative committee established under the provisions of the Local Government State Award.

The functions of the consultative committee include:

- Award implementation
- Training

- Consultation with regard to organisation restructure
- Job redesign
- Salary systems
- Communication and education mechanisms
- Performance management systems
- Changes to variable working hours arrangements for new or vacant positions
- Local government reform

In developing this plan Council has and will continue to consult with its employees to determine the best possible personal and organisational outcomes.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

The *Local Government (State) Award* requires Council to advise its employees and the unions to which they belong of changes it is proposing to its organisational structure, positions and roles of its employees.

This Workforce Management Strategy identifies new positions and changes in positions that require consultation. This Workforce Management Strategy is a living document that may change within its lifespan and in future delivery roles that Council may be required to perform.

Council will seek the assistance and practical support of its employees and relevant unions to enhance the development and recognition of this plan, not only because of its award obligations but also because Council genuinely values the input that its employees' provide.

SUMMARY

This Workforce Management Strategy has been reviewed in accordance with the proposed Special Rate Variation adopted by Council on 11th November 2013 for submission to IPART.

The changes to this plan include a retention of 66.21 staff in its general workforce and 2 permanent full time positions, plus casual positions as required at the CentrePoint facility, for a period of two years. The staff numbers will be further assessed by council based on future reviews of a special rate variation and the service levels too be undertaken at that time.

Council has resolved to further consider a special rate variation after this two year period of 6% and 10% across rating categories which may allow an increase in workforce numbers to meet service level expectations.

This Workforce Management Strategy identifies an increase in councils staff establishment from 65 to 78 people, subject to future SRV's.

By increasing its workforce Council will be better able to more effectively deliver the objectives of the community as identified in the Community Strategic Plan.

Appendix 'A' details the specific measures Council will take to implement and achieve these objectives in response to community expectations.

APPENDIX ‘A’

WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2013/14 -2016/17

This Workforce Management Strategy identifies the objectives, rationale and performance indicators Blayney Shire Council will take to implement the objectives of the community as identified in Council’s CSP.

The Blayney CSP identified the following objectives;

- Grow the Wealth of the Shire
- A centre for sports and culture
- Preserve and enhance our heritage and rural landscapes
- Develop & maintain Shire infrastructure
- Develop strong and connected communities
- Leadership

The objectives identified in this Workforce Management Strategy assist greatly in aligning Council and community objectives

Objective	Rationale	Performance Indicators
Maintain a staffing establishment level of 66.21 employees in Councils general staff and 2 permanent full time positions, plus casual positions as required at the CentrePoint facility, to reflect the reduced services model proposed by a SRV of 6% for two years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To operate within a limited service delivery budget. 	Continue to review the staff levels required over the next two years to identify further efficiencies"
Increase staffing levels to meet community objectives identified in the CSP based on future SRV’s.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To meet community expectations Council must increase the size and composition of its workforce. 	Annual staffing levels compared to staffing levels identified in this plan.
Fill vacancies as they arise from the existing workforce.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an environment where employees have a career path within Council. 	Number of vacancies advertised internally compared to number of actual vacancies.

Objective	Rationale	Performance Indicators
Where possible identify if any positions can be filled on a traineeship or apprenticeship basis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shire residents are more likely to apply for positions if they are able to be trained in a role rather than already being expected to have the skills necessary to perform a role. • Have a readily available and trained workforce, able to quickly fill more senior vacancies as they become available. • Assist with succession planning measures. • Enhance the opportunities for local people to develop a career path within their local area. 	Number of positions filled on a training basis compared to number of positions filled.
Investigate more flexible working arrangements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist with the attraction and retention of staff. • Attract prospective job applicants. 	
Review Performance appraisal system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove structural impediments that don't allow people to progress through Council's salary system. • Better identify employee and Council training needs. 	Number of people who have progressed following review.
Develop a training matrix.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify training gaps and develop and enhance skills. 	Ongoing review of training requirements.
Review Council's salary system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council is limited by its present salary system and is losing valuable employees to the private sector due to competition in the local labour market. 	Completion of salary system review during the currency of this plan.
Investigate a retention incentive system based on length of service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council is limited by its present salary system and is losing valuable employees to the private sector due to competition in the local labour market. 	Completion of investigation of a retention incentive system during the currency of this plan.

Objective	Rationale	Performance Indicators
Engage extensively with Council's employee Consultative Committee on the implementation of the measures identified in this plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active employee participation in implementing community objectives. 	Consultative Committee meetings.
Risk Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing compliance with Workplace Health and Safety legislation. <p>Improve employee training and understanding of risk.</p>	Appointment of Risk Officer
Actively participate in regional and industry human resource forums.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep abreast of and informed about current and emerging issues and trends in relation to human resource management. 	Attendance at Centroc and industry forums.