WORKFORCE PLAN
2022 - 2037

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Executive Summary

Workforce planning, also called strategic workforce planning, is about making sure that the right person is in the right job at the right moment. This means that there are not too many people available (overstaffing) nor too few (understaffing).

Workforce planning thus solves staffing problems for today and for the future. According to *Evers (2014)*, strategic workforce planning is becoming increasingly important for several reasons.

Demographic changes: An aging workforce poses several different problems, including a lack of in-demand skills, reskilling challenges, and mass-retirement. Consideration must be given to barriers for attracting older employees such as translating language and interpretation of documents.

Cost reduction: Increasing demand forces organisations to work smarter. At the same time, the aging workforce is a more expensive one – but not necessarily a more productive one.

Talent management: Talented employees form a competitive advantage for the Shire. Having people with the right drive and lining up a talent pipeline to replace the aging group of senior staff and leadership members of the Shire is essential. Transparency is required to encourage the talented group to move up in the organisation and take on more responsibility.

Flexibility: Today's competitive landscape requires faster and more disruptive innovation. The revenue produced by the Shire has not increased tremendously in the last few decades. At the same time, the tactics that got us here won't get us where we need to go next.

When it comes to workforce planning, there are four criteria.

The Four Criteria of Strategic Workforce Planning

RIGHT SIZE	RIGHT SHAPE	RIGHT COST	RIGHT AGILITY
Low friction No vacancies Not overstaffed	Critical competencies Succession management	Cost efficiency Manageable cost	Agile Resilient Flexible

This Workforce Plan provides the Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands with clear guidance on how to manage its workforce for the next fifteen years by aligning decisions about human resources (recruitment, development, retention and so on) with outcomes, goals, and strategies in its Annual Workplan, Corporate Plan and Strategic Community Plan. Embedded in this planning is the movement towards secondment placing for short periods to allow for future staff development and the capacity to exercise better management and flexibility of staff.

The Cocos (Keeling) Islands face some unique challenges regarding accessing human resources, particularly due to its extreme isolation and very limited capacity for population growth. The impacts of climate change are being felt more severely each year and earlier on the islands than almost any other local government district in Australia (save the Torres Strait Regional Council) and this will eventually result in a dramatic shift in employment emphasis for both the Shire and the community in general.

2022 – The Journey Begins

Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands Today

The Shire of Cocos Keeling Islands is a unique and diverse place, located in the Indian Ocean, approximately 2,950 kilometres north-west of Perth, Western Australia, 900 kilometres south south-west of Christmas Island and 1,270 kilometres south-west of Jakarta, Indonesia.

The municipality of the Shire encompasses all the Territory of the Cocos (Keeling) Islands. The islands are an external Australian Territory.

The two inhabited islands are Home Island, the home of the Cocos Malay community and the Shire Office, and West Island on which is located the airport, Government offices, the homes of most Government and contracted employees, and some private residences. Home Island and West Island make up an area of 7.18km2.

The two inhabited islands form part of a group of 26 low lying islands in the south atolls with a total area of approximately 14km2 and a coastline of 26km, and a single island, North Keeling Island, 27 kilometres to the north.

There is a ferry service between Home Island and West Island daily and twice weekly to Direction Island.

Introduction to the Workforce Plan 2022 – 2037

Workforce planning is the process an organisation uses to analyse its workforce and determine the steps it must take to prepare for future staffing needs. The benefits of workforce planning include:

- Having a clear and concise strategic workforce direction for the Shire.
- Ensuring all workforce requirements are directly aligned with the company's business plans.
- Enabling the best decisions in terms of how to structure the organization and deployment of the workforce.

1.1 - Purpose of the Workforce Plan 2022-2037

The Workforce Plan 2022-2037 forms part of the Shires Integrated Planning Framework. The purpose of this plan is to identify and determine the workforce needs for the Shire regarding capacity and capability needs to deliver the outcomes of the Shires Strategic Community Plan 2022 – 2037 and Corporate Business Plan 2022 – 2026.

The Workforce Plan 2022-2037 is based on a review of the past workforce initiatives, re alignment of workforce needs around the Shires service delivery framework; and future workforce initiatives that will ensure projected workforce needs are met as service and project requirements change. Past contractual works under grant funding require additional scrutiny to ensure a "business-like" approach is taken to resource utilisation.

To do this successfully, our Shire must:

- Develop an understanding of the current workforce and the future needs,
- Review the Shire's Staff Outside Hours Employment Policy to prioritise Shire first,
- Identify the emerging skills gaps in the capability of the workforce, and
- Capture the emerging challenges facing the business that may affect the workforce.

1.2 - Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

"Local governments face increasing and diverse challenges in providing local services and facilities for
their communities. To meet these challenges, local governments will need to have staff with appropriate knowledge, skills, and expertise. Skills shortages in the local government sector and other sectors in this State and across Australia have highlighted the need for a concerted Workforce Planning effort.

For these reasons, Workforce Planning is a key component of the Integrated Planning and Reporting
Framework which was introduced to Western Australian local governments during 2011, underpinned by regulatory amendments. Together with Strategic Community Planning, Asset Management and Long-Term Financial Planning, it forms part of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework.

Integrated Planning and Reporting in Western Australia is consistent with a national approach to local government sustainability, including the National Assessment Framework.

Workforce Planning involves council and all employees of a local government and is an important part of every manager's role in the organisation. Others, such as unions and professional associations, are also key stakeholders in supporting and assisting workforce development. Ultimately, workforce planning becomes an integral part of the planning and operations in a local government" (Hon G M (John) Castrilli MLA 2012 Workforce Planning the Essentials).

The development of this Workforce Plan is being guided by the necessity for a plan to be developed under the Department of Local Governments Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework guidelines.

The Workforce Plan is a guiding document within the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework.
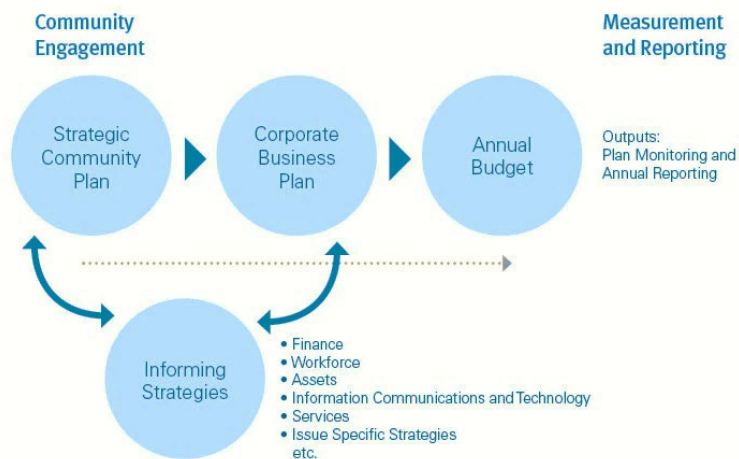
Elements of Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

1.3 - Aim of the Workforce Plan 2022 2037

The Shires workforce is without doubt the most important asset we have. In such an isolated environment as ours, it is critical the workforce is competent, engaged and highly productive.

"The effective use and development of people is a fundamental measure and requirement of local government performance. The program gathers data on not only the workforce profile but also on its capacity, performance, and productivity. This data provides deep insights into the performance of the council's workforce and identifies efficiencies and concerns for future workforce planning.

Additionally, this creates the opportunity to engage staff in your organisation's planning and can assist in internal change management" (Australian LG Performance Excellence Program 2019).

The Workforce plan will assist in realising the vision of the Shire through following the Shire Mission.

VISION

To build on the future sustainability of the Cocos (Keeling) Islands through the provision of core services to the community and to further develop tourism as a major industry to ensure the economic future of the islands are guaranteed.

MISSION

We will realise the Shire vision by:

- Providing leadership
- Promoting interest in Local Government
- Working in partnership with Government, business, clubs, and community groups
- Maintaining a strong liaison with political leaders
- Maintaining our community minded approach
- Canvassing year 11 and 12 students to provide pathways to local government employment
- Carrying out quality, visible community projects to engage with community

The Workforce Plan will allow the Shire to set its priorities within its resourcing capacity and deliver the short-, medium-, and long-term community priorities and aspirations. It is a plan that is continually evolving to ensure the Shire has the right people in the right place at the right time.

As a living document, throughout the life of the plan the Shire will undertake regular reviews to ensure the workforce plan actions are implemented, monitored, and reported against.

The plan itself does not produce all the right or wrong answers, but a series of alternatives from which the right course of action can be chosen. It is a circular process that requires feedback and ongoing adjustment because:

- The external environment will continue to change, and strategies may not be relevant to new circumstances,

- The agency's strategic corporate and business plans will change at least annually, having flow on effects for the workforce plan,

- Change in government policy and different business directions or priorities may require
adjustment to assumptions in workforce modelling or forecasts, and

- The Shire needs to be able to develop as the employer of first choice and be pliable and adaptive to the eve changing environment of the Cocos (Keeling) Islands

1.4 - Organisational Values

The Shires values underpin everything we do. We believe that a workforce that is operating in accordance with our values will be able to deliver great outcomes and services for the community.

The Shire values will be further embedded into the organisation, designing them into how we work and reinforced in all our workforce processes.

OUR VALUES

Service
Provide the best service we can.
We serve the community and each other.

Accountability
We take responsibility for our own actions.
We do what we say we will do.
Mistakes are an opportunity to learn.

Support
We support our team and our community.
Look for opportunities to help each other.

Respect
We respect and value others.
Our interactions are always respectful towards others.

Integrity
We will be honest and transparent with all our dealings.
Maintain confidentiality.
Trust each other.

Achievement
Being proactive and enabling the outcomes.
Be creative and think outside the square.

This plan provides the Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands with clear guidance on how to manage its workforce for the next ten years by aligning decisions about human resources i.e., onboarding, training, development and retention with outcomes, goals and strategies in its strategic community plan.

2. - The Current Organisation

The Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands faces some unique challenges in moving forward, delivering services to Home and West Islands where expectations often exceed capacity. Extreme isolation and very limited capacity for population growth stymies opportunity for generation of "own source" revenue and therefore Shire growth will always be challenged.

2.1 - English as a second language

Many male employees (particular the older employees) only speak English as a second language or have only basic English language skills, preferring to speak the traditional local language, Cocos Malay. Consequently, there is an identified need for further development to overcome language barriers. An opportunity for IOGTA to provide basic ACE courses in English.

All female employees speak both English and Cocos Malay fluently.

2.2 - Organisational Profile

As of 31 August 2022, the Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands had a permanent workforce of employees in the following capacity:

- 30 – Full time employees
- 8 – Part time employees
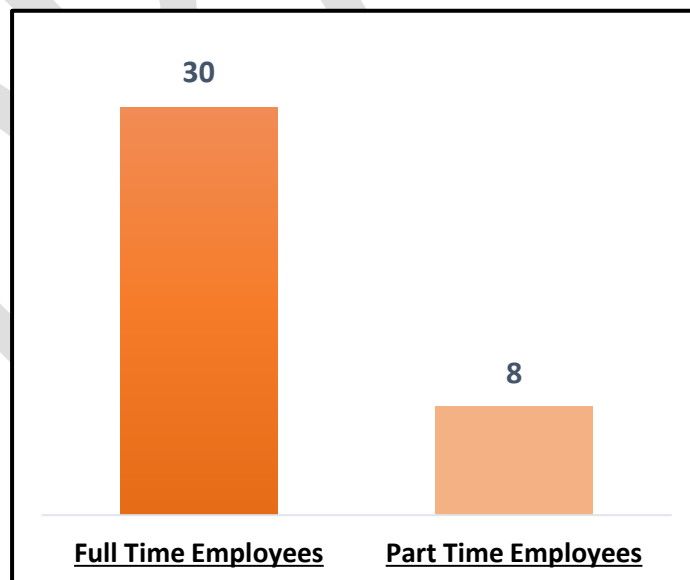
A fluctuating number of casual employees are also employed by the Shire to meet operational requirements, such as Administration, Library, and Infrastructure services.

- 30 % of all employees (including casual workforce) are female.
- 70 % of all employees (including casual workforce) are male.
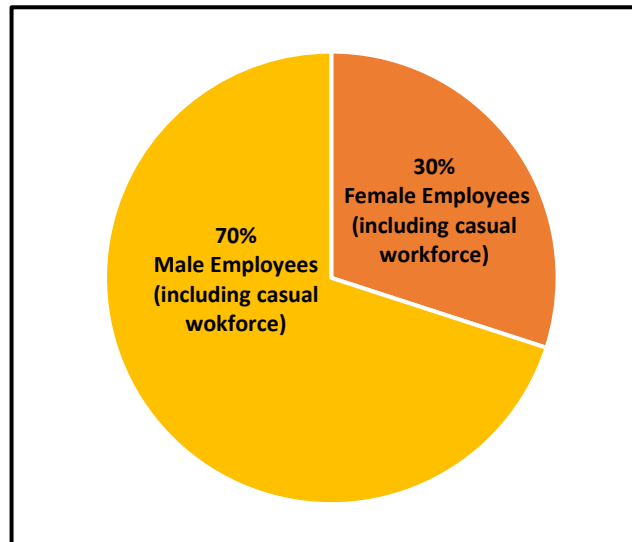
- 43% of all employees (including casual workforce) are under 41 years of age.
- 24 % of all employees (including casual workforce) are 41-50 years of age.
- 33 % of all employees are 51 years or older.
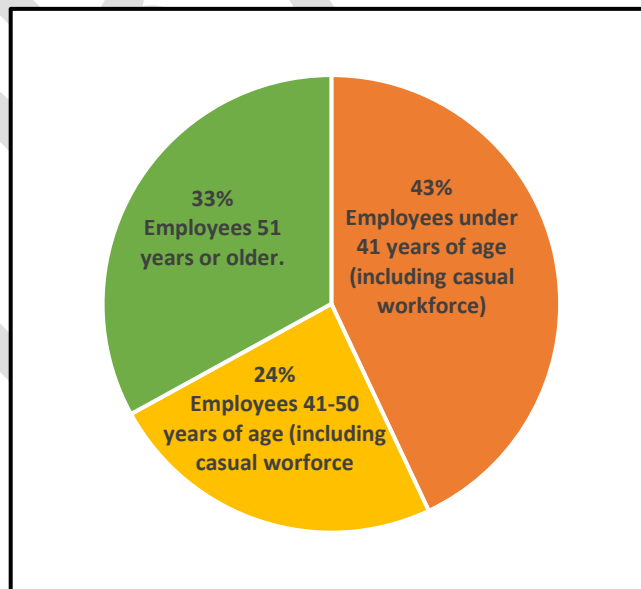
- 59% of the workforce are permanent, 11% are on fixed term contracts and 30% are casual.
- Median age of workforce 43 years.

Permanent — 59%

Fixed Term Contracts — 11%

Casual — 30%
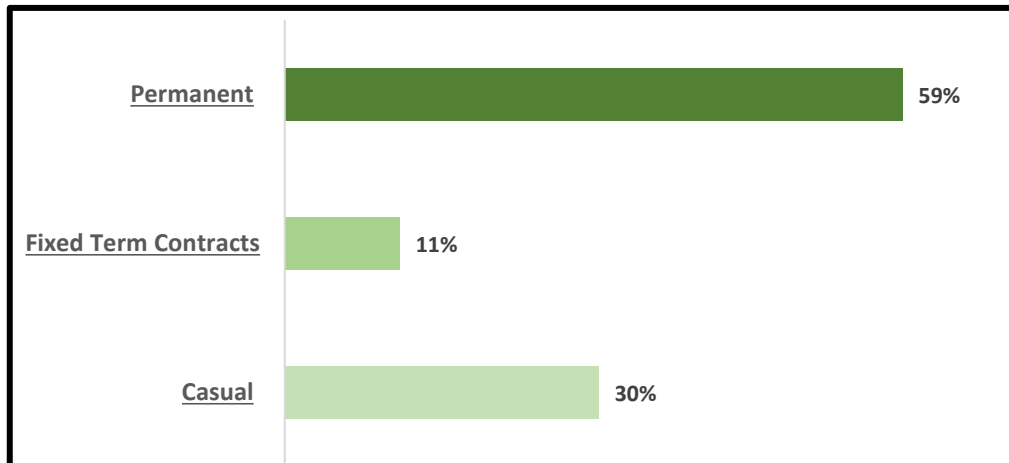
2.3 - Organisational Structure

The Shires organisational structure was reviewed and endorsed by Council in August 2022. The structure comprises four functional areas with an endorsed establishment of four key sectors i.e., Chief Executive Officer, Finance and Corporate Services, Infrastructure and Governance, Risk and Planning. The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for matters relevant to Shire staff and in August 2022 a new Organisation Structure was developed and approved by Council. (see appendices 1)

Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive Officer acts as the communications conduit between all facets of the community of the Cocos (Keeling) Islands. Relaying information to employees, elected members and the community as well as advising and embedding the culture and expectations of employee workplace behaviour.

The Chief Executive Officer is solely responsible for all staff and has additional direct functional areas of responsibility comprising of Community Development, Leasing and Policy Development and Planning Development.

Finance and Corporate Services

The Finance and Corporate Services staff enable and support the successful delivery of the Shires internal and external business activities.

Infrastructure

The infrastructure staff enable and provide Councils "outside" services including, building & construction, waste management parks and gardens and so forth.

Governance Risk and Planning

The governance, risk and planning staff enable and provide services include town planning, ranger, governance leadership, administration support and so forth.

2.4 - Financial Expenditure

Employment costs represents the largest percentage of annual expenditure for the Shire. In the 2022 – 2023 budget, employment costs account for 48% of the Shires operating expenditure, amounting to $1,008,455 made up of:

Shire $901,841
Trust $106,614
Total Opex & Capex Employee costs = $4,570,907

3 - Trends and Drivers

3.1 - Internal Drivers for Workforce Planning

3.1.1 - Equal Opportunity and Diversity

The Shire is committed to the utilisation of contemporary human resource practices through recruitment, selection, promotion, and other employee decisions being fair, consistent, and compliant with the principles set out in section 5.40 of the Act.

The Shires recruitment and selection process utilises all reasonable measures to attract a broad range of suitable candidates from which the most suitable candidate may be selected. It is somewhat problematic at time though as the number of employable people on the Cocos (Keeling) Islands is very limited.

The Shires recruitment and selection processes will focus on applicants that fully appreciate the opportunity and importance of working with the Shire. Individuals that can have a bearing as role models for the Shire and community need to be encouraged.

The Shire recognises its legal, moral, social, and ethical obligations to actively promote and practice the principles of equal opportunity in all aspects of employment. With the Shire encouraging people from different backgrounds to apply for roles.

The Shire recognises that there is an indeterminate number are former residents of the Cocos (Keeling) Islands that left the islands to pursue an education and are now unable to find employment in high end jobs that are a match for their education and training. Canvassing the former residents provides an opportunity to engage individuals who can inject new perspectives and directions due to their off-island experience.

3.1.2 Surveys and KPIs

During December 2021 all staff of the Shire were provided with the opportunity to participate in an Employment Engagement Survey the results of which were tabulated, and an Employee Engagement Action Plan was developed.

A voluntary process, 86% of staff engaged in the survey:

PARTICIPATION:

43 out of 51 invited staff members responded to the Employee Engagement Survey. This is a more than satisfactory result for this benchmark survey.

Contributors to the success were:

- Emphasis on the confidentiality of this survey
- Support to complete the survey in work time
- Ease of completion through online tool
- Ability to have the survey translated to Cocos Malay at the responder's discretion

A target of achieving this as a minimum participation result in the next survey will be set. It will be important for employees to see results communicated and action taken as an outcome of the survey to maintain confidence in this process and see value in completing surveys such as these.

Name	Invited	Responded	Participation Rate
∨ Overall			
Overall	51	44	86%
∨ Org Unit			
Community Development	6	3	50%
Finance & Corporate Services	5	5	100%
Infrastructure	35	31	89%
Risk & Governance	4	5	125%

With the intent of the survey designed to establish the engagement levels of staff to the organisation, the following results were revealed:
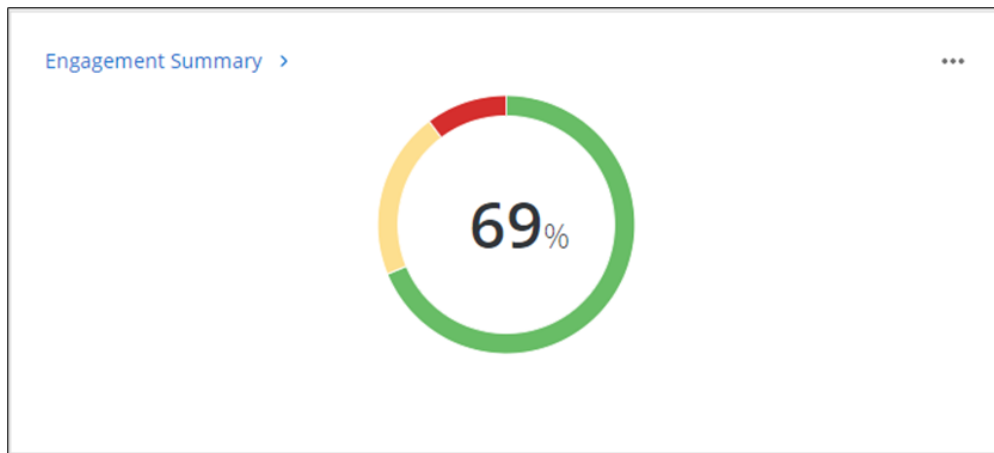
Engagement Summary

Based on a select algorithm of Questions answered the percentage of staff engagement is as follows:

- 69% Engaged
- 20% Neither Engaged nor Disengaged
- 10.5% Disengaged

As this is a baseline survey, the Shire would be looking to improve this result over time. It would be a more desirable result to have 80%+ engagement. A disengagement % is a concern and needs to be addressed to ascertain the reasons e.g., job fulfilment, lack of leadership, boredom, and so forth need to be explored.
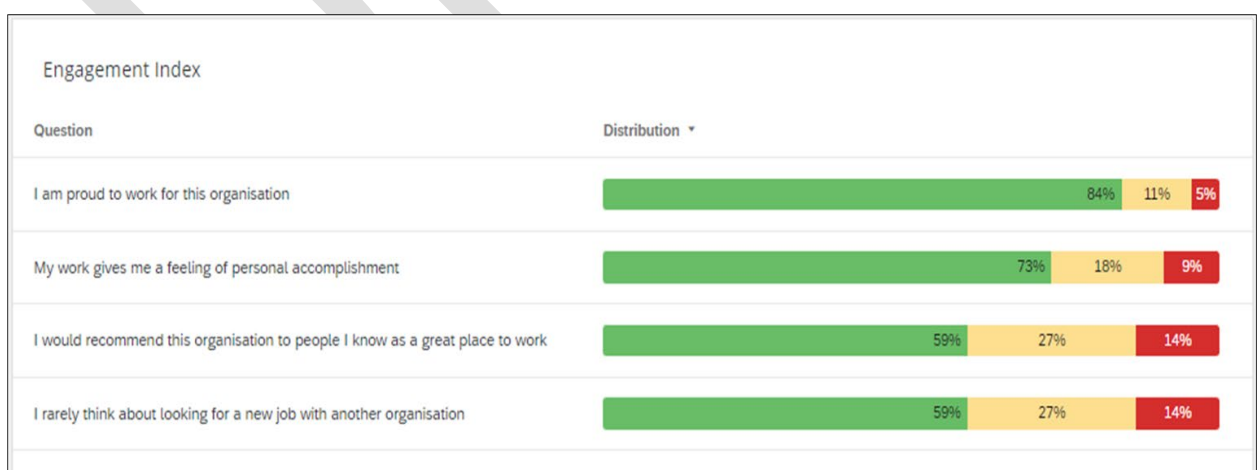
As part of the survey, both low scoring and high scoring questions were put to staff and the following results were revealed:

Top 5 Low Scoring Questions

Question	Distribution ▾		
We regularly use customer feedback to improve the way we work	43%	27%	30%
The leadership team does a good job of communicating the reasons behind important changes that ar...	43%	27%	30%
There is open and honest communication at this organisation	39%	30%	32%
I am paid fairly for the work I do	36%	18%	45%
At this organisation, people are rewarded according to their performance	32%	36%	32%

Top 5 High Scoring Questions

Question	Distribution ▾		
My job makes good use of my skills and abilities	95%		
My job is challenging and interesting	91%	7%	
Generally I feel positive about life	91%	7%	
I am interested in undertaking additional training to progress my career	86%	11%	
I feel positive about myself at work	86%	9%	5%

Key insights

The top 5 lowest scoring questions relate to communication and remuneration and reward. Only 36% of employees that responded to the survey feel that they are paid fairly for work completed. Similarly, 32% feel that people are rewarded in accordance with their performance.

Performing well, were questions with themes relating to the individual employee individually. Responses demonstrate that of those employees that responded a significant percentage are feeling positive about life (good mental wellbeing) and about themselves at work. They view their job as challenging and interesting, utilising their skills.

It is concerning that there are some employees (9%) that are either neutral or not feeling positive about life in general. It is important that the Shire continues/boosts efforts to assist with general well-being of employees.

With the survey being conducted as a benchmark survey a further survey will be conducted in December 2023 to ascertain any shift in our employee's outlook on their engagement with the Shire. The initial benchmark results are as follows:

Name	Mean	Distribution
> Collaboration	3.6	66% / 19% / 15%
> Communication	3.3	50% / 23% / 27%
> Leadership	3.3	52% / 25% / 23%
> Customer Focus	3.4	56% / 24% / 20%
> Employee Engagement	3.7	69% / 21% / 10%
> Growth and Development	3.6	63% / 22% / 16%
> Inclusion	3.4	54% / 23% / 22%
> Intent to Stay	5.8	75% / 7% / 18%
> Job Enablement	3.7	75% / 12% / 13%
> Performance & Accountability	3.3	56% / 19% / 25%
> Strategic Alignment	3.6	66% / 27% / 7%
> Work Process	3.5	65% / 20% / 15%
> Corporate Responsibility & Ethics	3.3	50% / 32% / 18%
> Managing Change	3.3	48% / 27% / 25%
> Pay & Benefits	2.9	41% / 23% / 36%
> Safety	3.7	67% / 20% / 13%
> Well Being	3.8	80% / 13% / 8%
> Work-Life Balance	3.6	71% / 14% / 15%

Scorecard

As this survey was conducted as a benchmark survey no targets were set for each category. The overall scorecard shown above highlights where the Shire can focus its efforts to improve employee engagement and satisfaction. Eight categories achieved an overall result of less than 60% favourable – Communication, Leadership, Customer Focus, Inclusion, Performance & Accountability, Corporate Responsibility & Ethics, Managing Change, and Pay & Benefits.

Intrinsic to any survey regarding staff engagement is measuring high and low scoring across a range of areas. The results i.e., heat map results are as follows:

	Overall	F	M
Responses	44	12	32
> Collaboration	66%	50%	73%
> Communication	50%	42%	53%
> Leadership	52%	44%	54%
> Customer Focus	56%	46%	59%
> Employee Engagement	69%	50%	76%
> Growth and Development	63%	52%	66%
> Inclusion	54%	49%	56%
> Intent to Stay	75%	50%	84%
> Job Enablement	75%	77%	74%
> Performance & Accountability	56%	50%	59%
> Strategic Alignment	66%	67%	66%
> Work Process	65%	54%	69%
> Corporate Responsibility & Ethics	50%	25%	59%
> Managing Change	48%	42%	51%
> Pay & Benefits	41%	46%	39%
> Safety	67%	62%	69%
> Well Being	80%	56%	88%
> Work-Life Balance	71%	65%	73%

Heat map by gender

In all areas, except for Job Enablement and Pay & Benefits, female employees have scored the organisation lower than male employees.

The lowest scoring area for female employees is Corporate Responsibility (25%), with employees feeling as though the organisation does not support them in their ability to carry out community initiatives. i.e., Volunteering for instance and a policy supporting it as an initiative.

The highest scoring area for female employees is Job Enablement. The female employees feel that their jobs are challenging and interesting (92%), they have the skills and authority they need to do their job and they are interested in further training.

The lowest scoring area for male employees is Pay & Benefits. With most male employees feeling as though they are not paid fairly for what they do, and the current pay and benefits do not meet their needs.

The highest scoring area for male employees is Wellbeing (88%), with most male employees feeling energised at work, feeling positive about themselves at work, and feeling generally positive about life. The second highest scoring area for male employees is Intent to stay (84%) suggesting that whilst they may be dissatisfied with their pay and benefits, they do not intend to leave the organisation in the next 3-5 years. Initiatives such as skills development and education to lean towards higher roles in the Shire may well support a greater percentage of satisfaction.

In rounding out the survey, opportunity was provided for employees to say what the Shire does well and what the Shire could do better to support its employees. The results of the survey are as follows:

What does this organisation do well that helps you be successful?	I am proud to work for this organisation
Supervisor and manager good mentoring.	5
Day to Day works	4
Give different types of work, experience at different jobs.	4
Lately there has been more training opportunity for staff which is nice to see as growth are both beneficial for the Organisation and self development to work and strive more effectively.	5
mendengar keperluan pekerja benda apa yg mahu digunakan untuk bekerja	4
communication from supervisor and attitude towards workers	4
a good and fair supervisor to manage the team work	4
more jobs, there have put me as a traineeship back in 2017-18 to do cert III in civil construction which is helpful for me at the task i am doing.	5
more experience	4
Work as a team	5
I have resources to do my job, strong organisational leadership	3
Training	4
Kerjasama	5
Having the support from different employees in the office and checking up on others whether they are doing good outside and inside of the workplace.	4
Provide training	2
Provide training to improve my skills	4
Provide Training	3
Helps me do my apprenticeship	4
Ability to discuss and work through issues together instead of having to deal with the issue by yourself.	5
Great place to work, flexibility, leaders show employees they're valued, share organisation vision	5
nothing	2
Give employees opportunity to be part of any training that is available on island	4
Offers advice and support with career goals and personnel development opportunities, training opportunities and space to develop and grow	4
Work as a team and look after one another	4
We get given the opportunity as a casual to get the training that we need to be successful.	5
Fair leave benefits and training opportunities.	4
Time - More higher level, experienced managers to share workload	3
Provide training and very supportive	4
encourage personal development and training where applicable	4
can already see things are moving foward	4
further training and development	4

Do well

The table above, shows the free text provided by employees responding to the question: "What does this organisation do well that helps you be successful", also shown is their response to the question "I am proud to work for this organisation".

A common theme coming through is the organisations commitment to providing training & development opportunities (although this is also seen in the "could do better" responses).

One response stands out as it appears that it may have been intended for the "could do better" response and that is:

Time – more higher level, experienced managers to the share workload.

Another area to consider include greater communication throughout the performance review and training development process.

What could this organisation do better to help you be successful?	I am proud to work for this organisati ▼
Nothing	5
Can't think of anything.	4
Could provide more training and qualifications.	4
1. The Shire needs a permanent uniform that everyone need to stick to and wear during work hours. As a local government, we need to keep our appearance and image professional and wearing our uniform will set a nice image to the Organisation. 2. I think staff needs not constant but refresher training or regular training on work environment eg, health training. Working in a small community is hard but should not be hard if we all work together for 1 goal and that is to better our community and provide service to the community. I have seen staff in the office take personally feelings that may have been caused at home or after work hours into work and have created a barriers which I believe creating an unhealthy work environment. 3. We need to look into a way that will allow us to better manage incoming items to keep track of what is received. I also think we need to have some kind of register/inventory list of what is being taken from the depo to keep track of what is going out and who it has been assigned to. This will us keep track of tools better and give us an idea of what is the life spam of tools and how do we mange them in terms of use. 4. I think a certain boundary needs to be set between outside workers and inside workers. Lately outside worker has been having/showing constant demands and persistent request without taking a step back and taking into account the work load and priorities of office staff. This implies to ordering item and tools. They need to understand the process of ordering and take into account the freight service to the IOT. This has result to unexpected budging into the office and asking about the same thing over and over again.	5
fair team works	4
pay rise.	5
more jobs	4
stop criticizing and accept the fact that not everybody is the same, instead, give positive encouragements that could change a person's approach towards work ethic.	5
Staff should be more accountable or responsible for their own action, stop dealing with personal matters on company time, stop time wasting, interrupting other staff members when everyone is expected to work, stop attending to personal matters too often and too long during work hours, stop excessive use of company resources for personal reasons/gains, stop getting too involved in other organisation business, encourage high level of service when dealing with customers when represent the Shire for example self presentation, proud to wear uniforms.	3

What could this organisation do better to help you be successful?	I am proud to work for this organisati
Increase hourly rates	4
Kerjasama	5
Not sure.	4
Pay rise - for the amount of hard work and duties we put in the organisation. Gives us motivation and looking forward to come to work every day.	2
Listen to the employees, take on board comments and ideas given by employees	4
Pay rise so workers are happy and motivated to come to work every morning and get work can de done quicker.	3
I courage me to take on course and tickets	4
Discuss training opportunities to gain more skills for our job.	5
Encourage positive attitude, be a team player, willingness to take on extra duties, discourage excessive gossiping, be considerate, keep personal life private, don't do personal business on organisation technology,	5
more traning	2
Employ another mechanic, one for west one for home. Grant another carpenter apprentice	4
I need a grader ticket and more training with my grading	4
Just to be fair with all the workers	5
Better communication, better relationships between part time staff and supervisors.	4
outsource	3
Provide training where needed	4
additional training and resources	4
fairness, and work to gather is the key	4
provide a long term succession plan	4

Do better

The table above, shows the free text provided by employees responding to the question:

"What could this organisation do better to help you be successful", also shown is their response to the question "I am proud to work for this organisation".

Common themes demonstrated in these responses are:
• Pay & Benefits not satisfactory
• Workload pressures for some staff, and a need for a longer-term succession plan
• Training & Development opportunities
• Commitment and attitude of staff members to work
• Communication between the organisation staff members as well as colleague to colleague

Conclusion

The Shire will continue to monitor factors that influence workforce outcomes, and these will be interrogated to inform and identify where the Shire can improve its existing workforce programs and processes or develop new approaches to emerging issues.

Methods to be used by the Shire will include:

- Further Employee Engagement Surveys – conducted on an annual basis to determine levels of engagement of Shire staff and any trends that may/may not influence the development of the workforce.

- Training and development - The Shire is currently engaging training for the leadership group to carry out its biennial staff performance evaluation and training plan development. These are a critical source of information for the development of workforce plan strategies and initiatives as it helps direct the available resources needed to address any major issues that arise.

- Exit interviews - analysing reasons employees are coming and going from the organisation allows the Shire to be agile and adapt to wider workforce needs and to continue to be an employer of choice.

- Workforce and community demographics – analysis for workforce demand to cater for resident population and its demographics will be integral to Workforce Planning.

- Leave balances – engagement of staff and following the Shire leave management policy combined with continual monitoring of Shire staff leave balances will afford valuable data for Workforce Planning and future development of the Shire's workforce.

- Industry benchmarking - Australasian Local Government Performance Excellence Program.
  The program provides valuable workforce benchmarking and trend data of the Shire's workforce shape and performance against other Australia and New Zealand Local Governments. Within reason, the Shire can drill down to comparing similar size and location local governments and this contributes to the Shire making informed decisions about its workforce planning.

- Strategic Planning and Major Projects - commitment to deliver major projects because of strategic planning processes can influence future workforce numbers, organisational structures, and skill development programs. Some of the major projects as outlined in the Corporate Business Plan that will affect the first five years of this plan will be completion of:
    1. reconstruction of the Tokoh building,
    2. completion of the retail centre,
    3. completion of Home Island Roads works, and
    4. continued foreshore flood mitigation works

- Community/Customer Satisfaction Surveys – will provide an indication as to how well Shire staff are completing various tasks and projects and whether there needs to be a revision of the workforce to provide a better service or not. A community survey completed throughout September and October 2022 provided results that indicate

areas of strengths and weaknesses of the Shire employees. These results have been taken into consideration in the development of this plan.

2022 to 2037 Where to from here?

The Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands has possibly the lowest number of unemployed people for any Local Government area in Australia. Anecdotally as of October 2022, only one resident person of working age was unemployed, and this was due to an ill health issue. The challenge therefore is to have the Shire become the employer of choice for all residents of the Cocos (Keeling) Islands.

The Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands is characterized by a heavy dependency upon Commonwealth Government grants to fund its operations and capital projects. Its annual rate revenue is only $442,694 .00 and fees and charges only $442,694.00 for the Shire plus $480,731.00 for the Trust a total of $1,111,274.00.

Using the current formula, an estimated annual rate and fees and charges revenue for the next 15 years increase from the current $1,111,274.00 to $1,144,612.00.

The Shires revenue from fees and charges has the capacity to increase at a rate that outruns the CPI Index if the Commonwealth Government continue to support the Shire through contractual agreements to carry out works associated with mitigation of erosion risk and remediation of erosion damage on both Home and West Island. Flood damage and mitigation works are expected to become the mainstay and a major part of employment for the Shire from 2022 – 2023 to 2022 – 2037, increasing on an annual basis.

There is current and future opportunity for the Shire to increase its workforce in the civil construction area assuming suitable plant operators can be employed or interested individuals trained and employed.

Any further opportunities for workforce growth will generally be reliant on a matching revenue stream from other external sources.

The development of the Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands Strategic Corporate Plan, Corporate Business Plan and the 2022 – 2023 Budget and future annual Work Plans will significantly influence the future workforce needs of the Shire.

In the development of this Workplace Plan, a number of reviews have been undertaken and whilst not an exhaustive list, some of these reviews include:

- Senior management and leadership team reviews of staffing needs,
- Review of demographic and performance data. This includes reviewing demographics, gender, age, recruitment, turnover, remuneration and other rewards and conflicts or grievances, and
- Future skill requirements and staffing levels.

Required Actions

Previous studies and recent reviews have resolved that the actions to identify and cost future workforce needs have been identified as follows:

- Employment of appropriate staff to perform a Human Resource Management role for the Shire and lead:

    1. Attraction and Retention.
    2. Mentoring.
    3. Training and Development.
    4. Succession Planning; and
    5. Monitoring and Evaluation.

Human Resources Staff

In an organisation such as the Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands, our staff are our most important asset. It is imperative that Shire staff are supported by Contemporary Human Resource Management which is essentially - the policies and practices required to perform the routines of human resources in an organization, such as employee staffing, staff development, performance management, compensation management, and encouraging employee involvement in decision making. A simple yet effective model for Human Resource Management follows. First produced and amended in the early 2000's the model shows how Human Resource activities are aligned with organizational strategy and lead to business performance. According to this model, HR will only be effective if its strategy is aligned with business strategy (in line with the best-fit theory). HR strategy is thus derived from the overall strategy. This model is an ideal "fit" for the Shire's legislated Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework.

Attraction and Retention

Attract

As some 75 per cent of the Islands' population is of Cocos Malay descent it is imperative that the Shire's workforce reflects this diversity and be culturally sensitive to the needs of the Muslim population. Such sensitivity should include making provision or allowance for workplace praying, festivals etc.

2020 ABS data shows:

Estimated resident population (no.)   573 estimated 450 Cocos Malay descent

Median age of residents   41.9 years

Working age population (aged 15-64 years) (%)   57.4 compared to Australia wide 65.1%

Given the age of the current workforce, compared to the median age of residents, significant emphasis should be placed upon attracting school leavers and young adults to pursue a career in one of the various roles available in local government.

With the small net number of available beds in the Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands there is limited opportunity to source an external element of the Shire's workforce. There is however a small stable labour market within the Cocos (Keeling) Islands that the Shire has access to. It is inherent that the Shire build its reputation and standards to become the employer of choice for all available workers on the Cocos (Keeling) Islands. This will provide first choice employees seeking strong employment and social foundations that lead to better and permanent employment opportunities. A consequence of this being in collaboration with other organisations, the Shire not only has, but displays high expectations from its staff.

Development of an Annual Workplan for the Shire that ties into the Shires Corporate Business Plan and 15-year Community Strategic Plan and Long-Term Financial Plan is quintessential to identifying immediate and future workforce needs. Annual budgets must cater for the employment needs each financial year and streamlined administrative and engagement processes will greatly assist in attracting first choice employees.

Retention

Retention strategies should focus on ensuring staff are equipped with the necessary tools and direction needed to perform their tasks. Such strategies should include balancing work-life considerations, occupational health and safety and fostering community spirit. An area of consideration often overlooked is that of retention bonuses, which should be investigated by the Shire.

In the past, the Shire has trained a number of apprentices in a variety of fields and once nearing qualification or becoming qualified they left to continue their employment with other

organisations on the islands. It is a challenge for the Shire to be the employer of choice by following retention strategies identified below.

The Fair Work Act 2009 and the Local Government Officers' (Western Australia) Award 2021 set the terms, conditions, and remuneration for all Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands other than the Chief Executive Officer and the Managers of Infrastructure and Finance and Corporate Services. It is the Chief Executive Officers legislated responsibility to ensure all staff are afforded the right terms, condition, and remuneration for the role they have with the Shire. Additionally, the Shire has the free air travel each year for employees to support their retention.

The development or improvement on current retention strategies such as:

- On boarding and induction processes,
- Flexible working arrangements,
- Career planning and professional development,
- Employee reward and recognition programs,
- Position descriptions developed position specific with training for employees if required,
- Initiatives aimed at reducing the disparity between Cocos (Keeling) Islands workers and the Australian mainland by continuance of the free annual airfares for employees to travel to Perth and back,
- Introduction of mentoring programs to develop both mentors and mentees,

- Ongoing review and improvement in performance guidelines and associated remuneration and rewards, and
- Scholarships to attend courses in block release format, as in apprenticeships for staff.

Mentoring

Mentoring is of enormous importance and an investment the Shire needs to be pursuing if it is to achieve its goal of employer of choice. The Centre for Health Leadership & Practice defines mentoring - *"as a process in which an experienced individual helps another person develop his or her goals and skills through a series of time-limited, confidential, one-on-one conversations and other learning activities. Mentors also draw benefits from the mentoring relationship. As a mentor, you will have the opportunity to share your wisdom and experiences, evolve your own thinking, develop a new relationship, and deepen your skills as a mentor."*

In an article by Anthony Tjan in 2017 he also described the role of a mentor the Shire should aspire to as: *"There are lots of ways to be a good mentor, but there are a few common principles that the best mentors share. One principle is putting the relationship before the mentorship. No amount of mentorship training outweighs the value of an authentic connection between mentor and mentee. Secondly, focus on developing your mentee's character and not just their job skills. Invest in your mentee's self-awareness, empathy, and capacity for respect. The next practice of good mentors is sharing their optimism much more*

than their cynicism. If your mentee shares an idea that seems unrealistic, try the 24 x 3 rule: spend 24 seconds, 24 minutes, or a day thinking about all the reasons that the idea is good before you criticize any aspect of it. Finally, be more loyal to your mentee than you are to your company. If your mentee's passions and skills are not a good fit for their job, or if your company has limited opportunities for your mentee to move up, you should help them move on. At its highest level, mentorship means committing to helping other become fuller versions of themselves".

Building upon attraction and retention strategies, formal mentoring strategies can lead to improved employee retention and human resource planning and management.

Successful mentoring will also promote a more inclusive workplace culture that supports the development of employees including leaders.

Given the predominant Cocos Malay culture on the Cocos Islands and the need to attract younger employees, "tapping" into the knowledge and guidance of existing staff as mentors is seen as crucial to the development of the workforce.

With a foundation being set, the Shire must continue to develop and evolve as a recognised best practice mentoring organisation by:

- Custom-designed leadership development strategies and curricula,
- Workshops, retreats, and presentations including collaborative leadership, team dynamics, and cultural proficiency,
- Senior level team building and strategic planning,
- Regular on-site toolbox meetings to mentor and guide employees,
- Customized mentoring programs, and training in coaching and mentoring skills,

- Succession planning strategies for leaders, team members, and human resources personnel,
- Adult learning approaches, assessment tools, and train the trainer programs to build organizational capacity, and
- Adopt and implement guidelines for mentoring.

Training and Development

An effective training program allows the Shire to strengthen those skills that each employee needs to improve. A development program brings all employees to a higher level, so they all have similar skills and knowledge. This helps reduce any weak links within the company who rely heavily on others to complete basic work tasks.

Effective human resource management requires a proactive approach is taken to identify training and development needs, source a training provider and conduct of the training.

With an identified gap in the capacity of some members of the Shire's leadership team to conduct performance reviews and develop Training and Development Plans for all employees. The West Australian Local Government Association (WALGA) has been engaged to carry out training for the leadership team and an appropriate Employee Performance and Development Review Policy and Procedure and Employee Performance and Development Review Form have been developed in conjunction with WALGA. (See appendices 2 and 3)

In the Cocos (Keeling) Islands the main training provider is the Indian Ocean Group Training Association (IOGTA) but technological advances associated with the provision of National Broadband Network in 2015 have led to other forms of training being available such as webinars, video conferencing, teams meetings and so forth.

The following actions must occur for a successful training and development program to be implemented and followed through by the Shire:

- Undertake a skills audit of the existing Shire workforce,
- Undertake initial and then bi-annual performance reviews and development of training plans for all employees,
- Identify skills gaps and needs as informed by the Annual Workplan, Corporate Business Plan and Strategic Community Plan,
- Ensure sufficient provision is made in each year's Shires budget to meet the cost of training and development, and
- Liaise with IOGTA and other training providers with regards to the provision of suitable training and development programs.

Succession Planning

Importantly, succession planning by the Shire will ensure that as an organisation, we can continue running smoothly after an important role becomes vacant. The Shire should also consider a succession plan to retain internal corporate knowledge, identify skill gap needs for training and to invest in our employees. An appropriate model of succession planning for the Shire is as follows.

As previously noted, the Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands has an ageing workforce due mainly to the limited number of permanent jobs on the Islands (resulting in people holding onto their jobs) and lack of off-island alternatives (e.g., fly-in, fly-out employment).

Accordingly, a succession plan to enable a smooth transition of a worker into an important vacancy is indicative of the effectiveness of our workforce planning. In that respect we must consider and undertake the following:

- Identify key positions from the abovementioned skills audit,
- Undertake a retirement intentions survey to establish time available to up-skill potential replacements,
- Use job rotation to enable existing workers higher duty opportunities,
- Accommodate older staff members to assist in mentoring, training etc, and
- Interview retiring employees to extract important historical information.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Any business plan is only as good as how well it captures the required audience's attention and how well they become "owners" and administrators of the plan. Constant monitoring, review, evaluation and refining of the workforce plan is the key to maximizing long term benefits to Shire staff and the organisation itself.

Monitoring is most effective where workplace planning actions and strategies are reflected in business plans and corporate plans. To this end, the Workforce Plan will be reviewed annually at the same and in conjunction with the Shires suite of plans to be approved each financial year such as:

- Annual Work Plan,
- Shire budget,
- Organisation structure,
- Corporate Plan,
- Strategic Community Plan, and
- Long term financial plan

The following actions will also be an inherent component of this Workforce Plan to achieve maximum outcomes:

- Establish a corporate information system with key baseline data to measure outcomes against expectations,
- Use of benchmarking data will enable comparisons with projections to be made easily, as well as for measurement against industry standards,
- Establish performance measurement systems that will facilitate monitoring of an individual's learning, progression, and capabilities,
- Minutes and achievement data from Leadership Team Meetings, Toolbox Meetings, Occupational Health and Safety Meetings and such like are all valuable data to measure outcomes, and
- Measurement of other actions such as acceptance of corporate values effectiveness of communications and acceptance of cultural change via surveys or benchmarks should be undertaken annually.

External Influencing Factors

The Commonwealth of Australia have given all indications of investing very heavily in infrastructure development, construction, and ongoing maintenance. With the current unemployment ratio of almost zero for the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, projects such as the runway upgrade will have broad appeal for our employees. Higher wages, longer hours and alternative work environments will be seen as opportunities very difficult to refuse. Whilst there is potential for the Shire to lose staff to roles such as labouring, cleaning, hospitality and machinery operation roles, there are advantages for the individuals in terms of training and development and participating in a great experience outside the Shire.

With potential impacts on the Shire by the loss of staff, careful monitoring and review of basic services must be done to ensure the community does not lose out.

2022 – 2023 Actions and timelines

November 2022	Workforce Plan approved by Council
November 2022	WALGA training for the Shire's leadership team
March 2023	Human Resource staff member engaged
April 2023	Performance reviews, skills audit and training and development plans for all employees carried out
June 2023	Combined training plan for all employees developed
June 2023	Review of Workforce Plan undertaken

Appendices

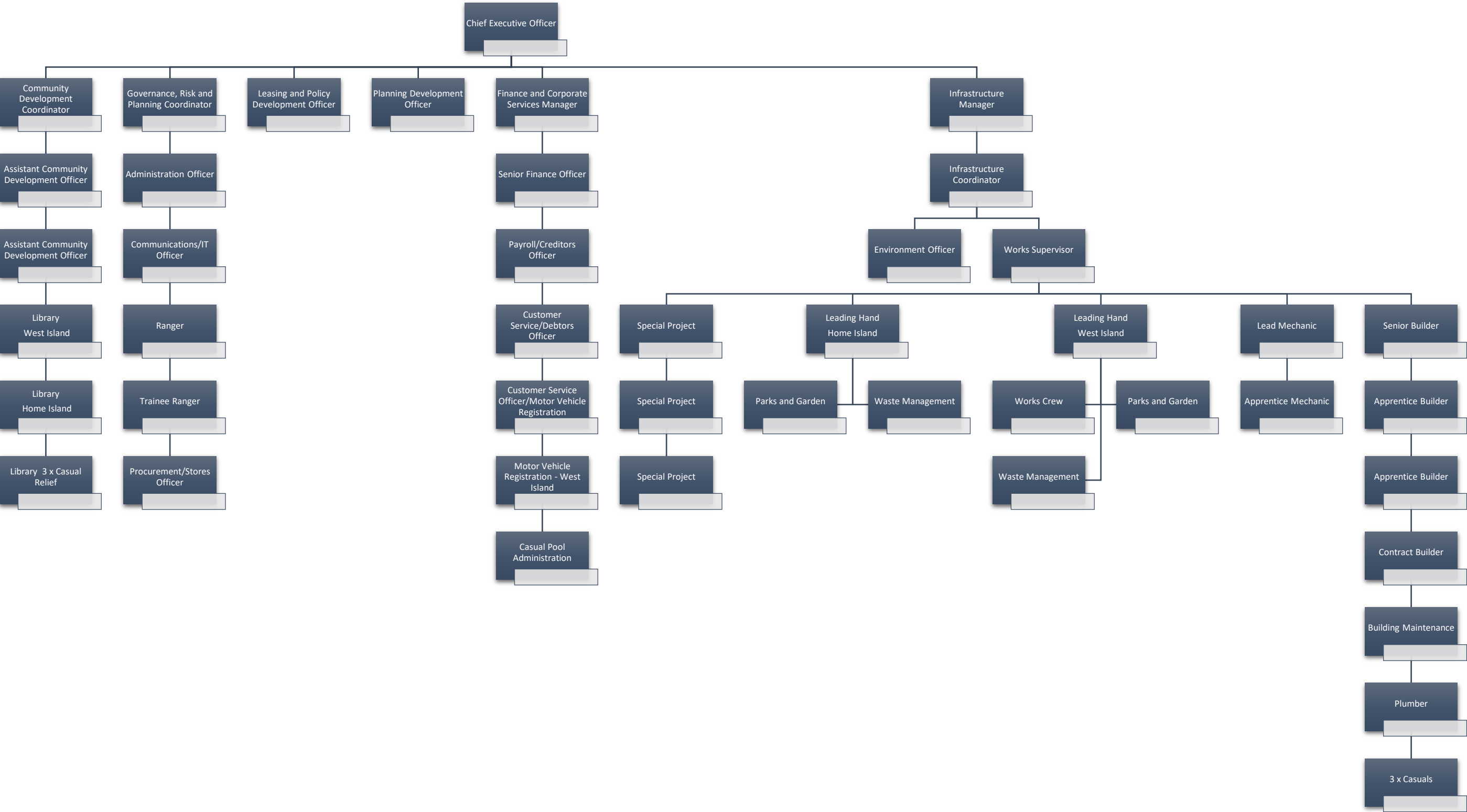Appendix 1 - Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands Organisational Chart – August 2022

Appendix 2 - Employee Performance and Development Review Policy and Procedure

Appendix 3 - Employee Performance and Development Review Form

SHIRE OF COCOS (KEELING) ISLANDS ORGANISATIONAL CHART AUGUST 2022

- Chief Executive Officer
  - Community Development Coordinator
    - Assistant Community Development Officer
      - Assistant Community Development Officer
        - Library West Island
          - Library Home Island
            - Library 3 x Casual Relief
  - Governance, Risk and Planning Coordinator
    - Administration Officer
      - Communications/IT Officer
        - Ranger
          - Trainee Ranger
            - Procurement/Stores Officer
  - Leasing and Policy Development Officer
  - Planning Development Officer
  - Finance and Corporate Services Manager
    - Senior Finance Officer
      - Payroll/Creditors Officer
        - Customer Service/Debtors Officer
          - Customer Service Officer/Motor Vehicle Registration
            - Motor Vehicle Registration - West Island
              - Casual Pool Administration
  - Infrastructure Manager
    - Infrastructure Coordinator
      - Environment Officer
      - Works Supervisor
        - Special Project
          - Special Project
            - Special Project
        - Leading Hand Home Island
          - Parks and Garden
          - Waste Management
        - Leading Hand West Island
          - Works Crew
            - Waste Management
          - Parks and Garden
        - Lead Mechanic
          - Apprentice Mechanic
        - Senior Builder
          - Apprentice Builder
            - Apprentice Builder
              - Contract Builder
                - Building Maintenance
                  - Plumber
                    - 3 x Casuals

Employee Performance and Development Review Policy

Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer

Objective

This policy is designed to ensure that employee performance and development reviews are conducted in an effective and consistent manner. A successful employee performance development review process will assist the Shire meets it vision, values, and strategic focus by enabling employees to be engaged and motivated**.**

Performance and development reviews provide a framework for employees to set performance objectives which are meaningful in their current role, contribute to career goals, and align to the Shire's strategic direction.

The Shire recognises that continuing to focus on the career development of its employees is a beneficial strategy in retaining employees and developing each employee's potential.

Scope

This policy applies to all Shire employees except for the Chief Executive Officer and temporary and casual employees that are engaged for less than a year.

Policy

1.   Commitment
The Shire is committed to conducting performance reviews in a fair and consistent manner. Employees and their line manager will develop a performance plan consisting of performance objectives (related to overall business objectives), performance standards, and a development plan to ensure the employee has the skills and knowledge to meet the specified objectives.

Each employee will be appraised on a bi-annual basis to discuss performance objectives and development plans with their immediate line manager.

The Shire will commit to ensuring that line managers are equipped to undertake the performance and development review process.

2. Performance and development review procedure

2.1 Frequency of employee performance and development reviews

Employee performance and development reviews will be conducted as outlined below, unless special permission to delay the review has been sought from the CEO. Permission will be only granted in certain circumstances such as prolonged higher duties arrangements and periods of leave.

Employee performance and development reviews will be scheduled as follows:
- during induction and on-boarding process – within three months of commencement
- the mid-year review – May each year, and
- the annual review – November each year.

2.2 Objective setting and review

New employees, or employees who have changed roles or had significant changes made to their duties and responsibilities, will have their initial performance development, and review discussion and agree to performance objectives within the first three months of their appointment.

This will provide the employee with clarity about the organisational objectives and how their performance can contribute to achieving these objectives.

Performance objectives will provide the Shire with an opportunity to:
- formally set the expectations, requirements, and objectives of the role
- outline the overall business and strategic objectives of the Shire, function, and role
- provide specific role or project aims and milestones, and
- establish a training and development program.

Performance objectives will be developed using the **SMART** model outlined below.

Specific – clearly defined and understood by the employee and the line manager.

Measureable – able to be measured in terms of progress or achievement, so the employee and line manager can identify to what extent the objective has been achieved at the mid-year and annual reviews.

Attainable –the employee and line manager are of the view the performance objective is achievable.

Relevant – related to the position description, the employee's role and broader team, and aligned to organisational objectives.

Time bound – a timeframe needs to be agreed and documented when setting objectives.

The employee and their line manager must agree to the performance objectives and measures, and identify any training and development required.

2.3 Position descriptions

Position descriptions are a key reference when formulating performance objectives. As part of the performance review process the Shire will review the position description to ensure that is accurately reflects the employee's role and responsibilities.

2.4 Mid-year and annual review meetings

Employee performance and development reviews will be conducted in a confidential manner. Employees will be given at least a week's notice of the performance review meeting so they can prepare accordingly. The meeting will be conducted with the employee and their line manager.

The performance and development review will be recorded on the **Employee Performance and Development Review Form**. A record of the review will be placed on the employee's personnel file.

2.5 The mid-year review:

The purpose of the mid-year review meeting is to:
- Allow the employee and line manager to formally come together and discuss the employee's progress against the agreed objectives
- Allow the employee and line manager to comment on and discuss the expected behaviours
- Review training and development needs and strategies

2.6 The annual review:

The purpose of the annual review meeting is to:
- Allow the employee and the line manager to agree on the final assessment of the employee during the full review period, which is usually twelve months
- Ensure the line manager formally tasks the employee for the next review period, and to set up training and development needs and strategies
- Encourage the employee to provide constructive feedback to their line manager in relation to their leadership, support, and guidance

The final assessment is based on:
- the extent to which performance objectives have been met (taking into account management of any obstacles), and
- a judgment of the expected behaviours being demonstrated.

2.7 Informal feedback meetings

During the 12-month review period, regular informal discussions and two-way communication must take place. Quality conversations will include:

- sharing feedback and observations
- identifying how to overcome obstacles which may be preventing the achievement of performance objectives within the timeframe and/or budget allocated
- clarifying performance expectations where there are gaps, and
- discussing professional development or career opportunities.

Having regular discussions ensures there are no surprises for either the employee or the line manager during the formal annual review meeting.

3. Training and development

The Shire commits to providing training and development in line with the requirements of the role, budgetary limitations, and operational needs of the organisation for effective strategic planning. Where training and development opportunities are identified as part of the employee performance and development review process this should be provided to the line manager for review and action.

4. Organisational values and behaviours

The Shire will ensure the employee performance and development review measures the employee's ability to demonstrate and adhere to organisational values as outlined in the strategic plan. The review will also measure the employee's behaviour in line with the Shire's values, policies and expected standards of behaviour.

5. Responsibilities

5.1 Responsibilities of employees

Employees must actively participate in the performance objective setting process, performance, and development review meetings, and working towards the objectives set through the review process.

5.2 Responsibilities of line managers

Line managers must schedule and conduct the employee performance and development review meeting in line with the timeframes set out in this policy and to give honest and constructive feedback on an ongoing basis. To assign objectives effectively, the line manager must:

- ensure the objectives are within the employee's capacity
- discuss objectives with the employee before finalising, and
- provide context for the employee's objectives i.e., to give an overview of the big picture.

6. Underperformance

Where unsatisfactory performance is identified by the Shire, this will be dealt with by individual mentoring and support. Sustained and/or serious underperformance may lead to disciplinary action and/or termination of employment

7. Variation to this policy

This policy may be cancelled or varied from time to time. The Shire's employees will be notified of any variation to this policy by the normal correspondence method.

Definitions

CEO (Chief Executive Officer) - A person who holds an appointment under section 194 of the Local Government Act 2009.

Line Managers - Community Development Coordinator, Governance Risk & Planning Coordinator, Finance & Corporate Services Manager, Infrastructure Manager, Infrastructure Coordinator.

Relevant Legislation/Local Law

Local Government Act (WA) (CKI) 1995

Office Use Only				
Relevant Delegations				
Council Adoption	Date		Resolution #	
Reviewed/Modified	Date		Resolution #	
Reviewed/Modified	Date		Resolution #	

Employee Performance and Development Review Form

Employee Name:	
Employee Position:	
Line Manager Name:	
Date of Review:	
Review Stage:	

1. Position description and performance objectives

Check the relevant boxes to indicate the employee's performance in each area and against each performance objective. If additional tasks have been performed, ensure they are included. Include any missing information to the employee's position description, if required.

Task description (taken from position description)	Does not meet expectations	Meets expectations	Exceeds expectations	Comments
E.g. Ensure the fortnightly payroll is completed correctly and on time.				

2. Organisational values and behaviours

Organisational values and behaviours expected by the Shire.

Shire Value	Does not meet expectations	Meets expectations	Exceeds expectations	Comments
Service: Provide the best service we can. We serve the community and each other.				
Accountability: We take responsibility for our own actions. We do what we say we will do. Mistakes are an opportunity to learn.				
Support: We support our team and our community. Look for opportunities to help each other.				
Respect: We respect and value others. Our interactions are always respectful towards others.				
Integrity: We will be honest and transparent with all our dealings. Maintain confidentiality. Trust each other.				
Achievement: Being proactive and enabling the outcomes. Be creative and think outside the square.				

3. Individual development opportunities/targets

Explore areas for development in line with career progression.

Goal	Time	Action taken	Completed?	Comments
E.g. Review Human Resources policies.		*E.g. Started project.*	*E.g. No.*	*E.g. Delayed due to leave of staff.*

4. Training identified

Course	Reasons	Comments
E.g. Award interpretation for payroll officers.	*E.g. Greater understanding of the award.*	*E.g. Assist in meeting the KPIs and requirements of the role.*

5. Action plan for next review

Goal	Action Required	Date of Completion

6. Line manager's comments on employee's performance

E.g. Employee works well in a team environment and always meets deadlines. Employee is not proficient in Excel and could do with some training.

7. Employee's comments on performance

E.g. I am really enjoying the role and would like to learn more about accounting.

8. Acknowledgement of performance development review

Reviewer signature: _____ Date: _____/_____/_____

Employee signature: _____ Date: _____/_____/_____