

SHIRE OF CRANBROOK

WORKFORCE PLAN REVIEW – JULY 2024

All local governments are required to develop a *plan for the future* (ten-year Strategic Community Plan [SCP]) and a Corporate Business Plan (CBP). A local government's CBP is designed to develop and integrate resources to deliver services, operations, and projects, including those identified in Strategic Community Plans, in legislated and/or pre-determined desired timeframes. The CBP (formally reviewed every four years and due for review in 2025) in turn informs other Shire plans such as the Workforce Plan (WP), Asset Management Plan, and Long-Term Financial Plan. These plans form part of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework of local governments.

A Workforce Plan strives to ensure a workforce is made up of people with the right skills and equipped with the right resources to address operational matters and enable the delivery of local government services and those objectives identified within the local community's SCP. Review of a WP allows for evaluation of capability, efficiencies and, if necessary, any re-prioritisation.

The Shire of Cranbrook NEW BALANCE Realisation Workforce Plan 2021 – 2025 (WP) considers the desired outcomes of the four Key Pillars (Live, Work, Visit, Connect) contained within the Shire's SCP, the risks associated with the size and composure of the workforce at the time of the WP's inception (in so far as achieving the SCP outcomes), and makes recommendations considered necessary to create a workforce capable of delivering those services, operations and projects outlined to be achieved in the SCP. The gaps and weaknesses identified in the original WP were, on the whole, very astute, and the majority of the recommendations have been addressed, as follows:

- Recommendation #1 – increase the Local Shire's workforce headcount to ensure the Local Shire better becomes an asset to the community.
- Recommendation #2 – Increase the Local Shire's focus within the new headcount with a strong bias towards the 'Community' side of the business.
- Recommendation #3 – Create an annual 'Workforce Perception Survey' and use this process and information to continually update workforce planning in an empowered manner.
- Recommendation #4 – Employ a revenue generating 'Grants Officer' and a 'Project Manager' to achieve community driven major and minor projects.

The Workforce views collected in December 2020 are also particularly relevant and have been supported by some of the changes made since that time. The WP states on Page 8 that “The feedback provided by workforce members were of exceptionally high standard” and indicated “a high level of care for their organisation.”

During 2021/2022 a Community Development Manager was appointed to address the identified shortfall in community development services and to assist with accessing grant revenue. All staff were encouraged to participate in grant applying. The funds paid to YMCA for support of Smart Start (\$30,000) were retained and financed a part time Community Development Officer, with further Amity Health funding enabling After School Care and the creation of two part-time roles for 12 months. The WP also identified that talented employees were not being given the opportunity to step up so, as vacancies through natural attrition were identified, these have been filled in-house.

Further adjustments have been made to the Organisational Structure due to a lack of candidates for both the Manager of Works and the previous position of Manager of Corporate and Community in 2023. A solution was provided by the splitting of the latter role into Manager of Finance and Manager of HR and Administration. This allowed us to become one of the few smaller local governments still doing all their finances in house, and also enabled junior staff to be mentored in financial management – this has resulted in two excellent Finance Officers who continue to grow in their roles. Both the previous manager positions were classed as Senior Managers under the *Local Government Act 1995* and, although still in place, the new positions created are now classed as “Managers”. If Council and a new CEO in the future wishes to re-instate the roles of Senior Managers, they are classed by two differences being a. employing or terminating a Senior Manager must be approved by Council, and b. the positions must be advertised Statewide.

Very recently, the promotion of the Shire’s A/Manager of Works to Manager of Works has recognised experience within the role and enabled the retention of considerable knowledge within the Works Team. There has been an opportunity to upskill and promote from within the Parks and Gardens Team to a newly created Ranger/Team Leader Parks and Garden role. Please note that local governments are very much short in ranger services and tend not to look at upskilling one of their own employees, so it is refreshing to see the new Manager of Works, Joe Duina, upskilling an employee thus creating a new career path for him. The Works Administration Officer position has also recently filled and will provide much-needed administration support to the Works Team. To cater for fluctuations in cover for sick leave etc., a relief casual cleaner role has also been established to cover Council facilities.

An updated Organisational Structure reflects the abovementioned changes.

A review of the administration building has been undertaken to identify wasted space but, at this stage, it is difficult to envisage a feasible plan or any efficiencies to be made in the existing layout. There are sufficient work areas currently but there is a desire to avoid becoming overcrowded (for both hygiene/general health and confidentiality reasons), and because of the importance of having an environment conducive to working efficiently and with focus. The potential return of staff from longer term leave, such as maternity leave, will present challenges in this space. Thought also needs to be given to the ablutions at the Depot building with a view to bringing these up to a more contemporary standard for all staff who work in the Depot area.

Moving forward, it is suggested that the recent changes to the workforce structure are given an opportunity to become embedded within the organisation, in order to gauge effectiveness and efficiencies, and to also identify any potential gaps in capability and human resources. Therefore, further workforce structural changes are not forecast for 2024-2025 but rather the opportunity will be taken to identify gaps, if any, and these will be captured in the new Workforce Plan for 2025-2029. This will also enable further thought to be given to office space within the administration building and the ablutions within the Depot building.

Financial

The table below outlines the financial implications brought about by workforce changes since the inception of the current WP:

Year	Inside Workforce	Outside Workforce
2021/2022	\$1,345,691.64	\$1,249,357.10
2022/2023	\$969,245.24	\$1,339,530.75
2023/2024	\$984,262.97	\$1,599,244.63

Whilst work salaries have increased over the last three years, this is proportional to road funding received. The works increase in 2023/2024 is also attributable to the new Outside Agreement coming into effect in that period. It is expected that works staff numbers will remain at current levels. Any additional salary increases, as a result of the new organisational structure going forward, will be included in the 2024/2025 budget.

Administration Staffing

YEAR	ADMINISTRATION STAFF #	COMMENT
2021/2022	9 Full Time	On commencement of the 2021/2025 Workforce Plan, the Organisational Structure focused on three Senior Managers plus other full time staff.
2022/2023	7 Full Time	Maternity Leave was in full swing during this financial year with some staff returning to work one day per week. This placed pressure on the remaining full time staff to maintain work continuity.
2023/2024	6.4 Full Time	The Manager of Community and Corporate Services position was split and the Human Resources portion picked up by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) with other staff picking up administration functions.
2023/2024	6.4 + 1.6 commencing = 8 Full Time	Going into 2024/2025 vacancies were filled equating to one less position than in 2021/2022 when three staff commenced maternity leave.

Summary

Administration staffing has fluctuated during the lifespan of the current Workforce Plan. With a return to near 2021/2022 staffing levels towards the end of 2023/2024, it is anticipated that any gaps in capability/resources will be identified in the new 2025-2029 Workforce Plan.

The Works Department staffing remained consistent until 2023/2024 when several departures occurred. As of this review, two vacancies are being advertised and are expected to be filled in the short term. An increasing focus on roads has resulted in increased grant funding and this will have to be carried once staff numbers are back to normal. The Outside Staff Enterprise Bargaining Agreement was completed and registered in 2023 (Outside Staff Collective Agreement 2023) – this will show an increase in salaries of approximately 5-8% over the next three years, assisting staff with the cost of living.

As demonstrated above, staffing numbers have not increased within the Shire of Cranbrook since 2021/2022; however, workforce costs have increased in line with external economic conditions, and those factors directly affecting the Works Department as stated above.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE 2024-2025

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

