

QPRC



Queanbeyan–Palerang Regional Council

Workforce Management Strategy 2022–26



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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Workforce Management Strategy 2022-26 is a refresh of the version prepared in 2019. It continues to be based on the DPSIR framework (see right and Section 4) and, together with the subordinate Workforce Plans, provides the overarching context and direction to shape our culture and development of our people; mechanisms to develop leaders and staff; and provide a workforce that grows with service demands and is diverse and inclusive.

Embedded with the asset, technology and financial plans in the Resourcing Strategy, the Workforce Strategy aims to recruit and retain the right people with the right skills and values at the right time for QPRC, to deliver services and manage assets based on the budget and digital forecasts.

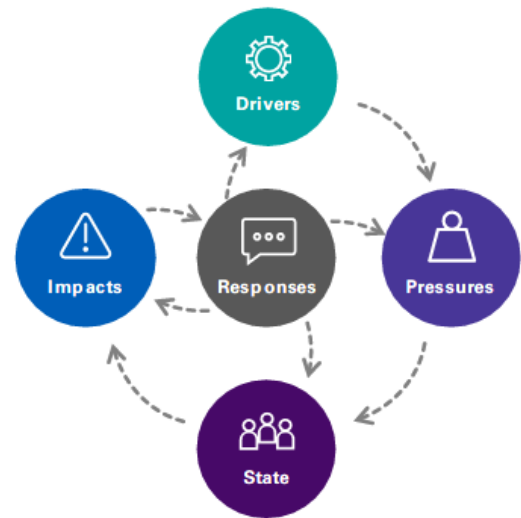


Figure 1: DPSIR model

The Strategy recognises the journey transitioning the workforce and organisation following the merger in 2016, and sets higher order ambitions to:

- build a contemporary future-focused workforce that will support adaptation to change;
- attract, retain and develop a diverse and inclusive workforce;
- grow cadets and trainees to 10% of the workforce;
- Learn from the challenges related to Covid-19 to provide a flexible, capable organisation
- unlock and achieve high performance of teams through stronger leadership capability;
- creatively manage our ageing workforce;
- provide equal employment opportunities;
- improve productivity through addressing unplanned absences and poor safety;
- provide a safe, inclusive and accessible workplace through Council's HSEQ Assurance Framework and capability training and awareness;
- instil a continuous learning and improvement environment through learning and development and process improvement;
- shape a positive customer-focused technically savvy culture through investment in culture development and technology adoption; and,
- achieve higher level of satisfaction of internal and external customers' perception of services

Council's Workforce Management Strategy identifies the challenges that Council faces over the coming years and highlights the areas where additional resources are required to ensure service delivery is not compromised. A Workforce Management Plan has been prepared for each Portfolio to estimate likely staff turnover, retirements and change in FTE to accommodate growth in development, facilities and infrastructure.

Council has targeted its staff to resident ratio at up to 7.5 staff per 1,000 residents, in-line with local government industry standards. Development and population growth in Googong, South Jerrabomberra and Bungendore will require an expansion of service delivery, including maintaining and operating new community facilities and infrastructure. Over the next four years, we have identified the need for up to an additional 40 staff members to

maintain current levels of service delivery for a larger population, with the majority of those in our Community Connections portfolio (roads, water, sewer and waste) and our Natural and Built Character portfolio (planning, development control, environment and landscapes). The new positions will be largely reliant on new or increased revenue streams.

Our back office areas will remain relatively steady in terms of growth, so that we can focus on the service delivery that matters to our community: our assets and planning services.

Over the next four years, we will increase our number of trainees and cadets to hit our goal of 10% across the organisation. Aiming to provide opportunities for new workers to create careers in local government and to develop the necessary skills we need to operate our business.

Since the 2016 merger, QPRC developed plans and timelines for developing a single organisation structure, reviewing positions, recruiting internal staff into new positions, amalgamating salary structures and aligning human resource policies. 28 positions have been abolished and discontinued as fixed term contracts expire and as staff retire or change-over. These positions have delivered savings of \$2.293 million with ongoing annual savings directed to the repayment of principal and interest on the loan funding for the new Queanbeyan Civic and Cultural Precinct (QCCP).

Long Term Financial Plan shows significant budget issues that will need to be addressed by Council. Following the merger, Council established a 'service, program, activity (SPA) framework to identify service priorities and to guide the organisational structure and associated resources and expertise required to deliver services and projects for the community. To an extent, many of those services were expanded in scope or extended geographically into the larger local government area, generally at a harmonised or higher level than the former individual councils. Council adopted a financial strategy to increase its revenue to meet the higher service demands, however has not yet been able to implement the revenue strategies due to specific legislation applying to merged councils.

Council now needs to review its established service levels, continue its program of service reviews and complete the process of aligning the required level of resources to its priority service outcomes.

The key pillars around which the strategic responses or actions are based:

- Strategic Focus 1 A contemporary, future-focused workforce
- Strategic Focus 2 Managing our ageing workforce
- Strategic Focus 3 Improving productivity
- Strategic Focus 4 Providing a safe, inclusive and accessible workplace
- Strategic Focus 5 Instilling a high learning, innovative environment
- Strategic Focus 6 Shaping a positive client-focused, tech savvy culture
- Strategic Focus 7 Being an employer of choice

Those actions are summarised in the Strategy.



2. INTRODUCTION

Legislative Framework

The Local Government Act 1993 requires NSW councils to prepare the following through the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (see right):

- A 20-year Community Strategic Plan to be developed in consultation with the community, State Government agencies and other relevant stakeholders. The purpose of the plan is to identify the community's main priorities and aspirations for the future and to plan strategies for achieving these goals.

- A four-year Delivery Program that details the activities Council will be committed to over the next four years to work towards achieving its long term objectives as documented in the Community Strategic Plan.
- An annual Operational Plan that specifies individual activities Council will be undertaking during the year together with details of income and expenditure estimates for the year. These activities are drawn from the Delivery Program which is based on the Community Strategic Plan.
- A Resourcing Strategy which is aimed at ensuring that the resources ie money, assets and people, required to achieve the Community Strategic Plan are available as and when required. The Resourcing Strategy is focused purely on Council's responsibilities in the roles of leader and provider.

The recently reviewed Integrated Planning and Reporting Guidelines describe the Resourcing Strategy as:

The Resourcing Strategy is the point where the council explains to its community how it intends to perform all of its functions, including implementing the strategies set out in the Community Strategic Plan. Some strategies in the Community Strategic Plan will clearly be the responsibility of the council, some will be the responsibility of other levels of government and some will rely on input from business and industry groups, community groups or individuals. The Resourcing Strategy focuses in detail on matters that are the responsibility of the council and considers, in general terms, matters that are the responsibility of others. The Resourcing Strategy articulates how the council will allocate resources to deliver the objectives under its responsibility.

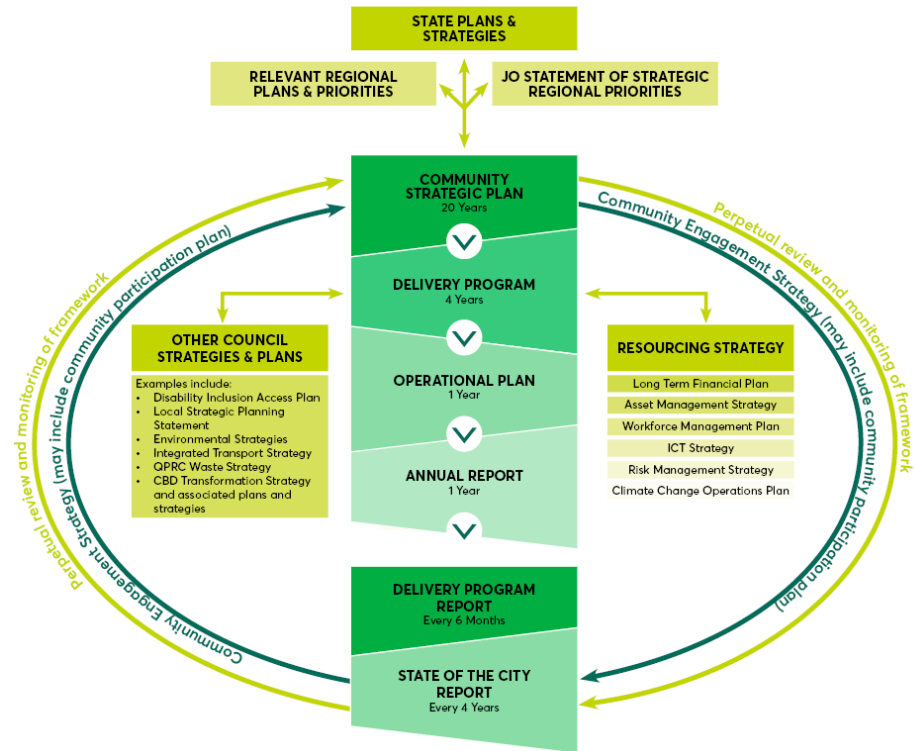


Figure 2: Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

QPRC's Resourcing Strategy 2022-26

The Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council (QPRC) Resourcing Strategy is prepared utilising the DPSIR Model which is a systems approach consisting of identifying Drivers – Pressures – State – Impacts – Responses. The Resourcing Strategy has identified six key components consisting of:

- Workforce Strategy – aims to provide the Council with the people best able to guide its strategic direction, develop innovative approaches to complex issues and deliver appropriate services effectively and efficiently.
- Asset Management Strategy – takes a 'whole of life' asset management from planning, purchase, operation, and maintenance to disposal of assets. It also encompasses integration of assets and service outcomes.
- Long Term Financial Plan – long term community aspirations and goals are tested against financial realities, and decide what resources Council needs to influence and work with other parties.
- ICT Strategy – identifies what digital and process tools mobilise delivery of services by staff and access to information by community
- Risk Management Strategy – establishes governance and assigns accountabilities for management of risk, and identification of risk appetite.
- Climate Change Operations Plan –

In this refresh of the Workforce Management Strategy, our ambitions are consistent with most organisations and that is to attract and retain the right people:



Figure 3: Workforce Capacity and Capability Principles

The Workforce Management Strategy and the supporting Workforce Plans are designed to move the organisation into the 'Transformation Structure' which was identified in Council's initial Transition Plan following the merger in 2016.

3. CONTEXT – ABOUT QPRC

QPRC was formed by proclamation on 12 May 2016 with the amalgamation of Queanbeyan City Council and Palerang Council - bringing together a wide geographical spread with diverse community needs.

The merger of a city council and a rural council presented a new challenge, refocusing services for urban and rural priorities and reorganising the way work was structured as the two former councils had different operational structures; hierarchical versus flat and generalist vs specialised roles.

Following the merger, the organisation outlined a three-staged approach to its structure review.

1. Following on from the merger in 2016, an interim organisational structure was implemented to essentially 'stitch together' the two former organisations to continue service delivery across the region.
2. As the organisation settled down and Council's priorities were determined, the transitional structure was put in place. In implementing the structures, Council was required to comply with staff protections in the Local Government Act which required Council to retain staffing numbers at Bungendore and Braidwood and prohibited forced redundancies of any non-senior staff members for 3 years.

On top of that, Council aimed to keep staffing numbers in line with the industry standard of 7.5 staff members per 1,000 residents.

3. The transformational structure aligns staff resources to the delivery of community infrastructure and services to the established priorities of the new QPRC inline with workforce plans developed for each Service Delivery Branch.

At the time of merger, QPRC had 405 full time equivalent staff members, with 513 total employees. By 2021-22, the full time equivalent staff numbers has grown to 468 with around 524 total employees. The majority of growth was a result of labour hire and casual roles being converted to permanent positions in accordance with the Award and conversion of redundant roles to accommodate growth with development, infrastructure, facilities and open spaces and new services around tourism, greenfield land release, business support, grants, events and communications.

This growth in employees was proportionally matched by a growth in population from 56,032 to 62,239 (estimated residential population) in 2021-22. Over the next four years, we have identified additional growth expectations requiring us to grow our workforce by up to another 40 full time equivalent staff members. Those positions will be required mostly in our

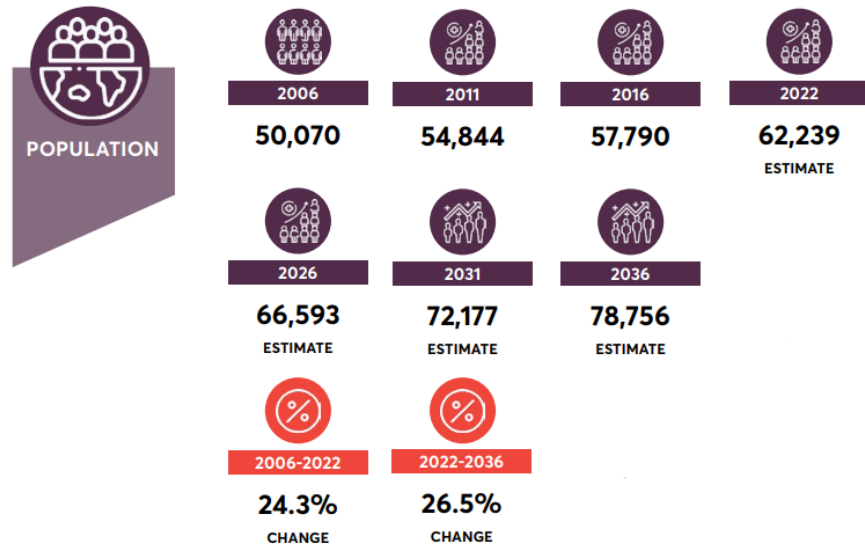


Figure 4: QPRC demographics

Natural and Built Character and Community Connections portfolios to ensure we keep up to the demand being seen for our planning and infrastructure services.

Of that growth in staff members, we will continue to focus on employing cadets and trainees to ensure we tackle the challenge that our ageing workforce presents. Within 4 years we expect to have 50 trainees and cadets which will get us to our target of 10% of our workforce being employed under those arrangements.

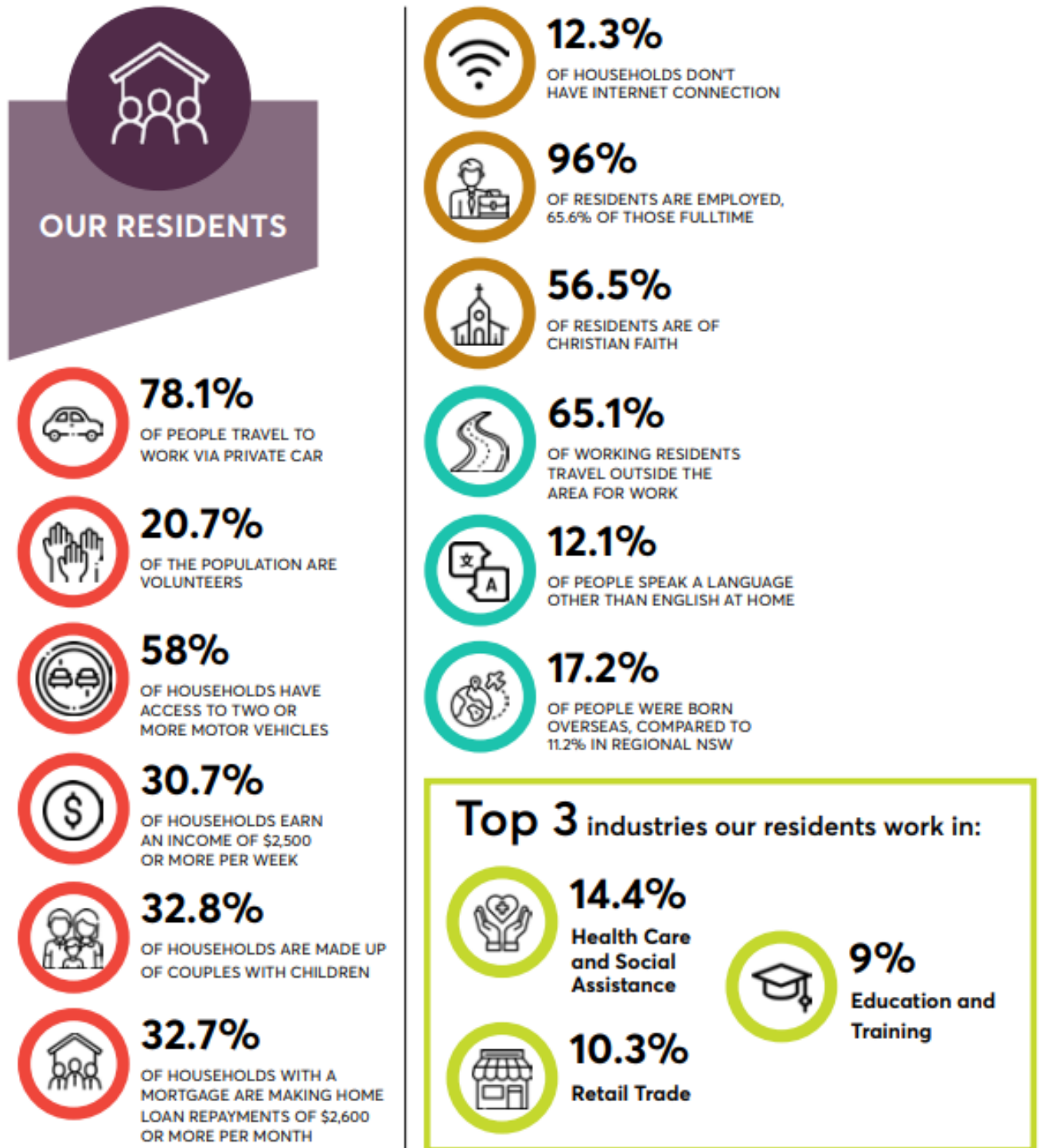


Figure 5: QPRC demographics and statistics

Our Strategic Pillars and Community Vision

Council is required to develop a Community Strategic Plan, which identifies the aspirations, goals and visions of the community. Following extensive engagement during 2021, our revised vision and Strategic Pillars have been developed. The Delivery Program and Operational Plan show the links between actions and the strategies and goals outlined in the Community Strategic Plan.

QPRC Community Vision

Our area is a safe and relaxed place, offering a wonderful lifestyle for all members of our community to enjoy and thrive in. Our diverse community has a sense of pride and can enjoy excellent services and facilities whilst experiencing the benefits of a growing area that has a sustainable and healthy natural environment.

Our Strategic Pillars

The challenge for QPRC is turning the community's long term aspirations and strategic priorities into reality. To assist with this the Council has set out our strategic actions within a quadruple bottom-line structure based around, Community, Economy, Environment and Leadership. QPRC has integrated these into four Strategic Pillars of COMMUNITY, CHOICE, CHARACTER and CAPABILITY. In addition to these focus areas, Council's core business provides key community infrastructure for roads and access to services. In response to this need, a fifth Strategic Pillar has been added - CONNECTION.



Figure 6: QPRC strategic pillars

Our Organisation Structure

The current organisation structure was established in 2017 and was designed to be:

- Aligned with the five strategic pillars - Community, Choice, Character, Connection, Capability
- Reflective of the Service and Program Framework
 - Culture, community, recreation, education
 - Business, health
 - Development, urban landscape, natural landscapes, sustainability, land-use
 - Transport, water, sewer, waste, facilities, asset logistics
 - People, technology, financial, quality, risk, property
- Differentiating of key accountabilities between each level in the organisation structure
 - L2 Portfolio General Manager: objective, output, outcome (of pillars)
 - L3 Service Manager : planning, performance, policy (of services)
 - L4 Program Coordinator : statutory, systems, supervision (of programs)
 - L5 Team Leader : quality, coordination, customer focus (of activities)
 - L6 Staff : quality, customer service (of tasks)

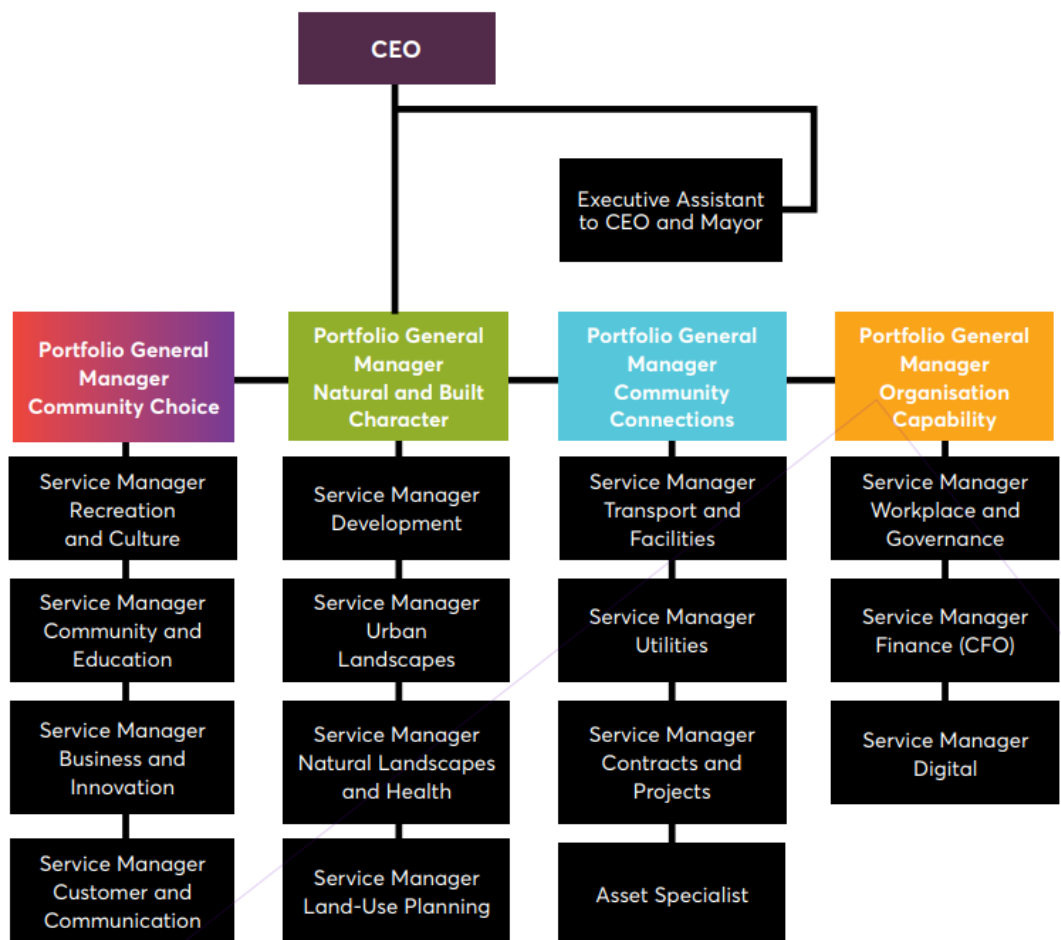


Figure 7: QPRC Transition Structure

The Transition Structure is scheduled to be reviewed during the Strategy timeframe.

Our Vision, Mission & Values

After the consultation with the community to establish Council's strategic pillars, the following Vision, Mission and Values were developed with input and validation from all levels within the organisation.

Vision

We are connected and respected.

Mission

We work together with our community to continually enhance our well-governed, safe and healthy city by caring for its assets, fostering a stronger sense of civic pride, and delivering quality services in a financially, socially and environmentally responsible manner to ensure a sustainable future.

Focus

Our reputation matters...



Values

Our Values define the way we work and behave. We will promote and encourage our employees to adopt the following shared values:

Integrity

We role model ethical, transparent and professional decision-making and behaviour.

Respect

We promote diversity, inclusion, consultation and fairness.

Innovation

We are future-focused and creative; we embrace technology, risk and opportunity.

Continuous Improvement

We strive to be efficient and effective through the development of our structures, systems and processes.

The values people focused (integrity, respect) and task focused (innovation, improvement). In line with our value of *Respect*, we will promote diversity, inclusion, consultation and fairness as detailed in our Reconciliation Action and Disability Inclusion plans. These strategies will assist in creating a diverse and inclusive workforce.

Our Ambitions

A number of interrelated strategies related to QPRC's branding, customer focus and digital efficiencies were developed to focus on assisting the organisational transformation and providing our employees with the skills and tools to deliver desired outcomes.



Since merger, QPRC recruited staff and consultant expertise to raise senior managers' personal awareness through MBTI and MI; provided leadership development by delivering formal coursework, colloquium and coaching; profiled the organisation culture using the Human Synergistics OCI/OEI surveys; and, shaped organisation culture supported by LG Capability Framework, Circumplex desired behaviours and implementation of Council's values.

Between 2021-23, Council engaged professional development consultants to provide the 'Colloquium' program to all staff in the organisation. This has been a significant investment in our staff, it recognises the importance of every position, and the vital role that all staff play in providing true public service at grass roots community levels. The objective is to equip all staff with the tools and personal skills to enhance the culture of QPRC through personal responsibility. The program has provided opportunities to all staff members, and has received high satisfaction ratings internally as well as benefits outside the workplace with improved awareness and teamwork showing up through improved responsiveness and customer service.

The establishment of the Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CRJO) in 2018, with 10 neighbouring Councils and the ACT Government, provides a unique opportunity for QPRC to contribute more broadly to regional initiatives, and benefit from regional opportunities. Since the creation of the CRJO, several joint recruitment and procurement opportunities have emerged. The CRJO has also developed a Regional Workforce Strategy which has helped to shape this document and the Workforce Strategies of other councils.

The outcomes from these strategies and investments since merger will result in QPRC aiming to:

- transact by digital means;
- interact by human means; and,
- utilise our regional scale and presence.

QPRC's transformational structure has been designed to release resources and redesign roles to:

- directly deliver or support emerging or expanded services;
- engage more cadets and trainees to build skills in our community and shape our culture; and
- attract and optimise specialist skills within the LGAs in the region.

Staff Establishment

QPRC is a medium-sized regional Council and employs a full-time equivalent (FTE) of 468 employees and taps into a pool of 129 casual employees across a diverse range of occupations.

The FTE has gradually increased since Council's merger in 2016 as the population has grown. Council aims to maintain its FTE at or below the industry benchmark of 7.5 staff members per 1,000 residents. Given that our local government area is growing by around 1,000 residents per year, we expect steady growth within the organisation into the future to ensure that service delivery continues to meet community expectations. Much of this growth will occur in our infrastructure and planning branches to cope with the increased demand from these new developments.

The increase of FTE during the interim structure has been responsive to resource requirements for the completion of major projects and the significant level of capital grants and contributions, including:

- additional resources to address internal specialty gaps and to improve productivity, performance, growth and access to funding through:
 - Asset management
 - Digital strategy and mobility
 - Project management
 - Grants sourcing
 - Property developments
 - Tourism marketing
 - New release subdivision
 - Emergency management
 - Arts development
 - Communications
- additional resources to service shortcomings identified in the Community Customer Surveys, namely:
 - Roads
 - Cleaning (streets and amenities)
 - Streetscapes
 - Parking
 - Development processing and planning
 - Tourism
- additional temporary staffing resources for merger transition and major grant funded projects including:
 - Organisation development
 - IPR and productivity
 - Property
 - Records
 - ERP (technology platform)

The table below shows the changes in FTE since merger. Council is required to maintain the core staff numbers at Bungendore and Braidwood from amalgamation date, as legislated by 218CA of *Local Government Act*. Council monitors and reports on staff members within the annual report, to ensure compliance.

	Position FTE				
	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Queanbeyan	300.28	313.92	317.92	321.9	324.89
Bungendore	83.94	98.94	94.1	87.78	89.98
Braidwood	50.41	42.78	53.63	53.28	53.88
Total (without Casual)	434.63	455.64	464.93	462.96	468.75

Table 1 – QPRC position FTE

Staff establishment – future

As part of the development of this Strategy, Council's Leadership team prepared four-year Workforce Plans for their branches and portfolios in 2021-22. The Plans were developed in consultation with Executive and looked at the proposed changes that may be required during the four-year period to continue the delivery services and programs to the community.

Where new positions were proposed, Service Managers were requested to identify how the new position would be funded, either via general revenue, grants, increased fees and charges or other.

While Workforce Plans have been developed, and Executive has agreed in principle to their implementation, each change proposal continues to be subject to consultation with staff, unions and the Workplace Consultative Committee. Alongside the consultation process, Executive and the CEO also consider the financial implications of the change within budget priorities.

A number of initial changes have already been progressed following consultation, and some have been deferred until revenue streams can be identified. Organisational reviews, service level requirements and workforce plans will continue to be progressed during the life of this strategy and changes will be considered through each review of Council's organisational structure.

A summary of the changes that have been proposed and funding sources considered as part of Council's Workforce Planning work is shown below:

Portfolio Increases	2021 2022	2022 2023	2023 2024	2024 2025	TOTAL SEP 2020	TOTAL 2024-25	TOTAL FTE GROWTH	Trainee/ Cadet	Trainee/ Cadets %
CEO Office	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	2.00	2.00	0.00	0	0%
Organisation Capability	\$ 94,499.12	\$ 53,492.59	\$ -	\$ -	58.96	60.66	1.70	9	14.84%
Natural & Built Character	\$ 323,513.48	\$ 241,594.39	\$ 613,283.95	\$ 202,024.68	123.21	140.21	17.00	20	14.26%
Community Connections	\$ 640,603.71	\$ 342,481.48	\$ 277,458.69	\$ -	181.30	197.60	16.30	8	4.05%
Community Choice	-\$ 97,484.42	\$ 439,329.73	\$ 372,724.34	\$ 172,839.78	95.88	100.48	4.60	5	4.98%
Portfolio Increases	2021 2022	2022 2023	2023 2024	2024 2025					
TOTAL 1	\$ 961,131.89	\$ 1,076,898.19	\$ 1,263,466.98	\$ 374,864.46	461.35	500.95	39.60	42	8.38%
			TOTAL \$	\$ 3,676,361.52	TARGET	485		50.10	10.00%
Portfolio Increases	2021 2022	2022 2023	2023 2024	2024 2025					
IDENTIFIED FUNDING SOURCES CONSIDERED					TOTAL				
Waste Fund	\$ 160,308.94	\$ 26,033.05	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 186,342.00				
Sewer Fund	\$ 321,910.07	\$ 53,916.59	\$ 233,573.09	\$ -	\$ 609,399.74				
Water Fund	\$ 126,394.55	\$ 53,916.59	\$ 43,885.60	\$ -	\$ 224,196.73				
General Fund	\$ 660,044.80	\$ 762,004.59	\$ 707,181.01	\$ 374,864.46	\$ 2,504,094.85				
Fees / Service based roles	\$ 52,217.05	\$ 197,078.83	\$ 64,892.25	\$ -	\$ 314,188.13				
Temporary Project Funding	\$ 30,993.83	\$ 26,746.30	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 57,740.13				
Temporary Grant Funding	-\$ 390,737.34	-\$ 96,290.34	\$ -	\$ -	-\$ 487,027.68				
Optional Environmental Levy	\$ -	\$ 53,492.59	\$ 213,935.03	\$ -	\$ 267,427.62				
			TOTAL	\$ 3,676,361.52					

Figure 8: QPRC workforce plan overview

4. OUR APPROACH

QPRC adopted the DPSIR Framework to guide the development of the Workforce Strategy and other parts of the Resourcing Strategy.

DPSIR Framework

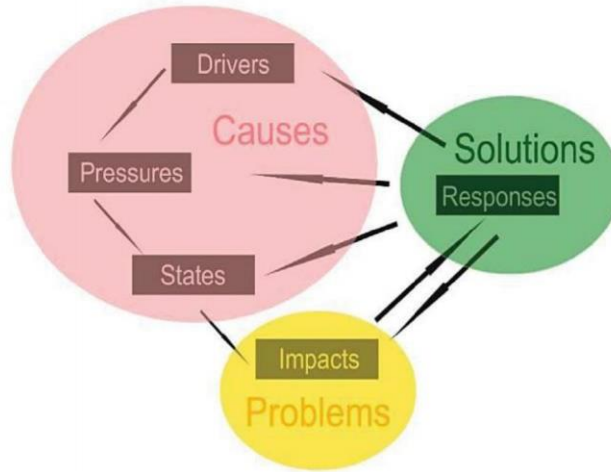


Figure 9: DPSIR Model

DPSIR represents:

Drivers – what is the driving force/s

- eg disruptors: snowy, aerotropolis, ageing workforce, IP&R reporting

Pressures – what pressures placed on LGAs as result of drivers

- eg turnover, recruitment delay, loss experience, proximity to ACT

State – what is current condition of the workforce

- eg profile of organisation

Impact – what are changes to the 'state' that has impact on workforce

- eg remote office, turnover in millennials, education costs

Response – what are proposals to mitigate pressure and impact

- eg list actions, policies, initiatives, advocacy
- eg metrics for monitoring

Drivers

External

The following drivers will impact QPRC's Workforce Strategy:

1. Community expectations (survey)
2. Population and economic growth
3. NSW State Plan Premier Priorities
4. South East and Tablelands Regional Plan
5. Canberra Region Joint Organisation Regional Workforce Strategy
6. NSW Local Government Workforce Development Strategy 2020
7. ACT-NSW Memorandum of Understanding for Regional Collaboration
8. ACT-QPRC Letter of Intent
9. Principles of the Stronger Councils framework:
 - Service: Maintain seamless service delivery to communities

- Opportunities: Embrace opportunities to improve services and infrastructure for communities
- Cohesion: Bring together and build on the strengths of strategies, structures, staff and systems
- Engagement: Inform and involve communities, staff and other partners, including industry unions, in planning and implementing change
- Integrity: Ensure ethical, open and accountable governance and administration
- Respect: Value the knowledge and contributions of staff, communities and other partners

Ongoing service reviews will evaluate and revise asset standards, levels of service; and the type, scope and spread of programs delivered – to meet community priorities. Similarly the next review of the ICT Strategy and priorities may alter the type and mix of human and technical resources required to deliver those services or for maintenance of community assets.

Pressure

QPRC has identified a number of significant challenges and pressures flowing from the drivers over the next four years that may impact the level of sustainability of the Council.



Financial

- Managing the changing landscape in relation to funding sources available to local government and exploring the opportunities for Council to be more self-funding;
- Meeting grant requirements and major project milestones and timelines;
- Maintaining required investment in Council's infrastructure, meeting both renewal and maintenance targets to ensure future generations are able to enjoy our community's assets;
- Meeting expectations from all areas including community, service users and government by ensuring standards across key services keep pace with demand and in balance with the capacity to fund these operations;
- Addressing the challenges of population growth and an ageing population which will impact service and infrastructure requirements; and
- Being future focused, digitally enabled. New community facilities, (sportsfields, pools) to operate and community infrastructure (footpaths, parks, roads, gardens) to maintain.
- Long term rate pegging has meant that Council's annual revenue decreases in real terms every year compared with inflation of costs

Change Management

- Unable to rationalise number of offices and depots;
- More than 200 Queanbeyan-based staff are to be consolidated from 11 buildings into a new head office
- New office in Bungendore, with temporary office accommodation required as an interim arrangement.

Workforce

- Trend of long term staff reaching retirement age
- Remunerating at attractive levels given proximity to ACT competition for skilled and professional labour;

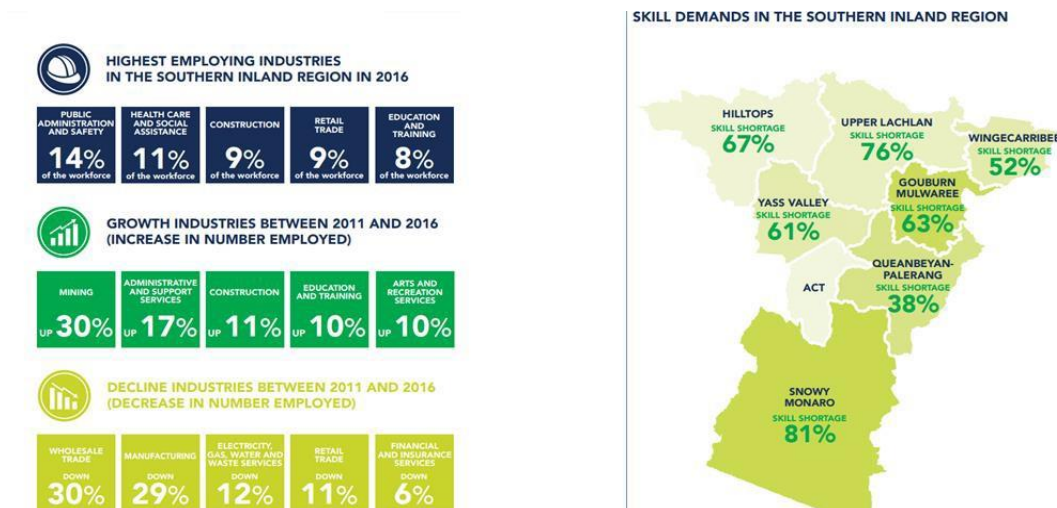
- Retaining and meeting the training needs for skilled design and construction staff to meet RMCC road construction standards required by Transport for NSW;
- Retaining skilled development and engineering staff to meet turnaround benchmarks of local government;
- Competing for skills within the Region due to major projects, for example:
 - Snowy 2.0
 - Badgerys Creek aerotropolis
 - Mining (at Majors Creek and near Woodlawn)
 - Increased private sector works

Attracting employees with the right skill set is becoming more challenging due to a tight labour market and a skills shortage for key professional skills.

Rank	Professional Occupations	Percentage of Councils		
		Current Shortage	Forced to Recruit Less Skilled Applicants	Critical Future Issue
1	Engineers	52.7%	25.5%	45.5%
2	Urban & Town Planners	41.8%	25.5%	40.0%
3	Building Surveyors	38.2%	20.0%	38.2%
4	Project Managers	21.8%	18.2%	21.8%
5	Environmental Health Officer	21.8%	12.7%	23.6%
6	Building Surveying Technicians	18.2%	10.9%	16.4%
7	Engineering Technicians	16.4%	10.9%	12.7%
8	Asset & Facilities Managers	16.4%	3.6%	10.9%
9	Human Resource Professionals	14.5%	5.5%	16.4%
10	Contract Managers/Officers	12.7%	9.1%	12.7%

The “Local Government Workforce and Future Skills Report New South Wales” listed the following top 10 professional skill shortage occupations in councils as follows: Due to the reported state-wide shortage of Civil Engineers, Town Planners and Building Surveyors, pressure is exerted on Council’s ability to recruit engineers when vacancies occur. This shortage was identified in the ‘NSW Occupational Cluster Reports (2018)’ by the Department of Jobs and Small Business (Australian Government); and in addition, there is generally skill gaps in the region – particularly in skill groups required of Local Government, as identified in the RDA Southern Inland report 2018.

Figure 10: RDA Southern Inland Report

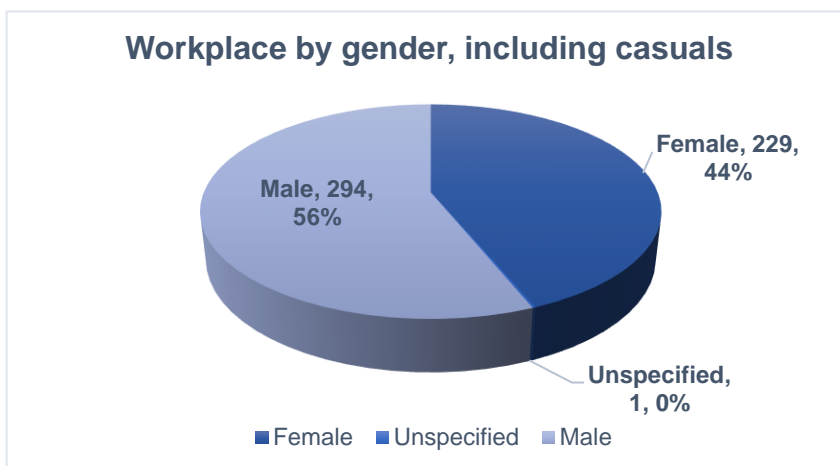
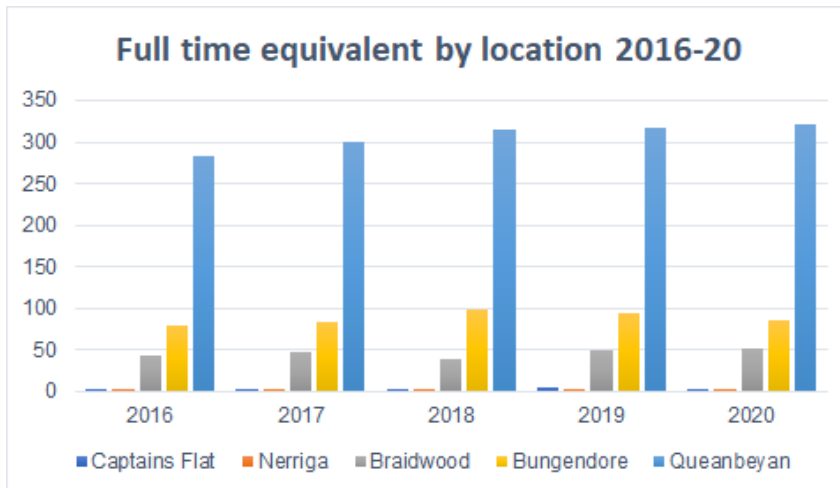


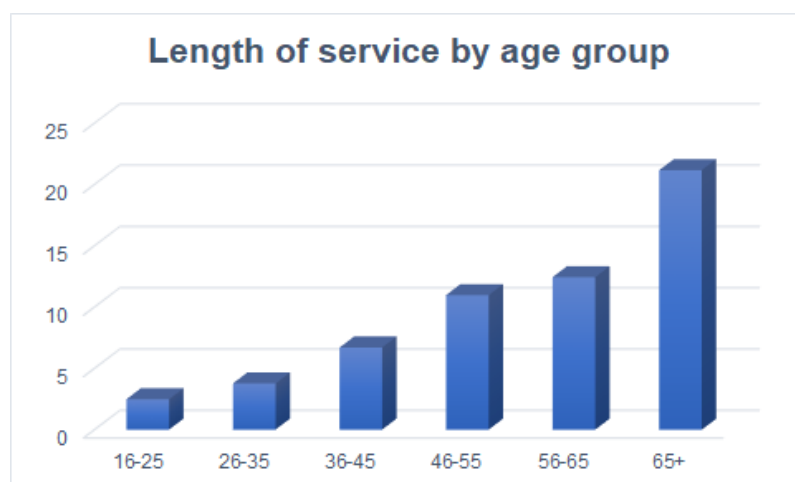
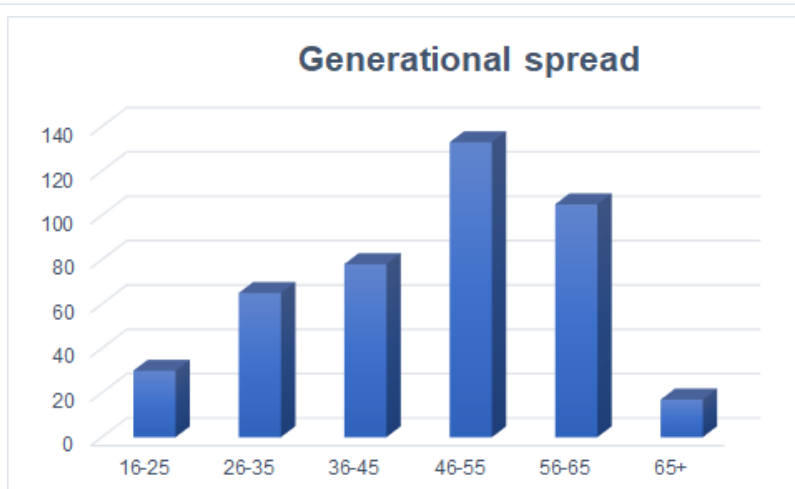
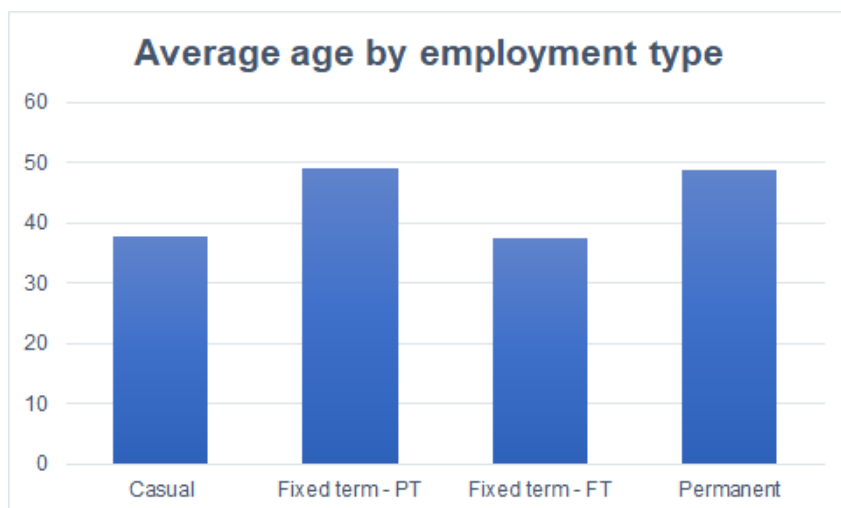
State

QPRC is a regional Council, with a diverse workforce spread across office and field-based roles and three distinct workplaces – Queanbeyan, Bungendore and Braidwood.

As with most regional organisations, one of the major challenges facing QPRC is our ageing workforce, with more than 50% of our staff aged above 46. Council is attempting to address by setting a target of having 10% of our full time equivalent workforce made up of cadets and trainees and also providing flexible working arrangements for staff as they move toward retirement. The majority of these older staff are also our longer-service staff, so ensuring their knowledge is captured prior to their retirement is key to the organisation maintaining its service level.

Due to our proximity to the ACT, we have a higher proportion of employees living outside the Local Government Area than most others in regional NSW. However, the majority still live within the Queanbeyan-Palerang area. Around 130 of Council's full time equivalent workforce live in the ACT, with staff also travelling from neighbouring local government areas, including Eurobodalla (4), Goulburn Mulwaree (20), Hilltops (3), Shoalhaven (1), Snowy Monaro (3) and Yass Valley (3).





Impact

Culture

- Culture surveys in 2017, 2018 and 2021 showed gradual improvement in the organisation's culture following the merger shock impact.
- The initial surveys naturally identified high levels of need for security and opposition to change, during a period of merger;
- Focusing on establishing systems, structures and policies that support staff in the workplace became a priority, with an 'action plan' required to identify levers to improve staff engagement, interaction and customer service;
- In the Culture Circumplex, management ambitions are to 'optimise the blue, manage the red, minimise the green'; and
- Investment in self and team awareness through organisation values setting, MBTI and MI programs amongst managers, and 'colloquium' leadership development with managers and coordinators, was aimed at shifting mindsets and providing a toolkit to assist leaders manage change and staff issues.

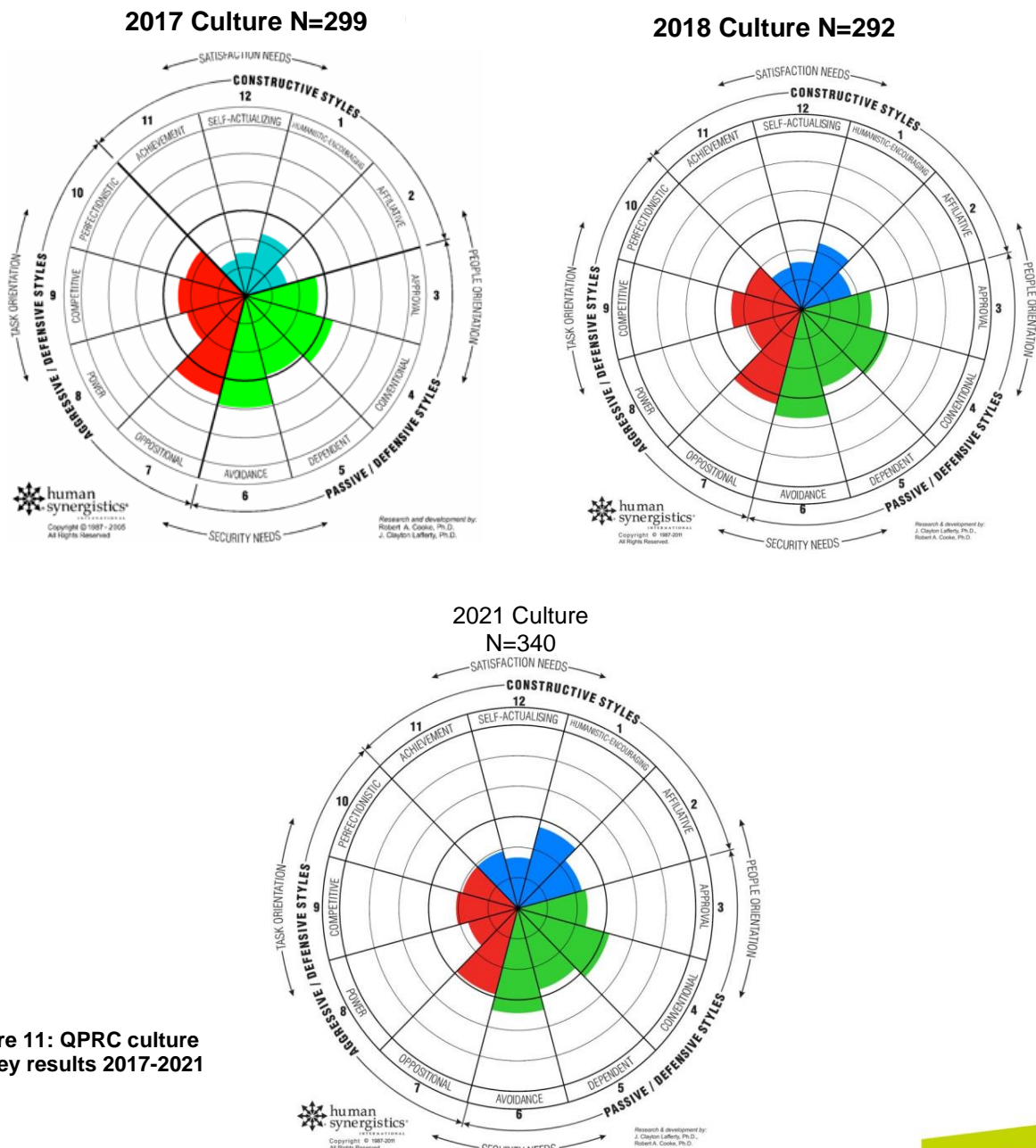


Figure 11: QPRC culture survey results 2017-2021

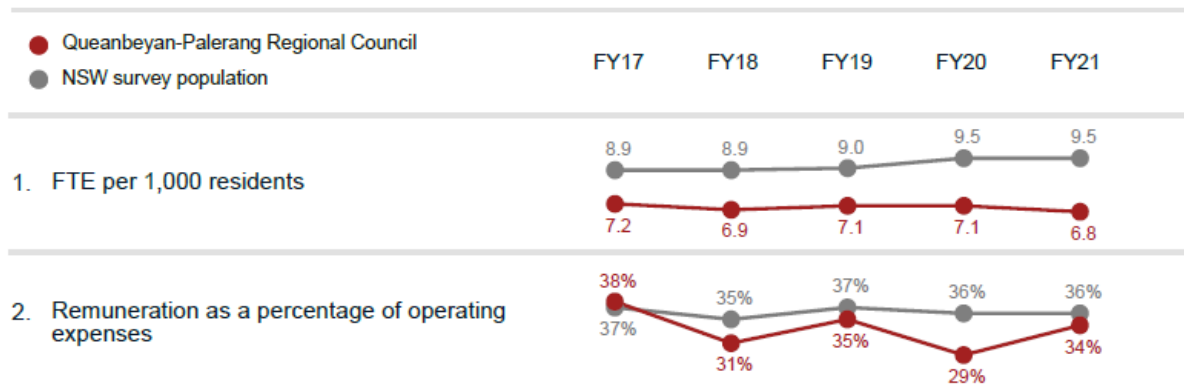
Workforce Performance Impacts

Council participates in the Australasian Local Government Performance Excellence Program (PEP) to analyse performance data, assess the impact of its workforce strategies over time and identify further opportunities for improvement. The comparison data from the PEP compared with the total NSW LG cohort and Canberra Region cohort, illustrates how changes in the workforce can impact Council's efficiency and effectiveness. Additional impacts of workforce strategies can include:

- Employee productivity and utilisation rate.
- Unplanned absences.
- OCI/OEI survey results.
- IR environment/disputes.
- NSW Audit Office findings.
- LGA population forecasts.
- Staff retirement forecasts.
- FTE growth forecast.
- Skill shortages.

Key Workforce Profile Comparison

Employee profile data, additional data from various industry survey findings and year on year comparative organisational data inform the review and development of key workforce initiatives and activities. The following are extracts of key workforce profiles from the PEP report.



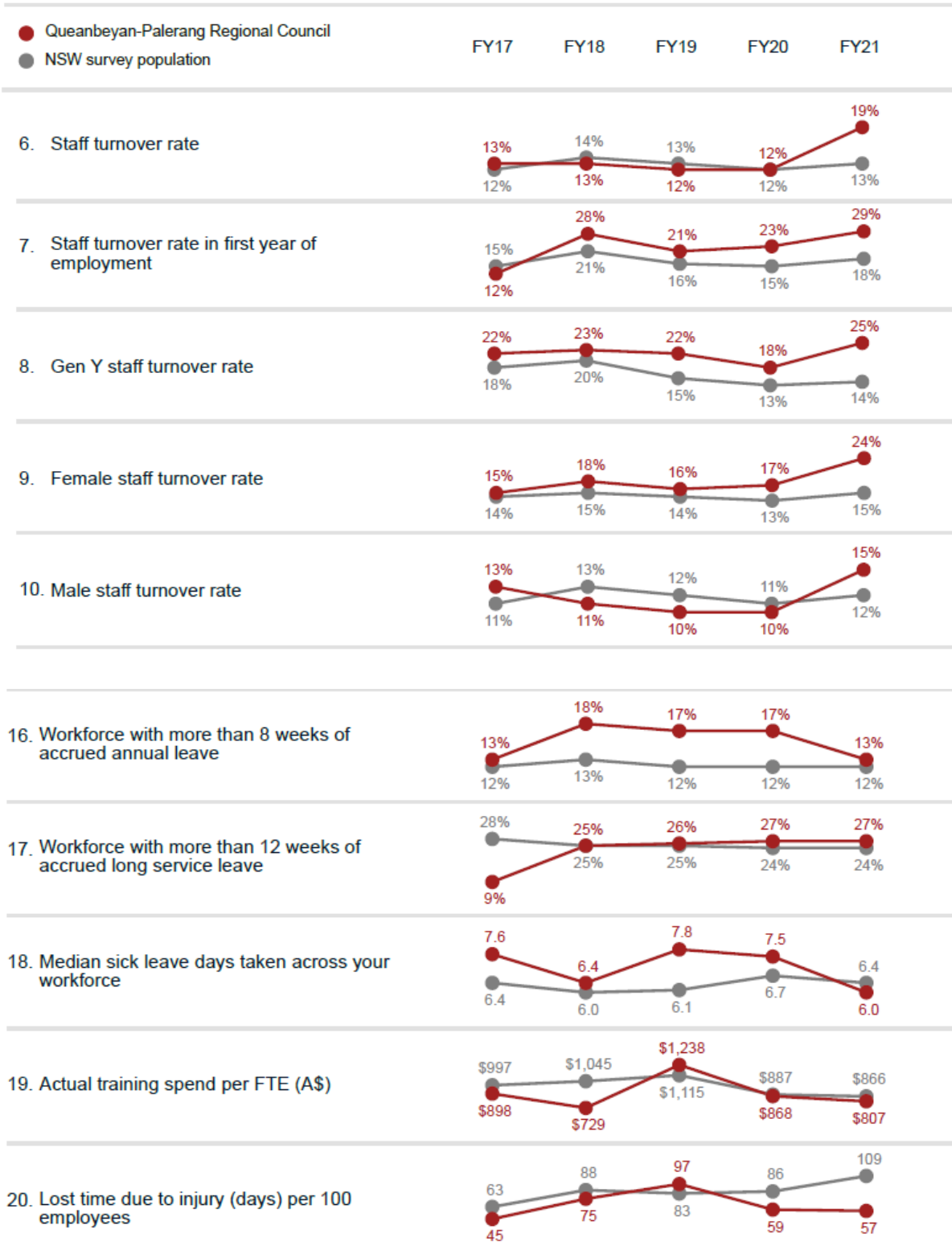


Figure 1.8: Staff level split (size of council)

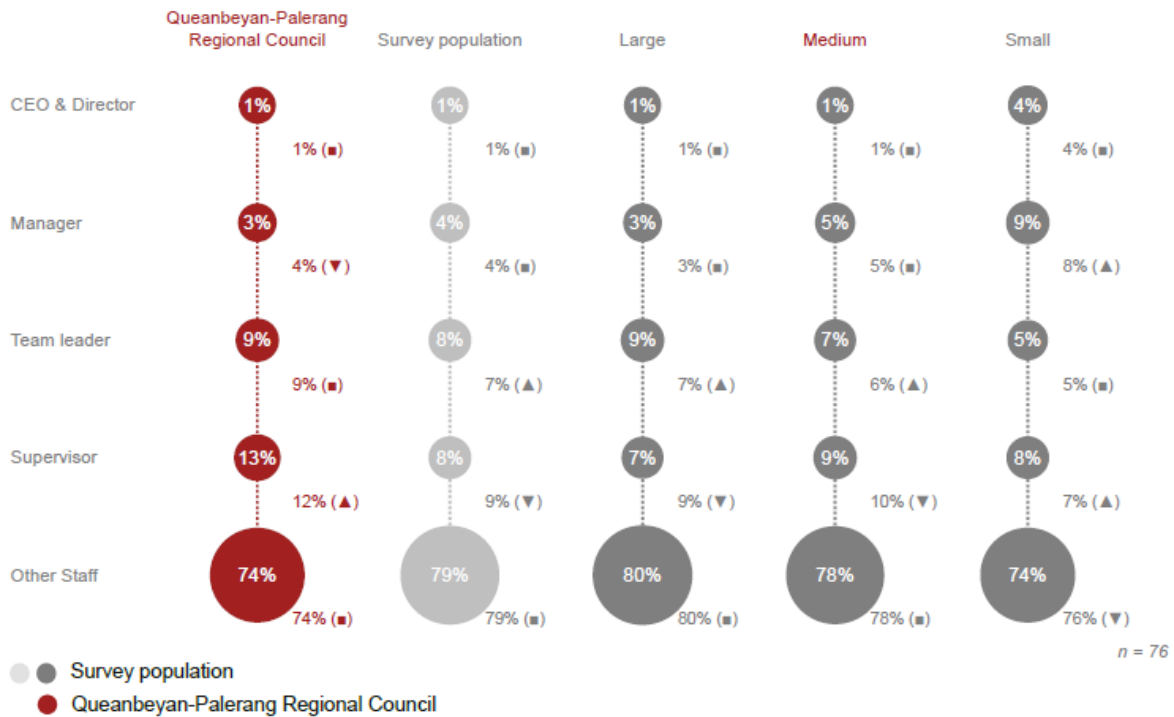


Figure 1.9: Headcount mix by generation

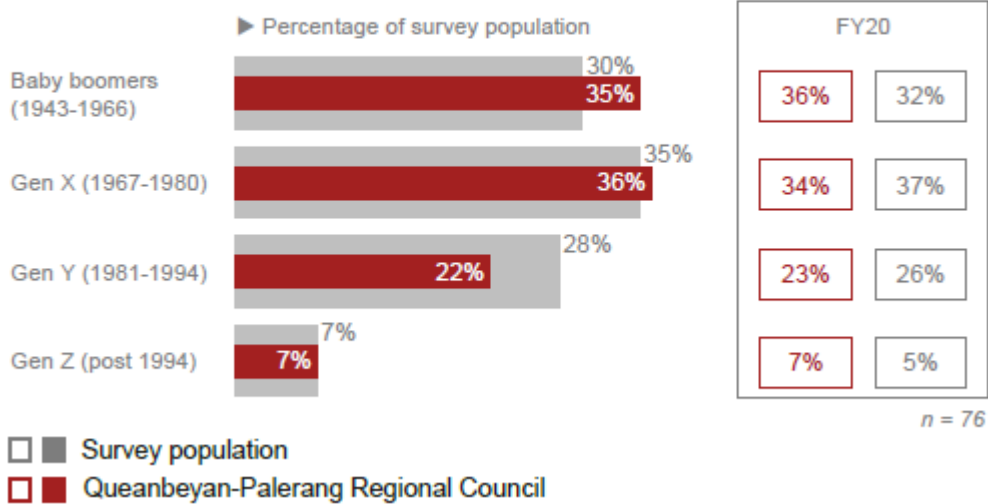


Figure 1.10: Workforce profile (closing headcount breakdown by generation and gender)

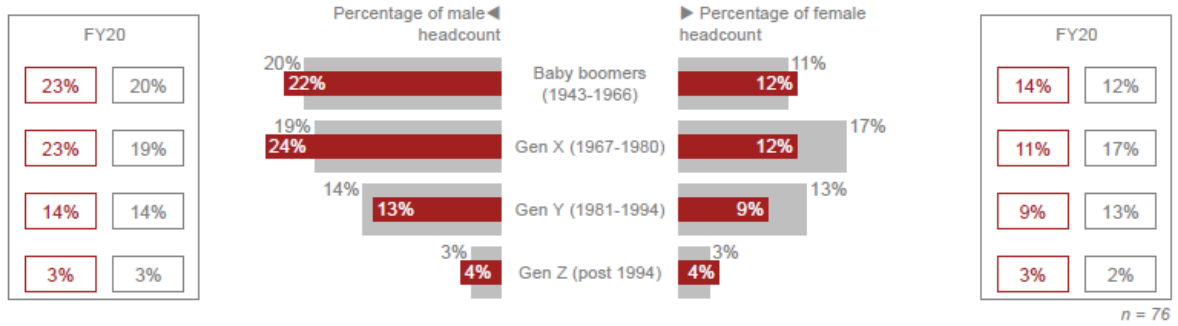
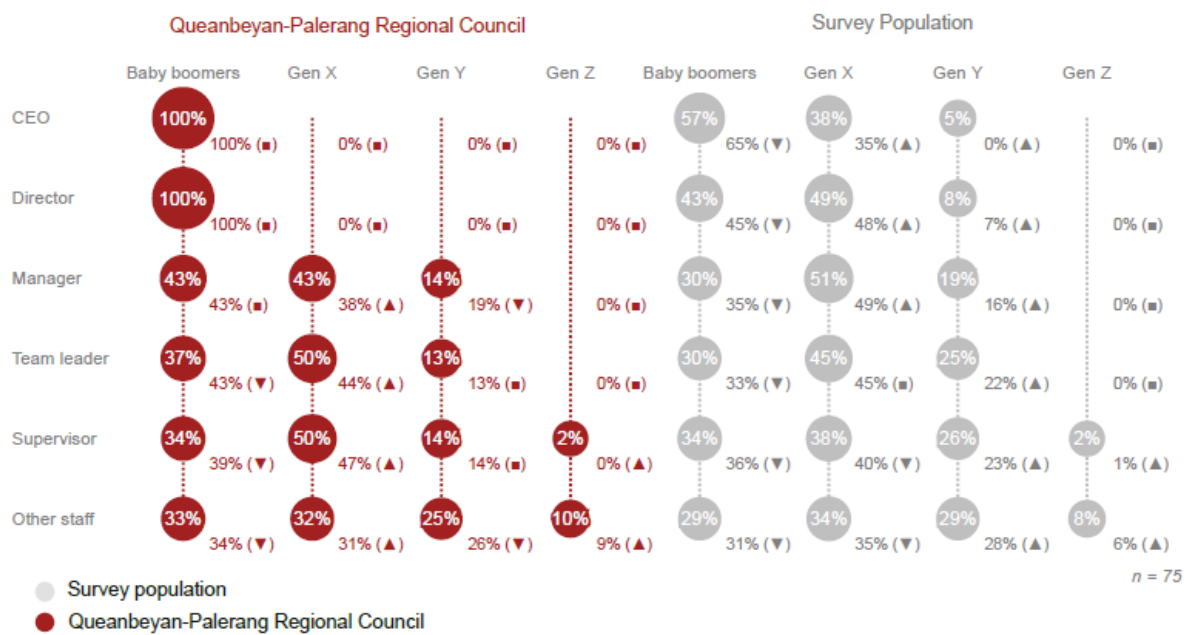


Figure 1.11: Generational mix by staff level



Response

The Workforce Management Strategy underpins QPRC's Vision, Strategy, ambition and service deliverables set out in the Community Strategic Plan 2022-2042.

It provides:

- overarching context and direction to guide the shaping of our culture and development of our people and business practices to ensure a flexible, agile and sustainable workforce prepared to respond to the QPRC's key challenges and opportunities;
- actions targeted at engaging and developing leaders and staff to enable the cultural changes necessary to deliver the Council's high level strategic plan which is central to what QPRC delivers;
- framework for the next 3 to 5 years, where Council employees will work together to transform our organisation and build our capabilities and capacity - to place our community and all customers at the heart of everything we do;
- actions that focus on delivering a high level of customer service which will be delivered through integrated, seamless and continuous pathways and which are enabled by innovative and leading edge technology;
- plan for our current and future workforce to ensure the right level of staffing requirements, skills and job match occur at the right time to deliver on our priorities;
- an overarching goal to create a positive workplace with employees who are proud team contributors;
- actions to support diversity and inclusion, making jobs accessible to a wide range of potential candidates.



QPRC's participation in the CRJO Regional WFS may also yield other responses such as:

- case for 'nursery' in region: cadets and trainees.
- case for LGA sponsored 'smart hubs' to host education and co-work space in region
- options to bring work to staff (e.g. Sydney) rather than bring them to work
- opportunities around engagement of returned skilled defence veterans, and immigrants.
- re-engineer and map skills/professions to local government services in the region.
- opportunities to develop and phase 'para-professionals' to supplement professional staff and re-distribute functions
- option of regional salary system and TRP model; and regional workforce policies.
- opportunities for centre of excellence or hosting approach to LGAs in region (training, recruitment, and payroll)
- joint/regional technology models to engage, retain, and develop staff
- LG job and marketing portal for Canberra region and social media presence

Identifying and Addressing Challenges

QPRC delivers a diverse range of services, with a large multi-skilled workforce, in a competitive regional employment market. This presents a number of challenges including:

- attracting and retaining skilled staff;
- improving community perceptions of Council workers;
- pace of technological advancements;
- regional skill shortages; and,
- an aging workforce and the resultant issues.



To address these challenges through this Workforce Management Strategy, Council is committed to the following principles:

- demonstrating strong leadership, both locally and regionally;
- a contemporary, inclusive and adaptable organisation culture;
- staff safety, wellbeing and professional development is a priority;
- employee engagement will be maximised
- a workforce that is capable now and in the future;
- 'growing our own' through accelerated investment in cadets and trainees;
- supporting innovative regional approaches to develop, attract and retain staff;
- investment in people, processes and systems to work seamlessly;
- provide a welcoming and inclusive organisation, especially noting our Reconciliation Action and Disability Inclusion plans;
- employee diversity is reflective of the community we serve; and
- vertical (between levels and rank), horizontal (between functions) and external (partners, suppliers and customers) boundaries will be more permeable.

Workforce Objectives

To address the challenges, including leadership mindsets and based on the core principles above, QPRC aims to achieve the following objectives through key areas of strategic focus.

Our ambitions to:

- *transact by digital means;*
- *interact by human means;* and,
- *utilise our regional scale and presence*

This can be achieved through:

- building a contemporary future-focused workforce that will support adaptation to change;
- attracting, retaining and developing a diverse workforce;
- growing cadets and trainees to 10% of the workforce;

- unlocking and achieving high performance of teams through stronger leadership capability;
- creatively managing our ageing workforce;
- providing equal employment opportunities;
- improving productivity through addressing unplanned absences and poor safety;
- providing a safe accessible workplace through Council's HSEQ Assurance Framework and capability training;
- instilling a continuous learning and improvement environment through learning and development and process improvement;
- shaping a positive customer-focused technically savvy culture through investment in culture development and technology adoption; and,
- achieving higher level of satisfaction of internal and external customers' perception of services.

5. KEY STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS AND ACTIONS

Council's Workforce Strategy will focus on the following strategic focus areas:

- Strategic Focus 1 A contemporary, future-focused workforce
- Strategic Focus 2 Managing our ageing workforce
- Strategic Focus 3 Improving productivity
- Strategic Focus 4 Providing a safe, inclusive and accessible workplace
- Strategic Focus 5 Instilling a high learning, innovative environment
- Strategic Focus 6 Shaping a positive client-focused, tech savvy culture
- Strategic Focus 7 Being an employer of choice

Table 2: QPRC Workforce Management Strategy action plan

Action	Timeframe	Responsible branch
Strategic Focus 1 - A contemporary, future-focused workforce		
Workplace Innovation Group action plan	Y1-4	Workplace and Governance
Leverage existing and new IT solutions to increase productivity	Y1-4	Digital
Input into design and layout of new offices in Queanbeyan and Bungendore to create activity-based working spaces	Y1-2	Workplace and Governance
Implement change management strategies to assist staff with move into new offices	Y1-2	Workplace and Governance
Implement Transformational Organisational Structure	Y1-2	CEO
Review recruitment approach for hard to fill positions	Y1-2	Workplace and Governance
Fully automate recruitment process to remove paper-based forms.	Y1	Workplace and Governance
Review Home Based Work Directive and approval process following impacts of COVID-19	Y1	Workplace and Governance
Ongoing review and refinement of Workplace-related directives, with focus on creating a future-focused workforce	Y1-4	Workplace and Governance
Liaise with CRJO councils to address employment-related issues	Y1-4	Workplace and Governance
Consider job share program with other councils/ACT Government	Y1-4	Workplace and Governance
Implement endorsed workforce plans, within financial capacity, to ensure resources levels keep pace with population growth	Y1-4	Executive
Strategic Focus 2 - Managing our ageing working		
Promote Transition to Retirement Directive and options under Clause 23 of Local Government Award	Y1-4	Workplace and Governance
Identify positions that are at risk of retirement and knowledge departure	Y1-4	Workplace and Governance
Educate staff in retirement bracket on importance of transition	Y1-4	Workplace and Governance
Trainees and cadets make up 10% of workforce	Y1-4	Workplace and Governance
Investigate mentor program – either internal or as part of CRJO	Y1-2	Workplace and Governance
Increase usage of Promapp in organisation	Y1-4	Organisation Capability
Enhance QPRC's development approach by considering QPRC scholarship/graduate program	Y1	Workplace and Governance
Partner with universities to develop pathway strategies for hard to fill positions	Y1-4	Workplace and Governance
Strategic Focus 3 - Improving productivity		
Monitor staff absences and highlight trends to Executive and Service Managers	Y1-4	Workplace and Governance
Increase percentage of staff with workplans in CiAnywhere	Y1-4	Workplace and Governance
Review the use of overtime across the organisation to achieve a balance between productivity and staff safety	Y1-2	Workplace and Governance
Strategic Focus 4 - Providing a safe, inclusive and accessible workplace		
Maintain HSEQ accreditation	Y1-4	Workplace and Governance
Launch safety module within CiAnywhere	Y1-2	Workplace and Governance
Monitor and review health and wellbeing programs and activities	Y1-4	Workplace and Governance
Support Council's Diversity and Inclusion Group	Y1-4	Workplace and Governance
Maintain Employee health initiatives such as Safety Day, wellbeing program and healthy lifestyle programs	Y1-4	Workplace and Governance
Strategic Focus 5 - Instilling a high learning innovative environment		
Development of annual Training Plan for organisation	Y1-4	Workplace and Governance
Trainees and cadets make up 10% of workforce	Y1-4	Workplace and Governance
Sponsor trainee and cadet awards	Y1-4	Workplace and Governance

Action	Timeframe	Responsible branch
Provision of study assistance in line with adopted Directive	Y1-4	Workplace and Governance
Build upon library of online learning resources	Y1-4	Workplace and Governance
Embed learnings from Colloquium program	Y1-2	Workplace and Governance
Review and implement Sustainable Leadership at QPRC program	Y1-2	Workplace and Governance
Identify future leaders and provide with tools and learning to prepare them for career progression	Y1-4	Workplace and Governance
Provide opportunities for future leaders to participate in Local Government Professionals Management Challenges	Y1-4	Workplace and Governance
Invest in Team Leaders and emerging leaders	Y1-4	Workplace and Governance
Strategic Focus 6 - Shaping a positive client-focused tech savvy culture		
Workplace Innovation Group action plan	Y1-4	Workplace and Governance
Publish service review schedule in Operational Plan	Y1	Workplace and Governance
Service owners commit to implementing service review findings	Y1-4	Leadership group
Consider the 'customer' when developing Workplace processes and Directives	Y1-4	Workplace and Governance
Strategic Focus 7 - Being an employer of choice		
Review Equal Employment Opportunities Plan and Policy	Y1	Workplace and Governance
Ongoing implementation and promotion of QPRC values	Y1-4	Organisation wide
Recognise the efforts and achievements of our staff through formal and informal reward and recognition	Y1-4	Leadership group
Develop a social media strategy to support employer of choice aspirations	Y1-2	Workplace and Governance
Progress Team Leader improvement program following 2021 culture survey results	Y1-2	Workplace and Governance
Remeasure organisational culture in 2024	Y2/4	Workplace and Governance
Implement action plans to address causal factors and outcomes that are affecting culture	Y2/4	Leadership group
Participate in CRJO employment initiatives	Y1-4	Workplace and Governance
Review volunteering program and processes to enable and encourage volunteering in suitable areas	Y1	Workplace and Governance and Recreation and Culture
Participate in Local Government Week and other events to promote the value of Council to the community	Y1-4	Workplace and Governance
Develop strategies to encourage and promote flexible work and work/life balance	Y1-4	Workplace and Governance