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Introduction

The Workforce Plan is part of the planning and reporting framework for Local Government. It forms part of the Resourcing Strategy. The aim of the Resourcing Strategy is to help meet the priorities in the Gwydir Shire Council Community Strategic Plan, which are:

- A Healthy and Cohesive Community (Social)
- Building the Business Base (Economy)
- An Environmentally Responsible Shire (Environment)
- Regional and Local Leadership (Organisation)

Since the 2012-2016 Workforce Plan was drafted, the Local Government Practice Unit of Local Government Managers Australia (LGMA), on behalf of the Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government (ACELG) introduced the Future-Proofing Local Government: National Workforce Strategy 2013-2020. The strategy recognised that in rural communities, such as Gwydir Shire, local governments are the primary economic drivers and the only levels of government delivering social and community services. Gwydir Shire Council's functions are expanding and increasing out of necessity, therefore workforce capacity, capability and innovation are critical.

Effective workforce planning ensures that we have the ability to provide an appropriately skilled workforce to meet future changes and challenges and provide expanded services. This provides a plan for the future development of the Gwydir Shire Council workforce to deliver the goals identified in the accompanying planning documents. The Gwydir Shire Council Workforce Plan is designed to continue to recruit and retain staff with the appropriate values, attitude and knowledge to support the changing work environment whilst strengthening relationships with businesses and other community partners to deliver services efficiently and to a high standard.

The Long Term Financial Plan is a fundamental part of the Resourcing Strategy. Through drafting the Long Term Financial Plan it has been confirmed that there is a considerable downfall to sustain existing service standards into the future. To ensure the sustainability of the existing services and to address the emerging and long term service delivery expectations and needs of the community, it has been recognised that additional funding sources need to be identified.

As a proactive measure Gwydir Shire Council has been instrumental in the formation of the Australian Rural Roads Group (ARRG). The ARRG is a national alliance of over 120 rural based local governments. The ARRG nominally represents rural local governments nationwide producing over \$100 million in agricultural product annually. Together this group produces almost \$18 billion in agricultural product – almost half of Australia's total output. In other words, these are very productive communities that contribute significantly to national wealth. However, there is an ageing road network that underpins their productivity which is under threat due to under-investment over many decades.

Specifically, the objective of the ARRG is to increase the total amount of rural local road funding available, by advocating better policies. The goals of the ARRG are being pursued to improve the efficiency, sustainability and safety of rural communities.

The Impact of Fit for the Future on the Workforce

The Fit for the Future (FFTF) program is the result of numerous reports and discussions concerning the viability of local government. In addition, it is the NSW Government's response to the Local Government Review Panel report.

Gwydir Shire Council is facing two issues:

1. The General Fund cash flow issue and
2. The longer-term structural budget deficit issue

The cash flow is a symptomatic outcome of the second.

The purpose of the program is to develop a robust local government sector that is 'fit for the future'. The main ratio of concern within the scope of the Workforce Plan is the Operating Performance Ratio. Reducing costs can play just as significant a role in this ratio as increasing income. Ongoing benefits by reducing employee benefits and on costs have been identified.

Staff are endeavouring to curtail the overall call on General Fund cash and this will continue. The following outlines the planned Council cost saving initiatives that will impact the Workforce:

- Staff have been reviewing the Council's operations with the objective of reducing the Council's overall cost structure. As a component of this process a call for expressions of interest for a voluntary redundancy was made in 2014/2015. As a result of this action an additional seven (7) positions (three (3) indoor and four (4) outdoor) were made redundant within the structure. This has resulted in savings of approximately \$440,000. The full impact of these staff reductions was seen in the 2015-1016 financial year. It is expected that another round of voluntary redundancies will be offered in January 2016.

Unlike the previous redundancies that were made possible by the Council's decision to utilise contractors for some of the operation activities, it is expected that, should the Council be unsuccessful in obtaining the special rate variation, further redundancies will eventuate due to necessary reductions in services.

- The decision of the Council to relinquish the commitment to the core number requirements provided the opportunity for the review of the operational side of the fleet management. The original agreement reached between the former Yallaro and Bingara Shire Councils focused on the areas of operations that would be split as a result of the amalgamation. The engineering and other technically based services were to operate out of Warialda and the administration out of Bingara. The core number requirement did not allow the complete implementation of this division of responsibilities, but this is no longer an impediment.
- Council is considering suggesting the closure of the Bingara Depot. The current space will remain as a compound only, with all the servicing of the fleet being undertaken at the Warialda Depot. This will not result in any loss of the remaining qualified mechanical staff.
- The opportunity to improve the current work practices continues to be investigated with a view to increasing efficiencies. One such change is introducing a 'late' shift that will allow heavy vehicle preventative maintenance

to occur outside normal working hours in order to reduce work hour downtime. Another will be the introduction of a mobile maintenance service to respond to problems at the worksite, if required. The use of extended hours for graders will also be progressed.

Our Work Environment

Our History

The Gazettal Notice creating Gwydir Shire Council was printed on the 17th March, 2004. This saw the amalgamation of Yallaroi and Bingara Councils and a portion of the former Barraba Council.

The northern part of the Shire is located just south of the Queensland border, to the east is Inverell, to the west Moree and to the south Tamworth. The Shire covers an area of 9,274 km² and has a population of 5,445 people, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Estimated Resident Population as at 30 June 2011.

The Gwydir Shire area has two main centres with similar populations - Warialda and Bingara. Negotiations prior to amalgamation had resolved that the main administrative functions would be located in Bingara and the main technical functions and works depot would be located in Warialda.

Under the proclamation, the Council had a statutory obligation to ensure that its core numbers did not fall below the employment numbers that existed as at the date of amalgamation. The core numbers were mutually agreed with the appropriate unions and endorsed.

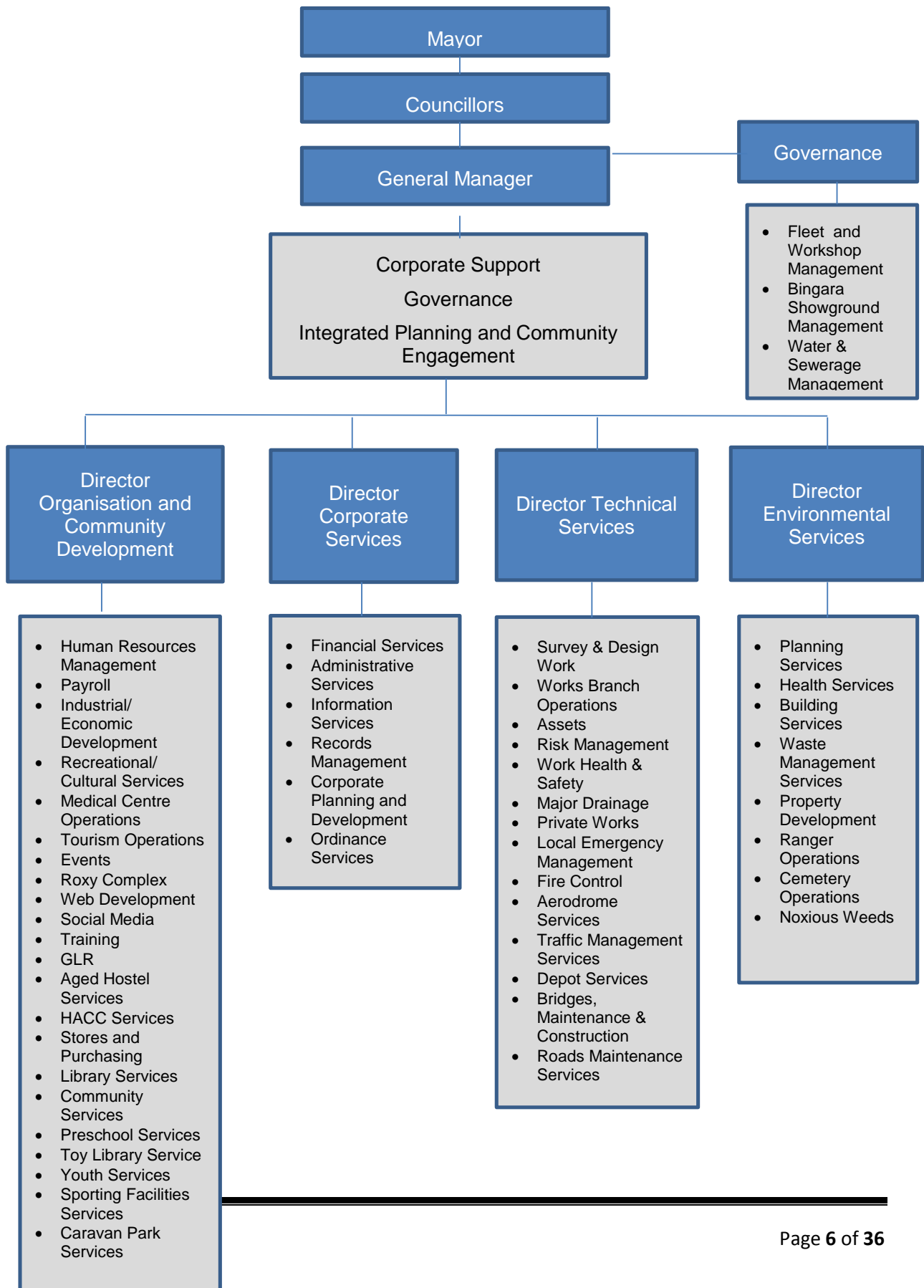
At the time of amalgamation there were 145.4 equivalent full time staff members; 60.95 Bingara and 84.42 Yallaroi (Warialda). Consistent with the current situation, the staff numbers were closely aligned to the level of grant funding received by the councils.

Still in its infancy, the Gwydir Shire Council was awarded the A R Bluett Memorial Award in its second year of existence, in recognition of its achievements post amalgamation.

Our Organisation Profile

The Current Structure

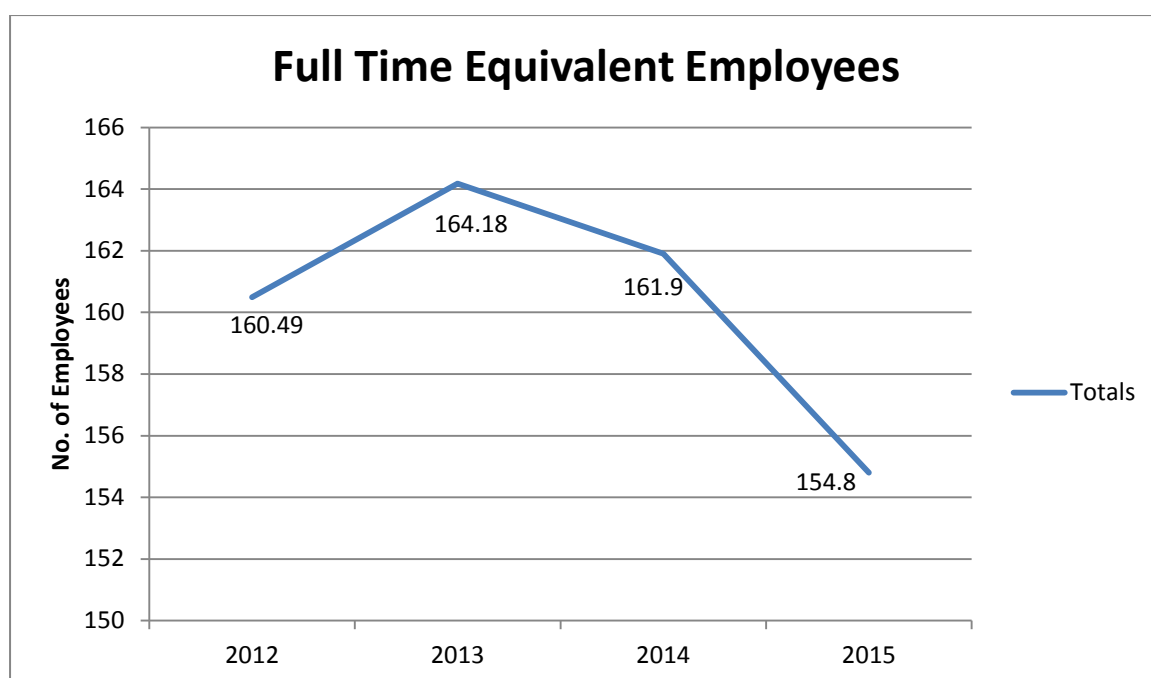
The Council delivers services to the community through four (4) Departments and the Executive (General Manager's) Unit.



Employment Profile

As at 31 December 2015, Council had an establishment of 205 employees, which comprised 125 fulltime staff (111 permanent, 9 trainees, 3 apprentices and 2 temporary) and 50 part-time (45 permanent, 2 trainees, 1 apprentices, 2 temporary) and 30 casuals.

The number of full time equivalent staff total is 154.8. The table below outlines the full time equivalent numbers from 2012 to date and clearly illustrates the reduction in numbers as Council strives to achieve sustainability through reviewing the efficiencies of our work practices whilst maintain productivity levels.



Wages and Salaries

Wages and salaries expenditure for the 2014 - 2015 financial year was \$12,629,000. This equates to approximately 41% of Council's total operating expenditure of \$30,795,000.

This is in line with industry averages due to local government providing direct services to the community.

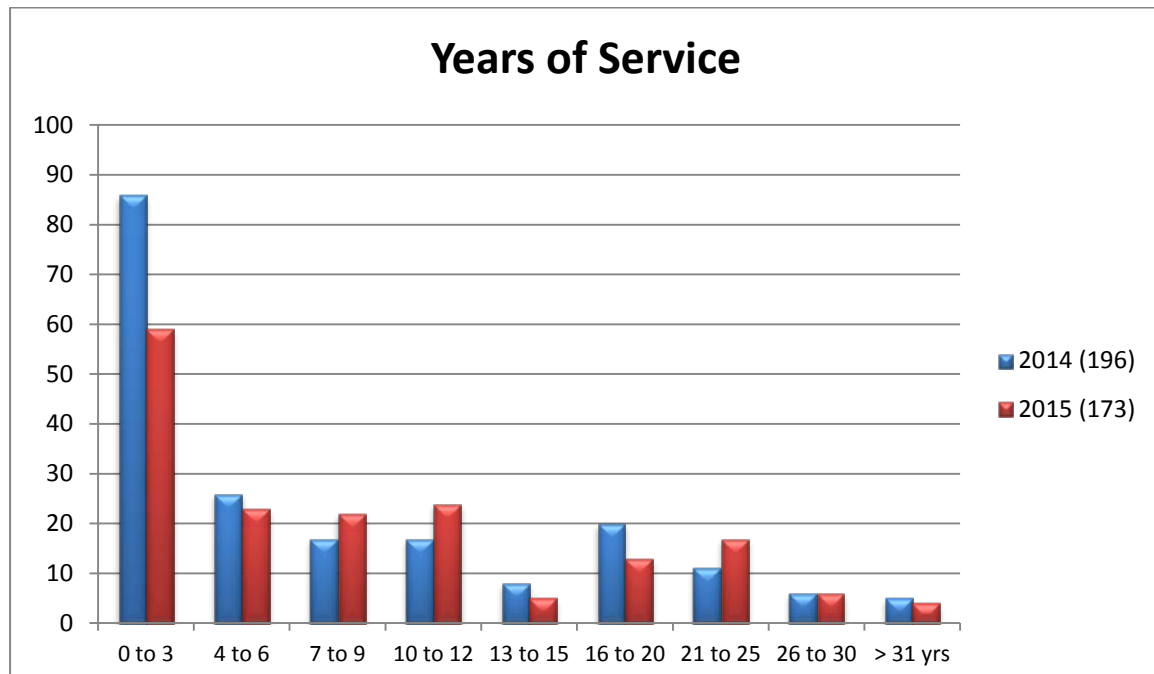
Length of Service

The graph below represents the years of service categories for our staff:

- 59 or approximately 34% of staff have been with Council for 0 – 3 years (a decrease of 32% on 2014 figures)
- 23 or approximately 13% for 4 – 6 years (a decrease of 12% from 2014)
- 22 or approximately 13% for 7 – 9 years (an increase of 30% from 2014)
- 24 or approximately 14% for 10-12 years (an increase of 41% from 2014)
- 5 or approximately 3% for 13 – 15 years (a decrease of 38% from 2014)
- 13 or approximately 7% for 16 – 20 years (a decrease of 35% from 2014)
- 17 or approximately 10% for 21 – 25 years (an increase of 54% from 2014)

- 6 or approximately 4% for 26 – 30 years (equivalent to 2014)
- 4 staff or approximately 2% have been working for Council for in excess of 31 years (a 20% decrease on 2014 figures).

In summary, as at 31 December, 2015 approximately a third of the Council staff (34%) have less than three years' experience in local government and 23% of staff have been working in local government for over 15 years.

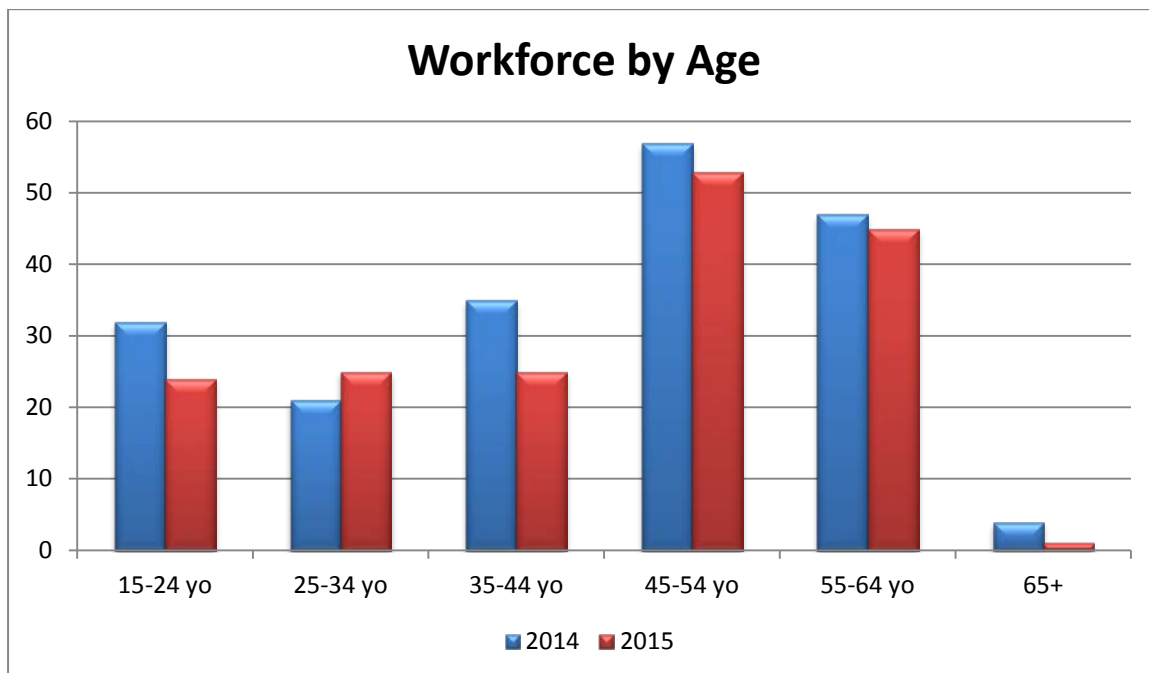


Employee Age Profile

The table below represents the number of total employees in the different age groups and contains figures for the 2014 and 2015 reporting years.

The percentage of employees under the age of 34 years has increased by 1% since 2014. The percentage of employees who are over 45 years of age in this reporting period is 58%, an increase of 3% on the 2014 figure.

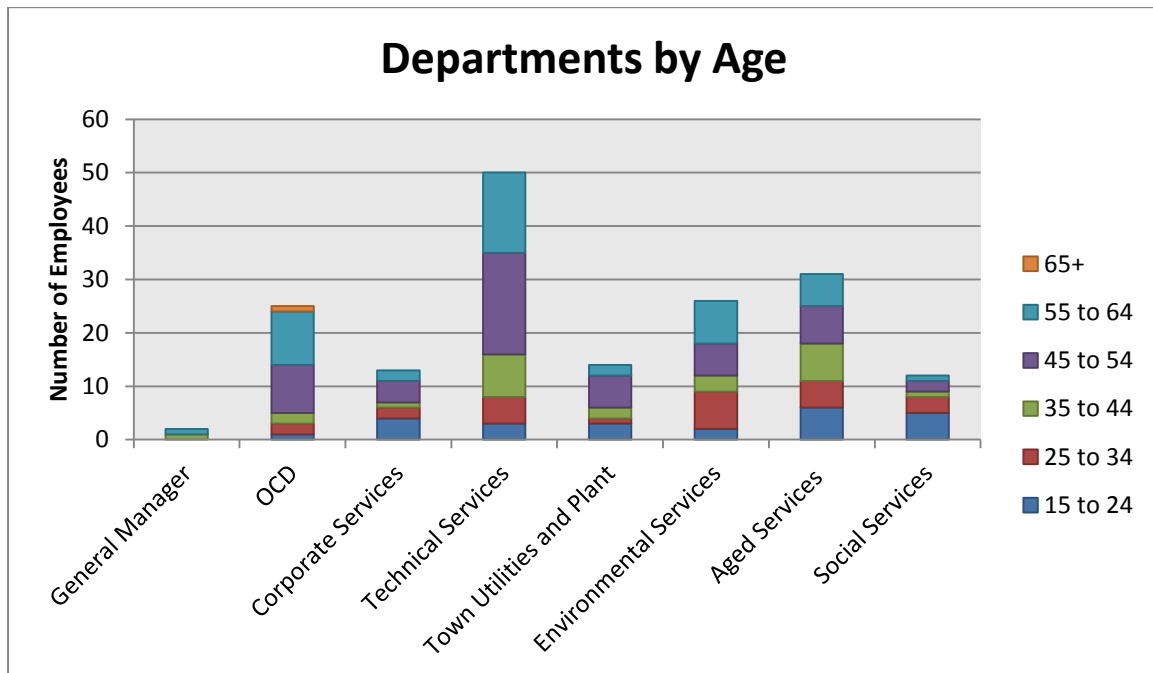
Planning the management of aged workers will need to be ongoing as the demographic for workers over 55 years of age has increased slightly in the total workforce since 2014. This demographic information presents the Council with the challenges of corporate asset loss (information and knowledge) through employee retirement and the higher risks of workplace injury and ill health due to the natural effects of ageing.



The table below further dissects the age demographic information into Departments. The graph demonstrates that the largest proportion of staff over the age of 45 remain in the Technical Services Department. Initiatives to address this after it was identified in the 2012 Workforce Plan included the recruitment of Trainee Plant Operators. These staff are now trained and competent in anticipation of ease of succession in the Technical Services Department.

The graph demonstrates that there has been a reduction in the average age of staff employed in Aged Care with a increase in the number of staff under 45 years of age. In 2014 the number of staff over 45 years was 58% of the Aged Care workforce, it has now reduced to 42% in 2015. Considering some of the positions in this department are high risk by nature, Council continues to investigate ways to provide the resources needed to ensure that its duty of care responsibilities are met.

Provisions for Phased Retirement were introduced through the Local Government (State) Award 2010, requiring Council to implement more flexible working arrangements to accommodate our more mature staff members. The Award also made provision for greater flexibility in relation to work and family responsibilities, with the inclusion of purchased additional annual leave arrangements. These requirements give us greater opportunity to attract and retain staff, while providing our employees with the flexibility to balance their work and home life.



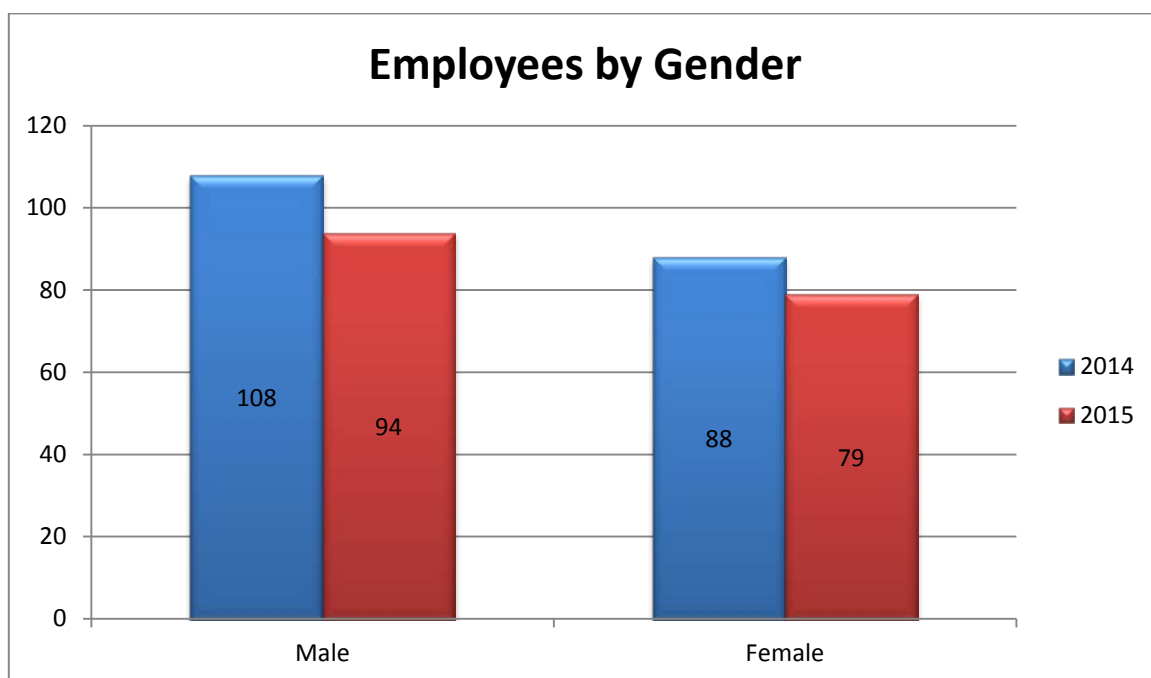
Gender Profile

In 2014, 55% of the workforce was male and 45% were female and despite the reduction in numbers in 2015, the percentages remain the same.

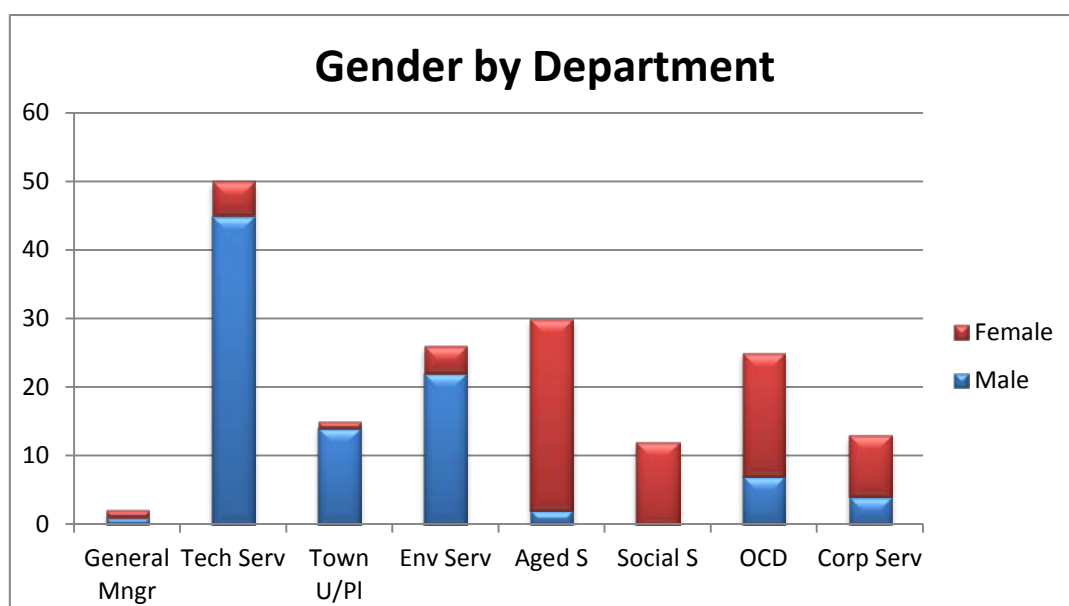
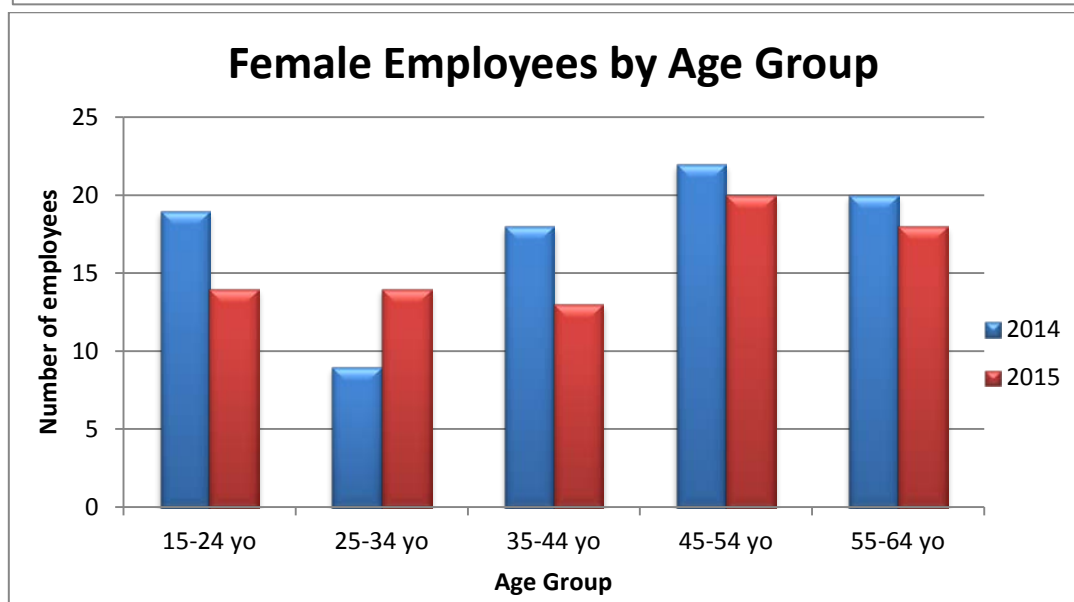
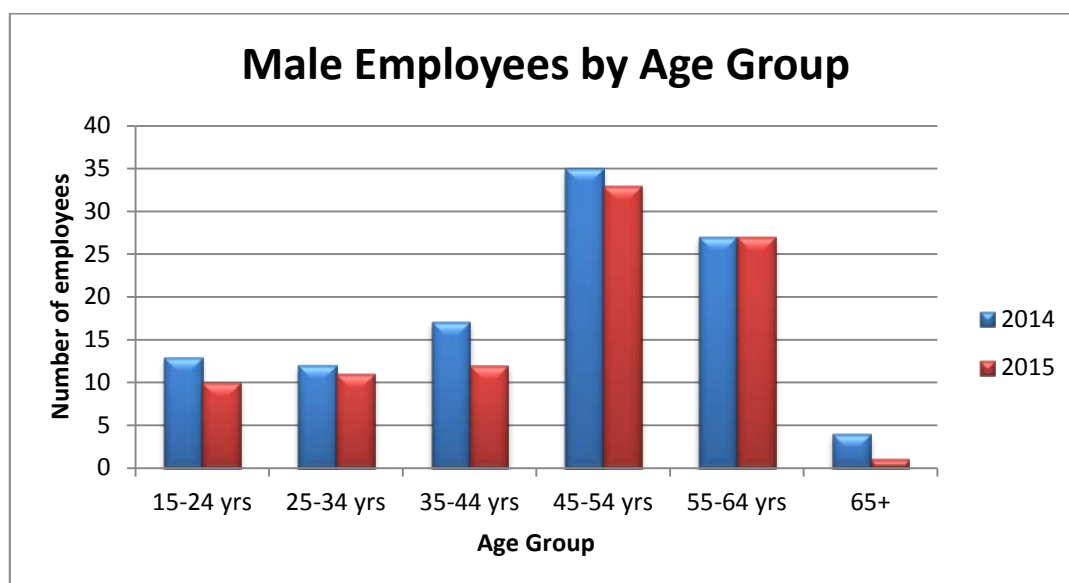
The 2010 Census of Local Government Employees established that the percentage of women in the NSW Local Government workforce for Rural Councils is 37%.

Gwydir Shire Council has continued the trend towards gender equality since 2012.

It is consistent with industry norms that the areas with higher female employment are the areas of Aged Care, Social Services and Human Services. The male dominated areas continue to be Technical, Town and Environmental Services.



The gender dissection by age group is represented in the graphs below.

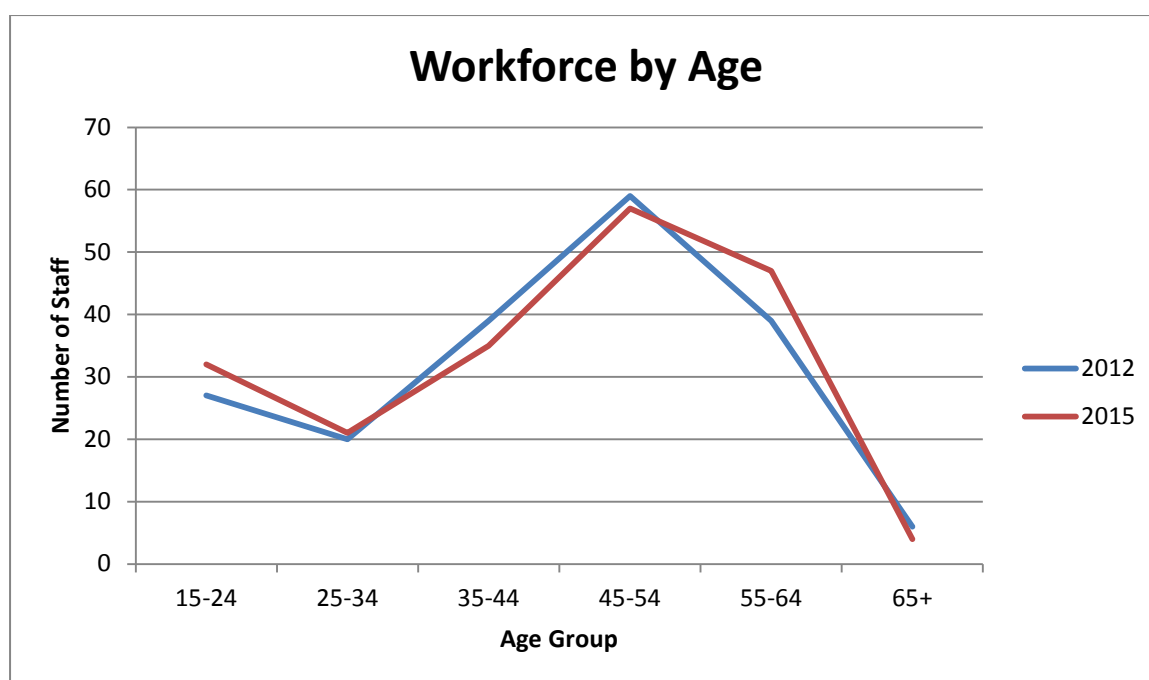


Does our Workforce Reflect Our Community?

In the 2011 Census (held on 9th August 2011), there were 4,965 persons usually resident in Gwydir Shire 55.6% were males and 49.4% were females. Of the total population in Gwydir 2.5% were Indigenous persons, compared with 2.5% Indigenous persons throughout Australia.

Note: The decrease in population from the 2006 Census (5311) may partially be due to the change to ABS boundaries.

While our workforce ratio of male/female employees is 55:45 the graph below demonstrates that the workforce age distribution directly reflects that of our community.



Gwydir Shire Council is the third largest employment industry in the region after farming and education, employing 5.6% of the regional workforce.

It is interesting to note that education (6.1%) has surpassed Local Government to become the second highest employment industry in Gwydir Shire since the 2006 Census.

Gwydir Shire Volunteers

Volunteers are the heart of Australian life with 6.1 million adults, 36% of the Australian population aged 18 and over, participating in voluntary work. This is up slightly from 34% in 2006. Volunteering is less common in the capital cities (34%) than regional and rural residents seeing 41% of residents volunteering.

Our Council area, due to its demographic profile, has a significantly higher volunteer rate of 31.1% than the overall New South Wales volunteer rate of 16.9% and national volunteer rate of 17.8%.

Without the work of volunteers, our community would not have been able to achieve the high standard of infrastructure and services it currently enjoys. Similarly our

volunteer network has created a true community spirit which is socially cohesive and inclusive.

Gwydir Shire Council values such contributions and actively supports community groups and sporting organisations. Each year Council 'donates' to the community and its volunteers through many avenues. These include financial contributions, subsidy, labour and in-kind donation.

Gwydir Shire Council is however, faced with a number of challenges on the issue of volunteering. Our area's volunteers are becoming 'burnt out', older and numbers are falling.

Compounding this challenge are Risk Management and Work, Health and Safety pressures which increasingly require volunteers to be suitable, qualified and insured.

Volunteer Strategy

Gwydir Shire Council is currently drafting a Volunteering Plan. This Plan seeks to identify who is volunteering in our community; what activities they like to undertake; and what skills and qualifications they possess.

Volunteers will then be inducted, as if they were a Council employee. In turn, Council will capture and record their voluntary hours. To establish a seamless system, Council plans firstly to track the voluntary patterns of its employees. This will be linked to the payroll system and employees will be able to record their voluntary hours, in the same way that they do with their weekly time sheets.

It is hoped that this Plan and Recording System will foster competition between volunteers and highlight their contribution so that it is duly recognised and can be openly valued.

It is also becoming apparent that external funding opportunities are increasingly subject to in-kind contributions. A Council Volunteering Plan and Recording System will provide evidence that our community is able to meet their in-kind contribution to various projects.

Workforce Planning Challenges

Existing and future challenges facing the organisation are highlighted by the demographics outlined previously. These challenges are a result of internal and external factors that are currently impacting on the organisation, some of which are likely to escalate over the next four years.

The National Local Government Workforce Strategy 2013-2020 has introduced eight strategies and associated actions that are designed to form a consistent national methodology for workforce development, in order to encourage a strategic approach to meeting current and emerging challenges.

The eight strategies are:

- Improving Workforce Planning and Development
- Promoting Local Government as a Place-Based Employer of Choice
- Retaining and Attracting a Diverse Workforce
- Creating a Contemporary Workplace
- Investing in skills
- Improving Productivity and Leveraging Technology
- Maximising Management and Leadership
- Implementation and Collaboration

Future workforce planning will be aligned directly with these strategies, specifically those actions that can be implemented at a local level.

Recruitment and Retention

Council needs to develop and implement strategies to attract and retain talented staff. The demographic information shows that it is likely that a considerable amount of existing staff will retire in the next 10 years. Areas such as Aged Care and Training have been identified as growth areas during the next four years. The competitive market will undoubtedly continue to make it difficult to attract suitably qualified and experienced staff to these positions.

Contributing factors to the difficulty in recruitment and retention of suitable staff include:

- Limited career advancement within the organisation structure.
- Increasing competition from mining entities that have recently been established in the regional area. This competition is placing pressure on the Council to increase wage levels to retain skills in the organisation.
- The Council has an ageing workforce. In addition to the succession planning considerations there are increased risks due to the functional restrictions of an aged workforce.

Current Strategies

- The Council provides flexibility for work and family responsibilities. There are already a number of family friendly work practices that have been embraced by staff. All reasonable requests are considered and accommodated where possible.
- Other labour retention strategies include the provision of career development opportunities and extensive training opportunities throughout the year. Gwydir Shire Council is a Learning Organisation and as a direct result the training is ongoing. Training and opportunities for academic advancement continually enhance the performance and overall productivity of staff.
- Career paths will be communicated and promoted to staff in the annual performance review process. In addition to the training and staff development opportunities, managers and supervisors will be encouraged and equipped to undertake one-on-one coaching to further employee development.
- Employees performing above and beyond will be rewarded and recognised.
- Council has a policy for long service recognition and this will be expanded to incorporate a recognition program that links to Council's Vision, Mission and Goals. Employees are not only looking for high remuneration and benefits, they also want to be valued and appreciated for their work, treated fairly, undertake work that is meaningful, and have advancement opportunities. Recognition and reward are key factors in enabling us to attract and retain quality employees.

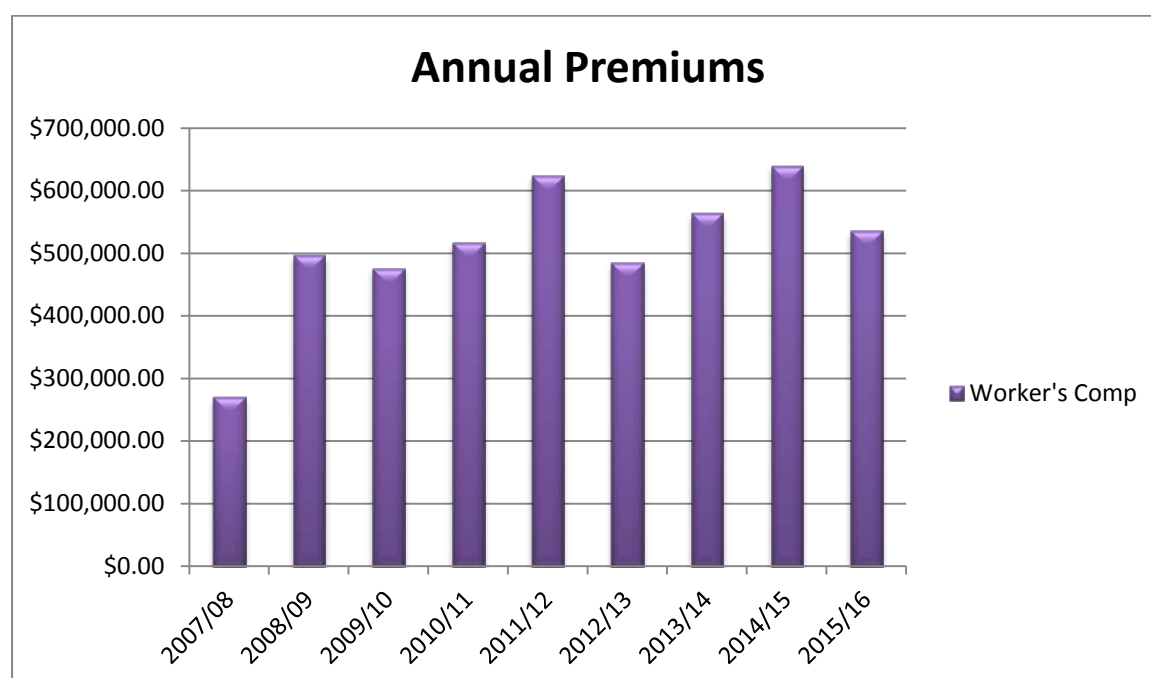
Additional Recruitment and Retention Strategies

- Promoting local government as employer of choice - the role of Local Government needs to be promoted widely to attract suitable pools of applications for vacant positions. This can be done through activities targeting students, EEO groups and businesses.
- Promoting the benefits of working in Local Government, including flexible and family-friendly work practices, as well as other initiatives such as cadetships, apprenticeships and trainee programs.
- Careers advice through mentoring at the local schools and opportunities to work with students performing mock interviews and discussion groups.
- Development of recruitment strategies to encourage minority groups to apply for Council positions.
- Investigating skilled migration initiatives for specialist positions.
- Investigating resource sharing opportunities with a neighbouring council or group of councils for key positions.
- Promotion of the 'Country Lifestyle' and benefits of the local community such as affordable housing, schools, medical facilities, sporting facilities and recreational activities, with the benefits of larger centres close by.

Increased Human Resource and Labour Costs

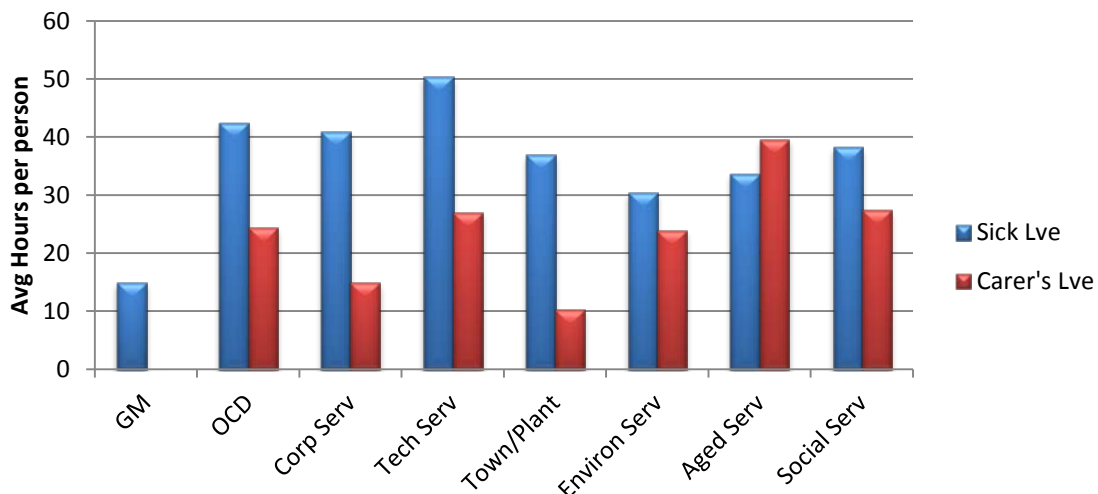
There is increased pressure on the Council because of the inflated cost of labour due to Award increases and legislative changes that require compulsory training and staff development, together with rate pegging constraints, to ensure the organisation remains sustainable.

Remuneration costs continue to rise to accommodate negotiated Award increases and additional on-costs such as superannuation and workers compensation. The graph below shows that the Council workers compensation costs have increased greatly in the eight year period since 2007/2008.



In addition to the increased cost of workplace injuries and incidents, is the cost of providing casual staff cover for employees suffering sickness or injury which is not work-related. Such instances increase the workload and pressure of the other staff, having further impact on their health and wellbeing. The graph below demonstrates the average levels of sick leave and carer's leave experienced this year by department.

Average Sick Leave and Carer's Leave 1 July 2015 to 31 December 2015



Succession Planning

Business succession planning is the consideration of current and future organisational capability, staffing needs and strategies to ensure that these anticipated challenges can be met.

The Council has identified some critical roles and specifically the skills necessary to perform them. Planning needs to be undertaken to ensure that there is current and future capacity for these to be filled with appropriately skilled in-house staff.

Some of the key roles/skills already identified as critical at Gwydir Shire Council are:

- Accountants
- Asset Management
- Engineers
- Technical Officers
- Environmental and Health
- Planning
- Overseers and Team Leaders
- Plant Operators

Areas of growth include:

- Aged Care
- Training and Development

Internal Training and Development and Succession Planning

We aim to provide Council officers/operators with at least the minimum trade level of qualification required to do the job, for example:

- Certificate 3 Civil Construction for engineering operators
- Certificate 3 Water Operations for water operators
- Certificate 3 in Automotive Mechanical for workshop mechanics
- Certificate 3 in Business Admin/Local Government/Financial Ops

For people whose aspirations are to progress further up the organisational ladder, we will seek to provide them with training appropriate to their needs and those of the organisation, as identified in the annual review and budgeting process.

- Staff wishing to take on supervisory roles will undertake a Certificate 4 in Frontline Management or a Diploma in Management.
- Employees wishing to improve their knowledge and skills in a specialised area e.g. Finance, will undertake training in that specialised area e.g. Bachelor of Financial Management.

92.5% of all permanent staff have qualifications of Certificate III or over

2% of the staff who have not been awarded Certificate III or over are apprentices or trainees who are studying towards achieving the qualification.

Where possible, Council will utilise the Traineeship/Apprenticeship system to fund this training.

- Existing workers who have started with the Council without formal qualifications will be signed up to an Existing Worker Traineeship.
- New entrant workers such as new apprentices and new indoor employees will be signed up to New Entrant Traineeships or Full-time apprenticeships.

Other Strategies

- Processes have been reviewed to determine if there are more effective ways to deliver services and train staff accordingly.
- Investment in development - past recruitment activities have demonstrated that developing and up-skilling existing employees is far more efficient and cost-effective than attempting to attract, and then retain, people with the required skills sets from outside of the organisation. Staff development strategies aimed at staff having the skills to deliver the Community Strategic Plan and Council's Delivery Program goals need to be implemented, to ensure a generous flow of candidates to fill key roles as they become vacant.
- Staff performance reviews are designed to determine both the appropriate skills sets to effectively undertake a position, along with the base level skills required to undertake other roles in the organisation. This will result in individual training and development programs for each staff member that are compiled into the one organisation training program.

Legislative Influences

The following legislative changes or reforms may impact on the Workforce Plan in the near future:

- The Building Professional Act 2005 requires certification of Accredited Certifiers to carry out certification work on behalf of Councils. This involves an annual investment in training and professional development of Accredited Certifiers to retain their accreditation.
- New Accounting Standards AASB13 Fair Value Measurement and AASB119 Employee Benefits may result in employment of additional resources, specifically in the area of Asset Management.

Gwydir's Broader Community Approach to Addressing Workforce Challenges

The Gwydir Learning Region

The Gwydir Learning Region (GLR) Committee is a committee of Gwydir Shire Council and seeks to identify the learning needs of all Gwydir Shire residents, and to facilitate the delivery of the appropriate knowledge and skills development.

Within the large area that makes up Gwydir Shire, there exist a substantial number of potential students and instructors, as well as under-utilised educational facilities and resources.

Distance, financial restraints and the nature of rural life are deterrents for residents to pursue further education and training. In order to improve access, it is crucial that the delivery of education be local, affordable and flexible.

Declining businesses and services have eroded rural town pride and confidence in many parts of country Australia. Vocational education can be the catalyst for confidence building and revitalisation of the community.

The GLR, through co-operative effort, facilitates the re-skilling of the community, the completion of community projects, and the development of new business opportunities and services.

Its success relies heavily upon collaboration between Council, the local schools, TAFE, the University of New England and local training providers such as the Community College – Northern Inland.

Capacity Building within Council Workforce and the Gwydir Community

Much of the work done by the GLR aims at building the capacity of the community to deliver training in various fields of expertise.

To this end, we have taken the following steps:

The Gwydir Learning Region as a Registered Training Organisation

The GLR has registered with the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) as a Registered Training Organisation (RTO).

Our registration has four heavy vehicle competencies on our scope:

- TLILIC 2014B – Licence to drive a light rigid vehicle

- TLILIC 2015B – Licence to drive a medium rigid vehicle
- TLILIC 2016B – Licence to drive a heavy rigid vehicle
- TLILIC 3017B – Licence to drive a heavy combination vehicle

There has been some demand evident for training in a multi-combination licence (B Double) and we plan to expand our scope to include this competency.

Council plans to expand our scope to include competencies in:

- Heavy Plant operation
- Rural Operations
- Horticulture

By delivering this training through our own RTO we are not dependent on the capacity of larger and less flexible RTOs, such as TAFE, being able to deliver the training to suit our needs.

On 1 September 2015, Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) implemented Clause 4.2(d) of the Heavy Vehicle Competency Based Accreditation (HVCBA) Accreditation Agreement which states that 'the Provider must ensure that the same Assessor who delivers the Training Course for an Applicant cannot conduct the Assessment'.

Clause 4.2(d) was implemented to improve the integrity of the HVCBA Scheme and to mitigate fraud and corruption risks, and conflict of interest, by separating the Training and Assessment roles of Assessors for the one Applicant.

RMS acknowledged that there were specific situations within NSW where an RTO/Assessor had difficulty complying with the requirements of Clause 4.2(d). In these situations, Roads and Maritime issued an individual High Risk Variation (HRV) to the requirements of Clause 4.2(d) on a case by case basis. The Gwydir Learning Region RTO HRV was issued for a period of six (6) expiring on 1 March 2016.

A request for an extension was submitted to RMS by GLR RTO in December 2015.

Sponsored Training in Certificate 4 Training and Assessment

Council has sponsored training in Certificate 4 in Training and Assessment for a large number of Council employees and community members in areas such as:

- Civil Construction
- Building and Construction
- Automotive Mechanical
- Horticulture
- Risk Assessment and Work Health and Safety
- First Aid
- IT
- Acute Care Nursing
- Aged Care Nursing
- Heavy Equipment Operation – excavator, back hoe, loader, forklift
- Heavy Vehicle Operation
- Local Government Finance

- Water operations
- Fitness
- Retail
- Hospitality

Amongst these Cert 4 TAA participants are Council employees who are trainers and assessors in Heavy Plant Operation and Heavy Vehicle Operation.

These people make it possible to train and assess Council employees and community members in areas that are crucial to Council operations. They also provide a means by which Council employees can improve their skills and gain extra qualifications that will enable them to advance in their career.

Council is already seeing improvements in access to Heavy Vehicle qualification upgrades through our Heavy Vehicle Competency-based Assessor.

Specific Case Studies

Aged Care Nursing

The local high school set up a class consisting of school-aged students and mature-aged students who were prepared to enrol as Year 11 students.

The course is currently delivered by Community College Northern Inland and to date we have had approximately 130 graduates from this course, most of whom have found employment either in Warialda and Bingara or in nearby towns. Some of these graduates staff our local aged care facilities.

For many, this has given them their first opportunity in life to work in paid employment, and in some cases, has given them the chance to break a generational problem of unemployment and to obtain paid work.

Acute Care Nursing

Two Warialda High School Year 12 students received a Certificate 3 in Acute Care Nursing. They had previously completed Certificate 3 in Aged Care as Year 10 students. They then obtained school-based traineeships with the Warialda Hospital and studied through TAFE New England. On completing Year 12 they received their Higher School Certificate (HSC) and vocational qualifications in Aged Care and Acute Care Nursing. This gives them automatic access to the Bachelor of Nursing course at the University of New England.

Certificate 3 in Children's Services

The Gwydir Learning Region pioneered provision of training to school-based trainees in Children's Services.

It has allowed us to provide students with an opportunity to pursue a career in preschool teaching or related activities. It has also given us the opportunity to train people to take up positions within Council.

School-Based Traineeships/Apprenticeships

During the time of its operation, the GLR has provided school-based traineeships and apprenticeships in areas such as:

- Rural Studies – Agriculture and Horticulture

- Retail
- Children's Services
- Metals and Engineering
- Meat Processing
- Hospitality
- Sport and Recreation
- Business Services
- Automotive Mechanical
- Aged Care
- Carpentry
- Hairdressing
- Information Technology
- Nursing – Aged Care Nursing and Acute Care Nursing

These school-based apprenticeships and traineeships provide students with a pathway to a chosen career while they are still full-time students at school. They can achieve a HSC concurrently with a vocational qualification.

If they choose to pursue the Certificate 3 Trade Certificate and then decide that they would like to pursue a university education, the Certificate 3 qualification at some universities equates to an ATAR score of 80 when it comes time to enrol at a university.

Gwydir Learning Region Trade Training Centres

Council was successful in securing Federal Government funding of \$2.99 million to build three trade training centres on Council owned land.

The Trade Training Centres are specific to the following industries:

- Primary Industry
- Hospitality (Commercial Cookery)
- Automotive Mechanical

These centres will provide a pathway for students to gain a vocational qualification whilst being enrolled as full-time school students. These centres opened in 2013.

Primary Industries (The Living Classroom)



The Primary Industries Trade Training Centre has been built on Council owned land in Bingara adjacent to the Bingara Common. The Common still continues to be used by local families who own livestock and run them on the Common. The Centre will give students opportunities to train in competencies that provide a pathway to a Certificate III in Primary Industries.

The facility includes a classroom, a multi-purpose break-out room, an office, a kitchen and washroom facilities. It is equipped with the latest IT connected classroom equipment, as well as a wide variety of equipment required for farming and grazing activities.

Council secured additional funding to construct a twenty-four bed student dormitory and teacher accommodation on the site to accommodate visiting students.

Automotive

An Automotive Mechanical workshop has been built on land adjacent to Warialda High School.

It gives Gwydir students (Warialda, Bingara and surrounding districts) an opportunity to pursue pathways to Certificate III in Automotive Mechanical studies in a state-of-the art facility.

Welding bays have also been installed in the facility allowing students and Gwydir residents to undertake welding courses, either as part of their automotive courses or as after-hours interest courses. The training is being delivered by TAFE New England and a qualified Gwydir Shire Council employee.

Council has been able to adapt the Automotive Trade Training facility to accommodate these classes, and it now operates as part of the Warialda High School campus.



Hospitality



A commercial standard kitchen has been built as an attachment to the rear of the Roxy Theatre in Bingara. Secondary school students at Gwydir schools who are pursuing a qualification in Hospitality (Commercial Cookery) will be able to train in this kitchen.

The kitchen is also a useful addition to the already existing catering facilities of the Roxy Cafe and will be available to provide catering facilities for community functions such as wedding receptions and

balls.

The trainee chefs will have the opportunity to gain work experience at these functions and at the Roxy Cafe.

Training will be provided by the Department of Education and Communities RTO and TAFE New England.

Community members will also be able to gain access to the kitchen through participation in short courses being run by the local branch of the Community College.

The Community Strategic Plan

The Community Strategy is divided into the following key components:

- A Healthy and Cohesive Community (Social)
- Building the Business Base (Economy)
- An Environmentally Responsible Shire (Environment)
- Regional and Local Leadership (Organisation)

The 'strategic issues' in each component is an area that has been identified as requiring a specific 'strategy' to achieve the desired outcome or 'term action'.

Community Plan Objectives

The main service delivery priorities identified in the Community Strategic Plan are:

- Major improvements to the rural road network through the allocation of the Council's existing resources, and promoting the allocation of substantially increased Federal Government funding
- Growth of the local economy through increased employment opportunities for residents complemented by Industry specific training opportunities, especially for the school leaver
- An increasing focus on Tourism promotion by the Council
- The maintenance of the existing strong 'Community Spirit' within the Shire's various communities
- Medical Facilities in general and the retention of the General Practitioners and Hospital Services and
- The expansion of aged care facilities and services to accommodate the growing demographic needed for these services.

These key components are expanded in the Delivery Program. The Delivery Program details the principal activities Council will undertake to achieve the objectives established in the Community Strategic Plan, within the resources available under the Resourcing Strategy.

Council's workforce strategy forms part of the Resourcing Strategy. It helps to meet the community's priorities and aspirations, as expressed in the Community Strategic Plan, by having the right people in the right places with the right skills doing the right jobs at the right time.

The following pages expand on the workforce resources needed to achieve the objectives of the Delivery Plan.

Appendix 1 - Delivery Plan

UPDATED DELIVERY PLAN – as at 31st December 2015

1. A Healthy and Cohesive Community –

Summary

Social Services (youth and children) - While a full complement of staff has not yet been achieved for this area, the department continues to innovate and adapt to the changes required. The full time trainee position at Bingara Preschool has been finalised and will not be replaced, while the part time trainee position has been suspended indefinitely. There will be one full time educator, one part time educator, one school based trainee and the Preschool Director for 2016. The Supported Playgroup Development worker has returned from maternity leave and the Social Services assistant will return at the beginning of February 2016. Tharawonga will have a new Director this year and a new trainee as the current traineeship will be finalised at the end of January. The Neighbourhood Centre has not been relocated as this proved logistically impossible but investigations continue to accommodate efficiencies in this area. The possibility of extending hours at Bingara Preschool to include long day care is also under investigation. Changes to the child care benefit scheme will mean changes to funding and structure for Tharawonga Mobile and long day care may also be an option for this service.

Aged Services – As identified in the IPR process, the demand for Aged Services continues.

Naroo Hostel - During the previous financial period the expansion of Naroo Hostel was completed. This expansion has provided an additional 15 beds with a dedicated wing of 10 beds suitable for dementia care. Recruitment of the additional staffing required to service the additional beds, specifically the dementia wing, proved to be difficult, however full occupation was achieved in March 2015. Due to a shortage of qualified applicants for positions at Naroo, four Aged Services trainees were recruited, providing them the opportunity to work at Naroo while undertaking the Certificate 3 qualifications. Recruitment initiatives are continuing.

Commonwealth Home Support Program (Formerly HACC) – Home and Community Care (HACC) services was replaced by the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) in July 2015. This model for older Australians provides entry level support to allow them to continue living independently in their home and in their community for longer. After a four month transition period, name changes, centralised assessments and service referrals through My Aged Care, the new program commenced from November 2015.

Due to recent government changes, responsibility for ageing and aged care has moved from the Department of Social Services to the Department of Health. A new style of reporting, known as Data Exchange, has also been introduced, with the first reporting milestone to be met by service providers by June 2016.

Clients can access service streams of meals, transport, and social support, both individual and group. Additionally, Bingara Community Transport is funded through Transport for NSW, allowing a comprehensive Community Transport Program. The aim is to provide services that support good health and wellbeing, through increasing independence and community involvement.

Recreation Services – The Warialda Fitness Centre provides for squash, aerobic, cardio and weights training. During 2015, a similar facility was opened in Bingara. The building was refurbished and equipment purchased through a combination of grant funding and community fundraising, with

Council providing in kind support. Council is responsible for the maintenance of both centres. In both facilities members undergo an induction in the safe use of the equipment and are issued with a fob pass allowing 24 hour access. It is Council's aim that both centres will become cost neutral.

Cultural Services – Roxy Cafe -The Cafe was leased in the 2013/2014 financial year and will be leased to new tenants in January 2015. The Cafe continues to provide a unique dining experience for visitors and locals.

Events - The Council continues, through the development of the Roxy Complex, to host events not previously able to be accommodated in our local government area.

Museum – A Museum that tells the story of Greek migration to regional NSW was officially opened in April 2014. The Local Government Award under which the Council operates does not accommodate the required spread of hours and staff flexibility required to deliver the services listed above. Volunteer engagement and retention is essential for the future sustainability of these community programs.

Strategies	Relevant actions/directions - 2012-2016	Workforce changes required	Update
Children's services	<p>Improve health and family support services for all members of our community</p> <p>Advocate on behalf of service providers and community groups for additional family support services and facilities, including day care.</p> <p>Facilitate the provision of services that aim to reduce alcohol and drug abuse in the community.</p>	<p>Staffing needs</p> <p>Existing staffing levels need to be maintained to ensure that funded programs continue throughout the period of this plan.</p> <p>Additional funding for specialist programs may become available in the future and this may require recruitment of additional staffing resources. All of these programs will be self-funded.</p> <p>Organisation and career development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrade and resource existing staff to ensure that qualifications are current and meet legislative requirements. • Staff to be up-skilled as per new legislative standards. 	<p>Continuing</p> <p>Continuing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

Strategies	Relevant actions/directions - 2012-2016	Workforce changes required	Update
Youth services	<p>1.2.1.1 Engender a positive youth culture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a Youth Strategy • Support youth programs • Undertake community education • Develop and maintain a Youth Centre • Foster relationships between Council and other service providers • Undertake a study to identify job opportunities for youth in the Shire. 	<p>Staffing needs</p> <p>Existing staffing levels need to be maintained.</p> <p>Additional funding for specialist programs may become available in the future and this may require recruitment of additional staffing resources. All of these programs will be self-funded.</p> <p>Organisation and career development</p> <p>Upgrade and resource existing staff to ensure that qualifications are current and meet legislative requirements.</p>	<p>Continuing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
Older people	<p>Promote the active participation of our elderly citizens in our community.</p> <p>Assist the development of suitable accommodation options for our ageing.</p> <p>Plan, in partnership with state and federal agencies, the provision of quality home care and support services and facilities for our ageing population.</p>	<p>Staffing needs</p> <p>Naroo currently boasts a full complement of staff to service the resident's needs. Continued recruitment of casual employees continues to be a consideration.</p> <p>Naroo Hostel has expanded to include additional Ageing in Place beds. This requires additional staff resources such as Registered Nurse hours (depending on care classification of residents), additional care service employee and cleaning hours. Additional administrative support was provided over this period.</p> <p>Due to the split in Aged Care and Disability Service models, GSC elected not to become a registered provider, but support the further development of established providers in the region. There is ongoing training and development to support the changes introduced with the CHSP model of Aged Care.</p> <p>Additional funding for specialist programs may become available in the future and this may require recruitment of additional staffing resources.</p> <p>Organisation and career development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrade skills of existing staff to ensure that qualifications are current and meet legislative requirements. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Staff training plans are aligned with future requirements</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

Strategies	Relevant actions/directions - 2012-2016	Workforce changes required	Update
Community leisure	<p>1.4.1.1 Identify recreation and leisure priorities of the community.</p> <p>1.4.1.2 Lobby for financial assistance from relevant government departments.</p> <p>1.4.1.3 Continue to explore ways to maximise the potential of Council's recreation resources.</p> <p>1.4.1.4 Further develop the community based gym for Bingara and surrounds.</p> <p>1.4.1.5 Continue to provide support for Warialda and Bingara Fitness Centres.</p>	<p>Staffing needs</p> <p>Staff numbers are sufficient to achieve the objectives in the Delivery Plan.</p> <p>Recruitment and rostering of volunteers and private providers to operate fitness classes will be ongoing.</p> <p>Organisation and career development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further skills in volunteer recruitment and management. • Develop volunteer recognition initiatives for school and community volunteers. • Specific training for specialist recreation activities. 	Development of community volunteers and private fitness providers is ongoing
Cultural and community events	Undertake an analysis of the existing cultural and community events and identify Council support priorities.	<p>Staffing needs</p> <p>Existing staffing allocation is sufficient.</p> <p>Organisation and career development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further skills in volunteer recruitment and management. • Develop volunteer recognition initiatives for school and community volunteers. 	Volunteer recognition program continuing
Volunteers	<p>Better management and recording of volunteer activities.</p> <p>Promote and support the initiatives and achievements of our volunteers.</p>	<p>Staffing needs</p> <p>A recruitment drive for volunteers needs to be undertaken on an annual basis. Future planning will include the development of a Volunteer Expo. Representatives from services that require volunteers will be present to provide information on their individual services and functions that might be undertaken by volunteers.</p> <p>Organisation and career development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further skills for managers in volunteer recruitment and management. • Develop volunteer recognition initiatives for school and community volunteers. 	<p>Volunteer recruitment initiatives are undertaken twice a year</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

UPDATED DELIVERY PLAN – as at 31 December 2015

2. Building the Business Base

Summary

Since 2006, the Council has concentrated on resourcing Tourism, with Visitor Information Centres being upgraded and manned seven days a week by a combination of Council staff and volunteers. The Workforce Plan identified that economic development functions were currently being undertaken in an ad-hoc way by a number of Council officers. In response to the identified need to invest further resources in business and economic development, a part time Economic Development Officer was appointed in the 2012/2013 financial year; this appointment continues with this officer having the added responsibility of the Management of the Roxy facility since the redundancy of the Roxy Manager position in July 2013.

Reallocation of staffing resources has allowed for the focus on business development initiatives associated with the Trade Training Centres in Bingara and Warialda. Plans are ongoing for future business development, both internal to the organisation and externally through planned economic development activities.

Tourism trainees employed in the 2012/2013 financial year when the need was identified during the Workforce Planning process were a valuable addition to the promotions team. These individuals have since completed their training with one of the trainees now working on in a permanent role and the other trainee working for Council on a casual basis when needed. Further investigation is being undertaken on the possibility of utilising more volunteer hours for the manning of the Visitor Information Centres. This will reduce the wages cost associated with tourism.

Strategies	Relevant actions/directions - 2012-2016	Workforce changes required	Update
Increasing in-migration	Target demographic groups who are aligned (to the attractions of the Shire) and accessible (i.e. not undergoing major lifestyle shift). Potential groups are older/retirees and young families; especially from the central and north coast areas.	Staffing needs Changes made in the 2014/2015 financial year ensure that staffing levels are sufficient.	Not required
Identifying the Shire's unique position in the regional economy	Increase the Shire's presence in the region.	As above	Ongoing
New business	Attract and retain businesses that enhance the longer term viability of the Shire.	As above	Ongoing

Strategies	Relevant actions/directions - 2012-2016	Workforce changes required	Update
Tourism	Implement and facilitate a tourism brand and strategy.	<p>Staffing needs</p> <p>There is currently two full time and one part time employee employed in tourism. Casual staff will be employed on an 'as needs' basis. This is sufficient to achieve the goals outlined in the Delivery Plan.</p> <p>An annual volunteer recruitment program will need to be undertaken to ensure that the volunteer pool is sufficient for the out of hours operation of the facilities.</p> <p>Organisation and career development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further skills in volunteer management. • Up-skill in regional networking and partnerships to provide opportunity for leverage on regional themes, and establish regional leadership... 	<p>Sufficient</p> <p>Continuing, once a year</p>

UPDATED DELIVERY PLAN – as at 31 December 2015

3. An Environmentally Responsible Shire

Summary

Native Biodiversity - The key to achieving the objectives in this section of the Delivery Plan is forging co-operative arrangements with external bodies including the Universities, Catchment Management Authority, Northern Slopes Landcare Assn. etc. Success in this area requires a co-operative approach by landholders, Council and the broader community. No additional staff were required and training is ongoing.

Water Quality Management - Staff currently employed in the Town Services section will be responsible for the implementation of some of the water quality and management strategy. The Environmental staff will be responsible for the initiatives aimed at reducing water pollution.

Energy and Greenhouse Gas – Co-operative and resource sharing initiatives will need to be explored to meet the objectives outlined in this area. Special reference is made to relationships with Willoughby City Council and Namoi Joint Organisation.

Waste – Strategies for integrated waste management be aimed at reducing the quantity of material that goes into the landfills. During this reporting period Council staff have undertaken education programs focused on waste reduction initiatives, including but not limited to recycling. A joint waste tender has been entered into with neighbouring councils.

Strategies	Relevant actions/directions - 2012-2016	Workforce changes required	Update
Maintain native biodiversity	Establish an understanding of the extent of biodiversity assets in the Shire.	Staffing needs There remains adequate staffing in the Environmental Services to achieve objectives in the Delivery Plan.	Maintained
	Conserve and manage key biodiversity assets to sustain natural ecosystems.	Some of the objectives in the Delivery Plan will need to be contracted out to external specialist entities.	
	Preserve and enhance the region's native vegetation resources.	Organisation and career development Existing staff will need to be equipped with the following skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training in biodiversity strategies and processes. • Native vegetation management. • Training in competencies to equip staff with appropriate skills for community engagement. • Technical Services staff will need to be competent in roadside vegetation management. • Permaculture. • Water resource management. 	Ongoing

Strategies	Relevant actions/directions - 2012-2016	Workforce changes required	Update
Riparian environments	Develop and implement initiatives to enhance biodiversity in the Shire's riparian environments.	As above	Ongoing
Catchment management	Ensure an integrated approach to water management within the Shire.	As above	Ongoing
Integrated planning and biodiversity conservation	Ensure the coordination and effective implementation of environmental activities, including increased external funding.	As above	Ongoing
Water quality and management	Improve water quality and management within the Shire.	<p>Staffing needs No additional staff required in Town Services or Environmental Services.</p> <p>Organisation and career development Further skills will need to be gained in the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water cycle management. • Effluent reuse. • Water demand management. • Community engagement. 	Ongoing
Council's activities	Ensure that Council's activities and operations have minimal impact on biodiversity assets.	As above	Ongoing
Energy and greenhouse	Investigate Gwydir's potential to be central to a regional greenhouse offset development.	As above	Ongoing
Waste	<p>Provide integrated waste management services.</p> <p>Foster the re-use and recycling of materials and expand current recycling programs.</p> <p>Council will lead by example in recycling and waste minimisation.</p>	<p>Staffing needs No additional staff required in the Waste or Environment Services area to achieve the objectives in the Delivery Plan.</p> <p>Organisation and career development Further skills will need to be gained in the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste management. • Recycling. • Community engagement. 	<p>Efficiencies implemented</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

UPDATED DELIVERY PLAN – as at 31 December 2015

4. Proactive Local and Regional Leadership

Summary

Public Consultation and Engagement - Under the requirements of the Integrated Planning Framework strategies to engage the community and stakeholders, generally traditional methods of communication were continued, in addition to the establishment and utilisation of social media and electronic communication opportunities. This reporting period saw further development of the Customer Request Management system. This system is currently utilised by all Council staff members and is supported by a regular reporting regime.

Organisation Management and Capacity - Customer service training has been continued this reporting period with a specific focus on risk awareness. Appropriate staff continue to be trained in social media administration and effective electronic communications.

Risk and Workplace Safety – Effective management of risk and workplace safety continues to be a Council priority.

The Integrated Planning Framework imposes requirements for annual updating and reporting on the individual plans in the framework. It is a requirement that the Council increases levels of engagement with the Community and this will require properly organised processes for community consultation, policy development and planning. These processes will need to be facilitated as part of the governance process.

Strategies	Relevant actions/directions - 2012-2016	Workforce changes required	Update
Public consultation and engagement	Implement initiatives that enable all members of the community to be involved in, and aware of Council activities.	Staffing needs No additional staff required. Organisation and career development Existing staff will need to be trained in the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community and stakeholder engagement.• Communication through social media and electronic media.	Ongoing
Organisation management and capacity	Provide high quality customer services.	Staffing needs No additional staff required. Organisation and career development <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Skills development continued.	Ongoing

Strategies	Relevant actions/directions - 2012-2016	Workforce changes required	Update
Workplace safety	Provide a safe and healthy work environment that allows for the professional development of all staff.	<p>Staffing needs A Risk Officer position continues to be funded. An appointment to this position was made in January 2015.</p> <p>Organisation and career development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The existing Safety Management System undertook a review during this period and a new Safety Management System was introduced to the organisation. Training aligned with the introduction of the new plan is ongoing. Continued professional development aligned with the WHS Regulations and Risk Management for all staff. To be undertaken on an annual basis or more frequently as required. Managers and supervisory staff to be trained in WHS and Risk Management principles and internal practices, and to be accountable for performance in these areas. 	<p>Complete</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
Planned development	Promote and manage development within sustainability guidelines.	<p>Staffing needs No additional staff required.</p> <p>Organisation and career development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued staff professional development in planning and land use development. 	Ongoing
Infrastructure initiatives	Effectively deliver Shire infrastructure.	<p>Recruitment Needs No additional staff required to achieve the objectives in the Delivery Plan. Additional resources may need to be sourced for specific programs.</p> <p>Organisation and career development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued staff skills development for staff employed in roads, waste, water and other programs. 	Ongoing

Strategies	Relevant actions/directions - 2012-2016	Workforce changes required	Update
Council's sustainability performance	Ensure that Council's management and operations enhance sustainability values.	Recruitment needs No additional staff required to achieve the objectives in the Delivery Plan. Organisation and career development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All relevant staff to be trained in sustainability initiatives. 	Ongoing
Financial sustainability	Ensure that the Council remains financially sustainable into the future.	Staffing needs No additional staff required to achieve the objectives in the Delivery Plan. Organisation and career development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal upskilling of finance staff to address succession planning initiatives. Continued professional development of finance staff. 	Ongoing
Outward looking Shire	Leverage of state and national trends to create business opportunities in the Shire.	Staffing needs No additional staff required to achieve the objectives in the Delivery Plan.	Continuing
Learning	Expand and develop a knowledge culture, and continuous education practices.	Staffing needs Due to staff movements the Council will be considering the appointment of a GLR General Manager to achieve the objectives in the Delivery Plan. Organisation and career development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue with the Gwydir Learning Region Model. Workforce planning requirements aligned to this model are outlined previously in this report. 	Continuing
Governance	Maintain and enhance Council integrity.	Staffing needs No additional staff required to achieve the objectives in the Delivery Plan. Organisation and career development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to upskill all required staff to ensure ethical practices are employed. Training of staff to undertake internal audits on internal corporate governance standards. 	Continuing