



# 2024 / 2025 ANNUAL REPORT





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# Shire of Cranbrook

## 2024/2025 Annual Report

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## *Shire President's Report*

It is with pleasure that I present the Shire of Cranbrook's Annual Report for 2024/25 financial year as your Shire President appointed by Council in October 2023 for a two-year term.

The financial year commenced with the ongoing effect of the dry seasons coupled with the Shire supporting the Keep the Sheep campaign. The Shire organised an evening event at Tunney Fire Shed in support of rural resilience and for the community to get together and catch up with each other. This event was also supported by Elders and Bendigo Bank. The guest speakers were Warren Davies of the Unbreakable Farmer and the Blue Tree Project organisation.

We remained as a full company of seven Councillors through most of the financial year, although Cr Lee Casson left to travel around Australia late in the financial year, but continued to attend remotely up to the October 2025 Council Elections. He has now stepped down as he continues his travels, and I would like to thank him for his commitment to Council. He always represented the wine industry and the Shire of Cranbrook well and will be missed by those remaining.

Council has continued to follow through on the compilation of a wind farm policy whilst learning from the challenges and opportunities of other local governments who are already down that track or are hosting wind farms. We have continued during the 2024/25 financial year to support our Planning Policy for Plantations and whilst not opposing plantations as a land use in the Shire of Cranbrook, we are strong on the need for better management by plantation owners/lessees, this includes the monitoring of vermin and improved fire management. Approval of planning applications for plantations need to be presented to Council based on robust management plans and adherence to the Shire's Planning Policy.

Cranbrook continued to run the After School Activities Program which has been fully supported by parents in the community. This has been expanded to include a School Holiday Program for both Cranbrook and Frankland River. Who could forget ZAP Circus in October 2024 with the fire twirling and eating, acrobatics and juggling! The Shire has also expanded the Medical Services offered at the Cranbrook Community Hub, and this now includes podiatry and remedial massages as well as the fortnightly Doctor's visits to Cranbrook and Frankland River.

Council was very supportive on spending the last of the promised Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program from Federal Government, these were funds designed by Federal Government to address the economic impact of COVID, on the renovation of the Frankland River Town Hall. This has been restumped, floors sanded and resealed, ceilings and doors replaced and a replacement kitchen that meets commercial kitchen standards scheduled in 2025/26 financial year. The old regional Halls have often been classed as redundant and then demolished, but they used to be the hub of birthdays, engagements and weddings. They were also the place where locals would travel from miles away in the hope of meeting a potential partner at the monthly dances. So many of our soldiers would have attended functions before leaving for the Front and not coming home. They will continue to be maintained by the Shire.

The construction of the multi-loading rail facility at the CBH work site has continued on during the year, with the Shire working closely with Laing O'Rourke and CBH, in order to reduce any impact on the community of their nighttime and often noisy work. Laing O'Rourke as a community initiative, also offered to clean up the old Motorcross Club site at the edge of town, and with the clean fill from the CBH site, have created a wonderful amphitheatre.

The Shire, through funding from the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, had installed water storage tanks at the Cranbrook airstrip and at the Works Depot. This water is for use for stock water and emergency management. The total storage capacity is 500,000 litres.

CBH have continued to progress their planning application for a workers' accommodation camp on the north side of Grantham Street, as well as continuing to maintain their current workers' accommodation near the Cranbrook Caravan Park. Elders similarly have continued to progress their plans for a bigger modern building on Climie Street in Cranbrook, and the Shire will commence building the new Cranbrook Fire Shed in the 2025/26 financial year. All our Development WA land has been sold, and the Shire has approached Development WA to make more land available. In line with Albany, houses in both Cranbrook and Frankland River have increased in price and rentals continue to be hard to find.

As Shire President, I am proud to reflect on the year for our small regional Shire. We as a Council, continue to support new initiatives to improve our community as well as maintaining the financial viability of the Shire of Cranbrook. We have made a commitment to enhance community services and to uphold our core values whilst maintaining a level of service delivery that is sustainable and realistic for a small regional Shire.

In a year marked by challenges and opportunities, we have focused on promoting sustainability, fostering strong mental health collaborations, and improving youth-based programs and driving community connection through events, as well as continuing to maintain and improve our infrastructure which includes our roads, bridges and buildings.

I would like to thank the Chief Executive Officer and the staff for a hardworking year. Council is fortunate to be supported by them, and we very much appreciate their commitment to the Shire of Cranbrook. I would also like to mention the local community groups and volunteers who give of their time and energy to the community in which they live – thank you.



Cr George Pollard  
**SHIRE PRESIDENT**





## **Chief Executive Officer's Report**

It gives me great pleasure to present the Chief Executive Officer's Report for the 2024/25 financial year and to complete my third year as the Shire of Cranbrook's Chief Executive Officer. It is a challenge I really enjoy and I am lucky to have such a great Council and staff with which to work.

### **Financial Performance**

The Shire of Cranbrook maintained a strong financial position throughout 2024/25, illustrated as follows:

- The Shire maintained appropriate reserve balances for future major projects and asset replacement. The closing balance as at 30 June 2025 was **\$3,651,498**. These cash backed funds are set aside for specific future purposes and are restricted on how they may be spent. Council has made significant efforts to build up its reserve accounts to even out years of high and low expenditure requirements, such as when major items of plant are replaced, without the need to resort to borrowings or dramatic rate rises.
- No new loans were taken out during 2024/25.

### **SERVICE LEVEL DELIVERY**

#### **Operating**

The Shire provided ongoing support to assist Doctors to visit both Cranbrook and Frankland River, with the inclusion of podiatry visits and remedial masseurs to Cranbrook. The After School Program and the Smart Start Program continued throughout the 2024 -2025 financial year with the addition of a School Holiday Program for Cranbrook and Frankland River.

Financial support continues to be provided to various local organisations, including the Gillamii Centre (\$72K for operating costs) as well as the maintenance of the building including cleaning and utilities. Similarly, with Frankland River Community Resource Centre (CRC) the Shire assists with operating and maintenance costs (\$51K). They both provide valuable Shire services such as Libraries, and in the case of the CRC they accept payments on behalf of the Shire as well as advocate for tourism in the Frankland River region of the Shire of Cranbrook and provide medical receptionist support.

#### **Road Construction:**

Council contributed to the following projects, which are two-third funded under State grant funding:

- |  |           |
|--|-----------|
| • Regional Road Group – Salt River Road -          | \$276,000 |
| • Regional Road Group – Shamrock Road -            | \$270,000 |
| • Regional Road Group – Wingebellup Road -         | \$290,000 |
| • Regional Road Group – Frankland/Cranbrook Road - | \$270,000 |
| • Regional Road Group – Kojonup/Frankland Road -   | \$360,000 |
| • Commodity Route Funding – Yeriminup Road-        | \$150,000 |

In addition, funding through Roads to Recovery (Federal Government) for Yeriminup Road \$232,818, and Boyup Brook/Cranbrook Road \$394,803.

Funding of \$2.5 million was provided by the Great Southern Secondary Freight Network for the widening of approximately 12 kilometres of Yeriminup and widening and replacement of a

section of Shamrock Roads. The work was completed with the exception of an amount of \$102,000 which was carried over in 25/26 budget to finalise the Yeriminup Roadwork..

We continued to operate as well with the Road Maintenance budget of approximately \$1.1 million plus Bridge Maintenance of \$167K. We have twelve bridges to maintain to be eligible for Main Roads' financial support for bridges.

### **Other Projects**

The commencement of work on the Cranbrook Fire Shed started in June, this work has been fully funded by DFES.

Phase 4 of the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure grant (LRCI - Federal Government) concluded. Projects completed under this funding:

• Wingebellup Rd Shared Pathway and Crossover	\$236,500
• Frankland River Playground, Caravan Pk, Pump Track Pathway	\$43,175
• Wingebellup Median Strip and Landscaping	\$20,000
• Cranbrook Community Hub Shade Shelter	\$41,026
• Cranbrook Drainage and Landscaping	\$23,000
• Cranbrook and Frankland River Entry Statements	\$19,344
• Frankland River Hall Improvements	\$235,799
• Sealing Hardy St to Rubbish Tip Rd	\$80,841
• Sealing Rubbish Tip Rd	\$45,558
• Frankland River Rubbish Tip Driveway Sealing	\$20,445
• Gardiner St Sealing	\$60,926

### **Rates**

An increase of 4% in both GRV and UV rated properties throughout the Shire was reflected as per the Long-Term Financial Plan.

### **Staff**

We lost Joe Duina during 2024/25 to retirement. His work ethics was excellent and like most good people you only fully appreciate their worth when they have left.

The Shire has been fortunate in retaining a good number of houses and units and this has been important in attracting staff to the Shire.

### **Challenges**

The adverse rain event in March 2025 resulted in the flooding of Cranbrook's town centre, and we are now seeking grant funding to make some improvements in Cranbrook's storm water drainage.

We have continued to advocate for improvements with Western Powers drop fuse power poles due to mitigation of a risk of a drop fuse caused bush fire and continue to support the bushfire brigades in every way we can. We continue to partially fund a Community Emergency Support Manager.

We still believe passionately in the Keep the Sheep campaign but were, like everyone else, forced to move on to assess the Transition stage and to support our farmers in other areas.



Linda Gray  
**Chief Executive Officer**

## Shire Profile

### AREA

3392 km<sup>2</sup>

### DISTANCE FROM PERTH

325 km

### POPULATION

1,100

### DWELLINGS

805

### TOWNSITES

Cranbrook, Frankland River, and Tenterden

### LOCAL INDUSTRIES

Sheep, Wool, Cattle, Pigs, Coarse Grains, Timber, Vineyards, Wine, Export Vegetables and Olives

### HISTORY

The greater part of the Shire was settled between 1906 and 1914, the earliest settlers taking up the land grants about 1860. The Shire has developed into an area renowned for its quality wool, grain and cattle and more recently Vineyards and Olives have been introduced into the Frankland area.

### CRANBROOK

We are the Gateway to the Stirling's with amazing views from our newly constructed Sukey Hill Lookout. A portion of the Stirling Range National Park is within the Shire of Cranbrook and besides the rugged beauty of the mountain range, the wildflowers of the park are world famous. Many species are found nowhere else, such as the Cranbrook Bell (*Darwinia Meeboldii*). There are also many buildings and places of historical interest, Vineyards, freshwater and saltwater lakes.

The Stirling Range National Park provides the tourist with the opportunity to experience an entire mountain range maintained in its natural state with animal, bird, and plant life unspoiled by the encroachment of civilisation.

It is one of the most outstanding botanic reserves in Australia and is noted for its distinctive ruggedness and spectacular wildflowers. An incredible variety of bush,

composed almost entirely of flowering species ranging from small catspaws and orchids to tall blackboys and flowering gums, provides peaks and plains alike with a dense unbroken cover averaging 1 - 3 metres. The range has five peaks of over 1000m, including the highest, Bluff Knoll, 1073m. Whilst not high by world standard, their abruptness, isolation, and jagged outline suggest a far greater size.

### FRANKLAND RIVER

If you are thinking of a change of scenery on your next visit to or from the South Coast, then detour through the scenic Frankland River region. The Frankland River area is one of WA's best kept secrets of rolling hills, rich and productive farming land, natural forest, and bush, abounding with unique native wildflowers. Whilst in Frankland River visit some of Australia's award-winning wineries that are renowned for their fresh and fruity whites and full-bodied reds.

### TENTERDEN

Home to the heritage listed St Mildred's Anglican Church, Tenterden is located on the Great Southern Railway, and although not one of the original sidings when the line was opened in 1889, a siding had been established here by 1891. Also, in 1891 the government opened agricultural land adjacent to the siding, by declaring the Tenterden Agricultural Area, and in 1893 part of this land was gazetted as the townsite of Tenterden named after a town in Kent, Southeast England.



**Your Council**



**George Pollard**  
Shire President



**Daisy Egerton - Warburton**  
Deputy President



**Perin Mulcahy**  
Councillor



**Jennifer Quick**  
Councillor



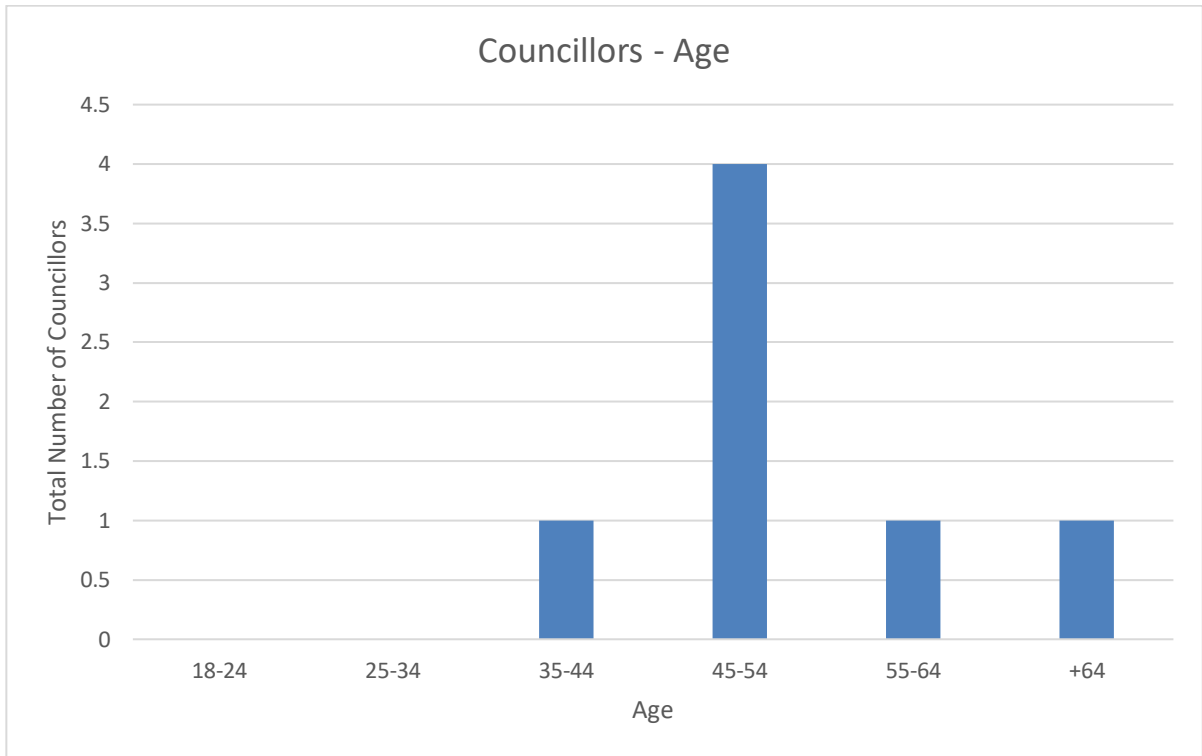
**Robert Johnson**  
Councillor



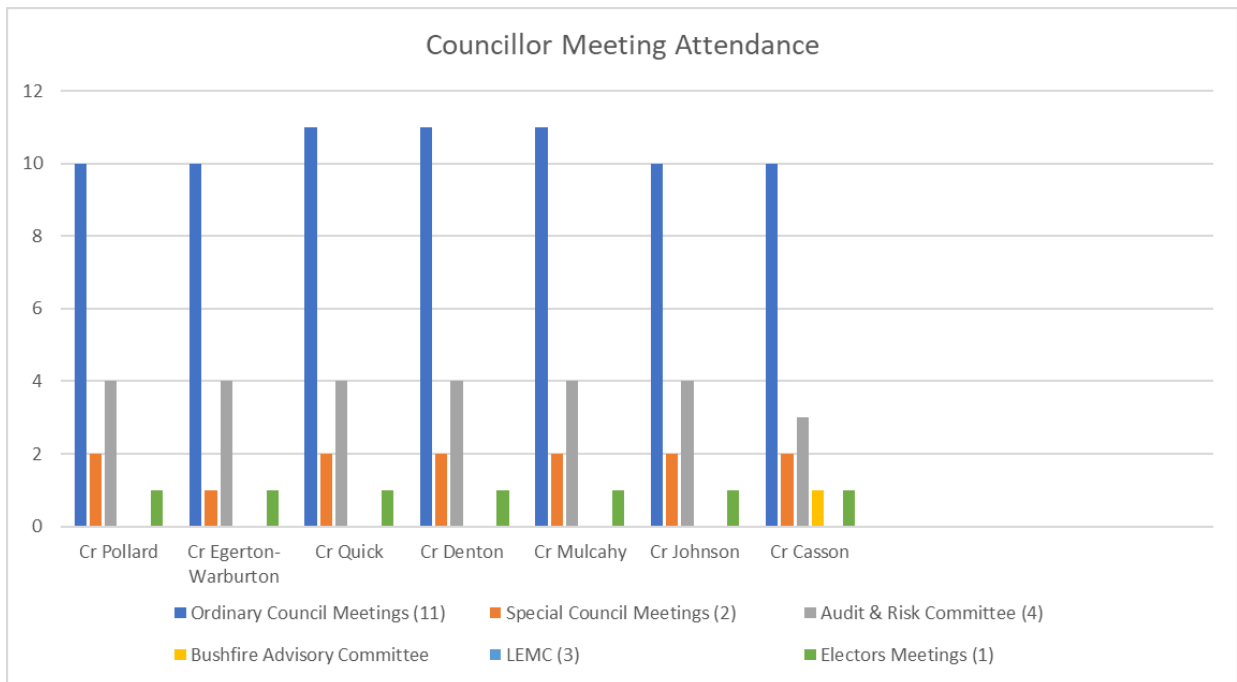
**Lee Casson**  
Councillor



**Peter Denton**  
Councillor



## ***Elected Member Attendance***



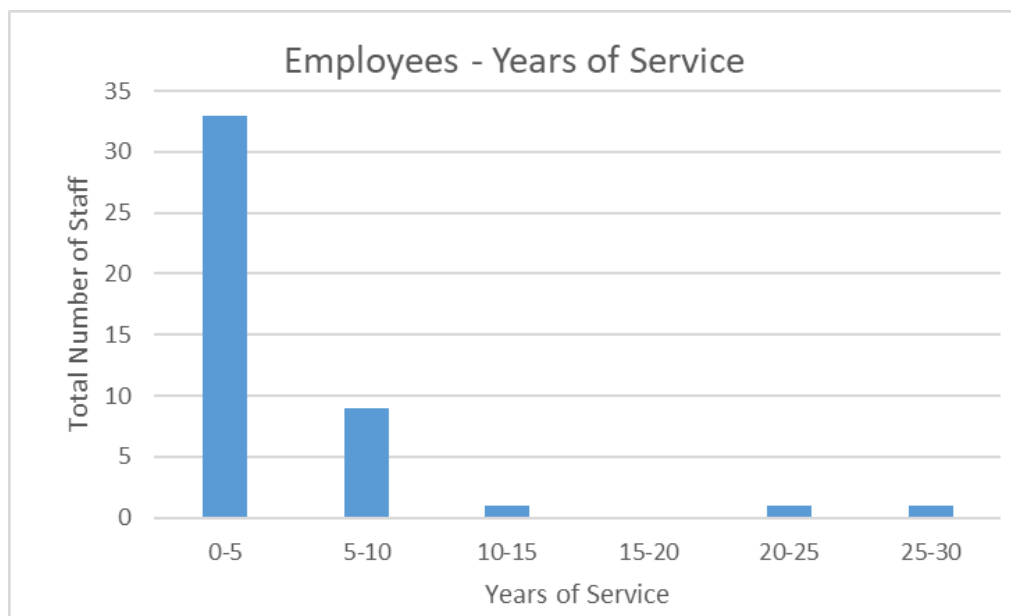
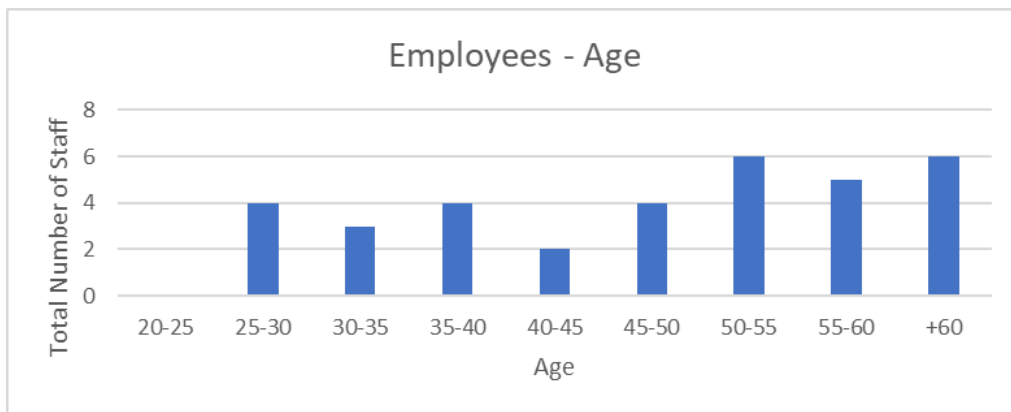
## Employees

Gender	Casual	Full Time	Part Time	Total
Female	4	11	13	28
Male	1	16	0	17
Total	5	27	13	45

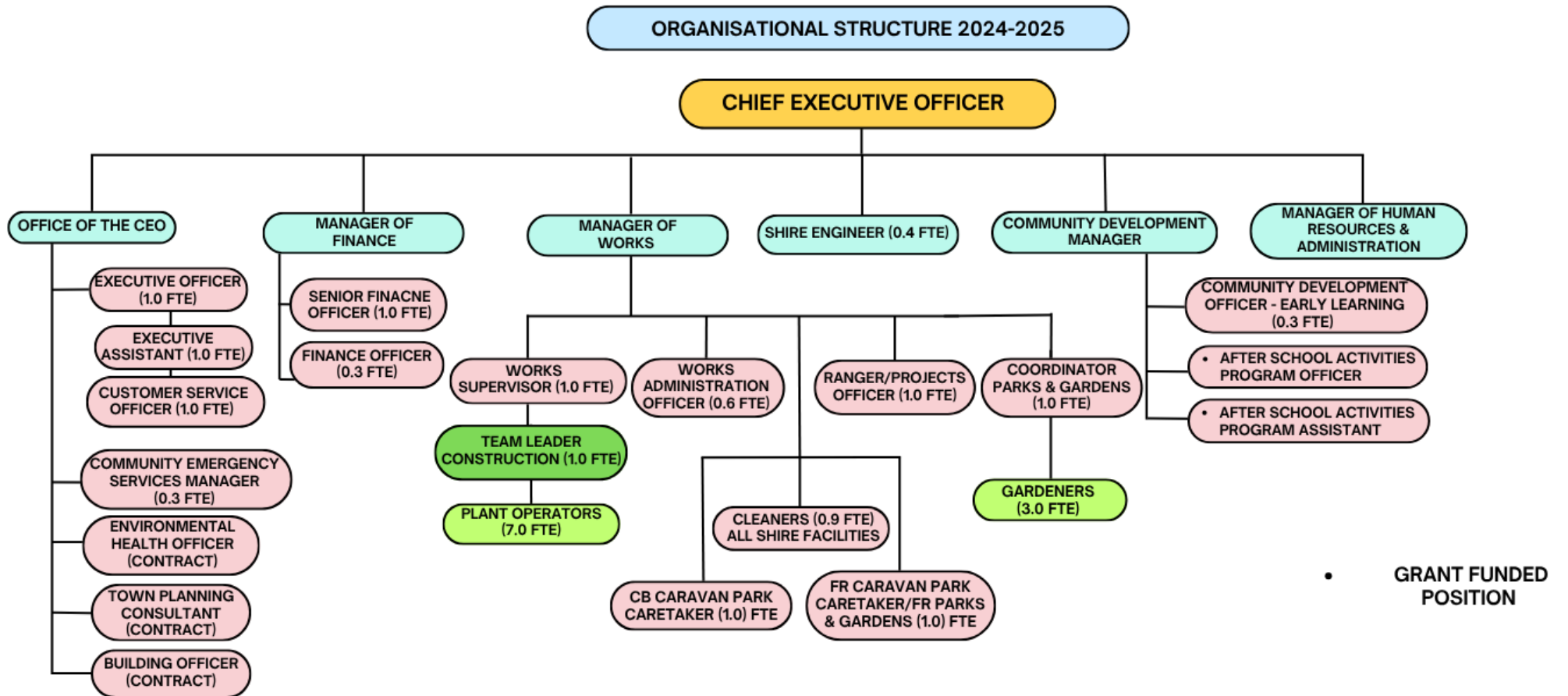
Salary Bracket	Number of Staff
\$130,000 and \$139,999	
\$140,000 and \$149,999	
\$150,000 and \$159,999	1

In accordance with the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996* Regulation 19B, the Shire of Cranbrook is required to disclose the number of employees who are entitled to an annual salary of \$130,000 or more and to break those employees down into bands of \$10,000.

For the purposes of Regulation 19B(e) the remuneration paid or provided to the CEO during the 2023/2024 financial year was \$207,417.01. This includes salary, allowances, fees, emoluments, and benefits (whether in money or not).



# Organisational Chart



## ***National Competition Policy***

This policy has been introduced by the Commonwealth Government to promote competition for the benefit of business, consumers, and the economy by removing unnecessary protection of monopolies of markets where competition can be enhanced. It affects local governments as factors such as exemption from company and income tax or possible local regulations and laws may give local government a potential advantage over private contractors.

In respect to competitive neutrality, the Shire of Cranbrook reports:

- The Shire of Cranbrook during 2024/2025 did not engage in any significant business activities which generated in excess of \$200,000 annual income. Therefore, the introduction of competitive neutrality under Clause 7 of the policy was not required.
- There is no indication that the Council will become involved in any significant business activities during the next financial reporting period.
- There have been no allegations received by the Council of non-compliance with the neutrality principles.

## ***Local Law Reviews***

Council did not propose or adopt any new Local Laws during the 2024/2025 financial year.

It is anticipated that model local laws developed by the Western Australian Local Government Association will be considered for proposal, as part of the Shire of Cranbrook review of Locals Laws, to update them in line with current legislative requirements.

## ***Freedom of Information***

The Shire of Cranbrook welcomes any enquiries for information held by Council. The Shire is subject to the provisions of the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*, which gives individuals and organisations a general right of access to information held by the Shire.

It should be noted that some documents are for viewing only and documents cannot be copied which would breach the *Copyright Act 1968*.

The Act also provides the right of appeal in relation to decisions made by the Shire to refuse access to information applied for under the Act. The Shire received no requests for information in 2024/2025.

Council's Information Statement is reviewed annually, and a copy made available at the administration office and on the Council's website, as required under the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*.

## ***Disability Access and Inclusion Plan***

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan It is the requirement under section 29(2) of the Disability Services Act 1993 to report on the following outcomes in Council's approach to assisting disabled people.

### **Outcome 1: Services and Events**

**People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by the Shire of Cranbrook.**

All Council-organised community events are held in appropriate venues with facilities which allow for ease of access by people with disability. Improvements to community and recreational infrastructure are ongoing to ensure easy access to people of all abilities. The library services cater for those with disability through the provision of large print and audio books. Within the Shire's Event application process an accessibility checklist has been incorporated. The Shire provides a representative to attend community event committees to assist with information and providing guidance to ensure all requirements are met. The Shire has provided exercise classes and opportunities to utilise gym facilities providing professional guidance with qualified educators.

### **Outcome 2: Buildings and Facilities**

**People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of the Shire of Cranbrook.**

Both Cranbrook and Frankland River have universal access public ablutions with designated disability access only parking bays. There are disability access parking bays at the facility as well as non-slip ramped areas, universal access ablutions and automatic doors to ensure ease of access for people of all abilities. The Shire also works alongside local businesses and community groups to improve access to buildings. This year an installation of shared pathways connecting recreational spaces to accommodation and shopping precincts, emergency exit doors and internal access doors to the Frankland River Town Hall were installed.

### **Outcome 3: Accessible Information**

**People with disability receive information from a public authority in a format that will enable them to access the information as readily as other people are able to access it.**

All Council publications are available in a variety of formats and mediums on request for people with specific needs. The Shire utilises print media, the Shire webpage, and social media for distribution of information to the public. Staff are available to provide residents with individual assistance, as required, to access the information.

### **Outcome 4: Service**

**People with disability receive the same level and quality of service from the staff of a public authority as other people receive from the staff of the Shire of Cranbrook.**

Council's Customer Service Policy outlines a commitment to providing a high standard of service to all customers of the Shire. The Shire staff endeavour to liaise with all members of the community in a positive and meaningful way through a variety of mediums including in-person, over the telephone, through social media and written correspondence.

### **Outcome 5: Complaints**

**People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the Shire of Cranbrook.**

The Shire has a fair and equal complaints process which is accessible for the whole community at the Shire Administration Office. Staff are provided with training and education to gain knowledge to assist with the complaints process.

### **Outcome 6: Consultation**

**People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by the Shire of Cranbrook.**

Council has used the local newsletters, public advertising, the Shire website, and social media to advise residents of issues that require public consultation. Staff are available to provide residents with individual assistance, as required, to access and respond to any public consultation. The Shire is guided by the Community Consultation Policy which encompasses the use of the Social Justice Principles.

### **Outcome 7: Employment**

**People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment with the Shire of Cranbrook.**

Council uses inclusive recruitment practices and methods of attracting, recruiting, and retaining people with disability and ensures its policies and procedures are regularly reviewed. The Shire of Cranbrook has been acknowledged in the past for its proactive approach for employing people with disabilities.

## ***Register of Complaints Made Against Elected Members***

In accordance with section 5.121 of the *Local Government Act 1995* and the associated *Local Government (Model Code of Conduct) Regulations 2021* the complaints made direct to the Shire of Cranbrook against Elected Members during the 2024/2025 financial year were nil.

## ***Record Keeping Plan***

In accordance with legislative requirements, a Record Keeping Plan for the Shire of Cranbrook is completed and lodged upon request from the State Records Office. This is a requirement under the *State Records Act 2000*, an Act to provide for the keeping of State records and for related purposes.

The Record Keeping Plan is prepared to ensure compliance with Section 19 of the *State Records Act 2000*. Best practice record keeping is conducted in accordance with State Records Commission Standards and Records Management Standard AS15489.

The Shire of Cranbrook Record Keeping Plan has set out the minimum requirements as to which records are to be created and how those records are kept. The Shire of Cranbrook has developed processes to facilitate the complete and accurate record of all business transactions and decisions. Measures have been taken to ensure all recorded information can be retrieved quickly, accurately, and cheaply when required and government records are protected and preserved. These take the form of hard copies and/or electronic records.

The Record Keeping Officer has attended training in records management covering Records Keeping Basics, Keyword Classification and Records Disposal. A general briefing for all staff on the compliance requirements of the *State Records Act 2000* and induction training for all new staff on their obligations are completed in accordance with the *State Records Act 2000* and the operation of records management within the Shire of Cranbrook.

## Public Interest Disclosure

In accordance with the requirements of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 2003, the Shire of Cranbrook has established procedures to facilitate the making of disclosures under the Act. These procedures set out the processes in place in respect to protected disclosures generally, to protect people from reprisal for making protected disclosures, and to provide guidance on investigations. During the 2023/2024 financial year, no disclosures relating to improper conduct were made to the Shire and therefore no disclosures were referred to the ombudsman. The Shire has two trained Public Interest Disclosure Officers within the administration office.

## Register of Financial Interests

In accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1995*, this register is held in the administration office and is available for viewing by the public.

## Integrated Planning and Reporting



### Strategic Community Plan

The Council adopted the Shire’s Strategic Community Plan in May 2021 for the years 2021 - 2031.

### **Councils Vision**

Our region is a proactive, sustainable, safe, friendly, and prosperous place to be.

## Objectives

- **Live** – Our community aspires to achieve a safe and friendly community, one which we are proud of, with modern and equal access to utilities and health, a focused facility push on aged care and youth, and a consideration to diverse and flexible housing to enable population growth and prosperity.
- **Work** – Our community aspires wholehearted to drive economic growth, achieve a prosperous working community, is open to all levels of community and agency intellectual property and effort, and builds local business wisdom for many generations to come.
- **Visit** – Our community aspires to offer thriving visitation experiences consisting of sport, recreation, culture, arts, and natural treasures. The local history is celebrated, and renowned public spaces are to take centre stage. A great community aspiration is to witness a marked and proactive increase in the local economy due to efforts through tourism.
- **Connect** – Our community aspires to capitalise on the power of people living, working, and visiting the Shire of Cranbrook, as well as protecting and enhancing the environment. There is a history of strong community driven progress in the region, and new-age think-tanks through organised groups. This strategic phase will see quantum increases in optimising the intellectual property housed in the area, as well as stronger community engagement in solving ‘how’ to achieve community aspirations. The Local Council workforce will be enabled to perform in a high-performing and accountable manner for the community.