

Workforce Plan

2021 - 2025

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Campaspe Shire Council (CSC) oversees the delivery of a diverse range of programs, services, facilities, and projects for our communities.

Effective workforce planning is fundamental to addressing our differing communities' needs now and into the future. Achieving the right mix of staffing, volunteers and contractors is crucial to the ongoing success of CSC's ability to serve our communities.

Within the scope of the *Local Government Act 2020*, CSC's Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the development of a Workforce Plan.

The requirements of the Workforce Plan are to; describe the organisational structure, specify staffing for a four-year period and set out measures to ensure gender equality, diversity, and inclusiveness.

This plan should be read in conjunction with CSC's Gender Equality Action Plan.

The CSC Workforce Plan 2021-2025 informs the Financial Plan and annual budgets. The Workforce Plan provides an overview of the workforce needs for current and future operations to enable Council to meet its legislative obligations, deliver the strategies of the Council Plan and contribute to achieving the aspirations of '*Campaspe Tomorrow*'.

CSC currently employs a total of 485 staff (335.03 full time equivalent) and benefits from the invaluable support of 133 volunteers.

Throughout the life of the plan the Executive Management Group (EMG) will undertake annual reviews to ensure the Workforce Plan actions are implemented, monitored, and reported against.

Key challenges/risks identified within the Plan include an ageing workforce, availability of skills in some professions, specifically attracting skilled and qualified personnel to the region, the ongoing impact of COVID-19 constraints, meeting the needs of a growing community and municipality.

Key focus areas for council include:

1. Improving culture, including training and development
2. Eliminating discrimination/harassment
3. Achieving Gender Equality
4. Succession planning
5. Developing and implementing a formal staff recognition program

Workforce Planning is defined as:

“the systematic identification, analysis and planning of organisational needs in terms of people’. It is an active and continuous process used to generate business intelligence to inform organisations about the current and future impact of the external and internal environment on the business, and in the process, to become resilient to structural and cultural changes and better positioned for the future”. (LGPro Future Ready – Workforce Planning Handbook and Guide, page 6).

This first workforce plan forms the foundation of what will be an evolutionary plan developed to comply with the timeframe set out in the *Local Government Act (2020)*.



Declan Moore
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Date: 8 December 2021

INTRODUCTION

CSC provides a diverse range of services which often require staff to possess specialised skills, competencies, and qualifications. In recent times CSC has experienced difficulties attracting some suitably qualified personnel.

A more transient workforce with employees, regardless of their generation, moving from job to job and changing careers more frequently than in the past means that Council is constantly engaging and training new recruits, which impacts our ability to respond to the needs and interests of its communities.

CSC acknowledges that its employees are its most valuable asset and in order to remain operationally sustainable and to provide the high level of services expected by Campaspe communities, we must build on the skill capacity and capability of current staff and attract, develop and retain new high calibre employees.

Some professions, particularly in the health and engineering sectors, where skilled and qualified labour is scarce, drive-up salary and employment conditions. Local Government must compete with diverse employers to source suitably qualified persons to deliver services to meet its statutory responsibilities. Recent experience is that filling some roles is becoming increasingly difficult. Across the board, Local Government is currently experiencing difficulties in recruiting potential candidates for positions in engineering, town planning, maternal child health and building.

A review of workforce data derived from the Municipal Association of Victoria 2020 HR Benchmarking report noted the top three challenges for coming years for councils were COVID-19 impacts, flexible working, and mental health issues. Skill shortage, staff attraction and the aging workforce were also identified.

This Workforce Plan focuses on the development of a more positive workplace culture, reinforcing and facilitating a work ethos that is both adaptive and accountable, while facilitating active staff contribution and participation. Council's leadership group play a vital role in leading by example, fostering employee engagement, and facilitating positive active employee participation. We recognise that to augment organisational and employee performance, we need to continuously improve our systems and processes.

To allow CSC to be responsive to future change, the foundational Workforce Plan will be a living and evolutionary document that will inform the implementation of key priorities.

Consultation and communication are fundamental to the success of any plan, and as part of its Workforce Plan, EMG has articulated a communication plan that includes:

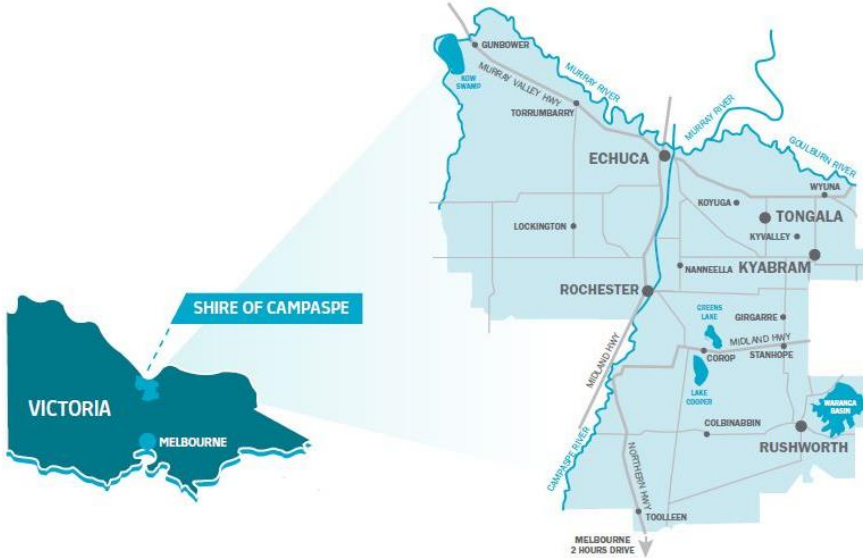
- Identification of internal and external stakeholders
- Prioritising current and future needs
- Identification of resources required to implement the actions of the plan
- Facilitation of employee engagement in the delivery of key actions
- Establishment of monitoring and reporting mechanisms to communicate the progress of the plan's actions.

The Executive Management Group has overarching responsibility for the achievement of the goals and objectives in this plan. Managers are responsible and are committed to training and developing their employees and to the achievement of their teams training plan. Employees are equally responsible and accountable for their personal and professional development.

An action plan has been developed to assist with the implementation of CSC’s Workforce Plan. The action plan details milestone outcomes that can reasonably expected to be achieved within the given time frames. The action plan will ensure that EMG remain accountable for the implementation of this Plan.

CAMPASPE SHIRE COUNCIL OVERVIEW

Campaspe Shire Council is located in north central Victoria, approximately 180 kilometres north of Melbourne. It includes the communities of Echuca, Kyabram, Rochester, Lockington, Gunbower, Rushworth, Stanhope and Tongala as well as many smaller areas outside these main townships.



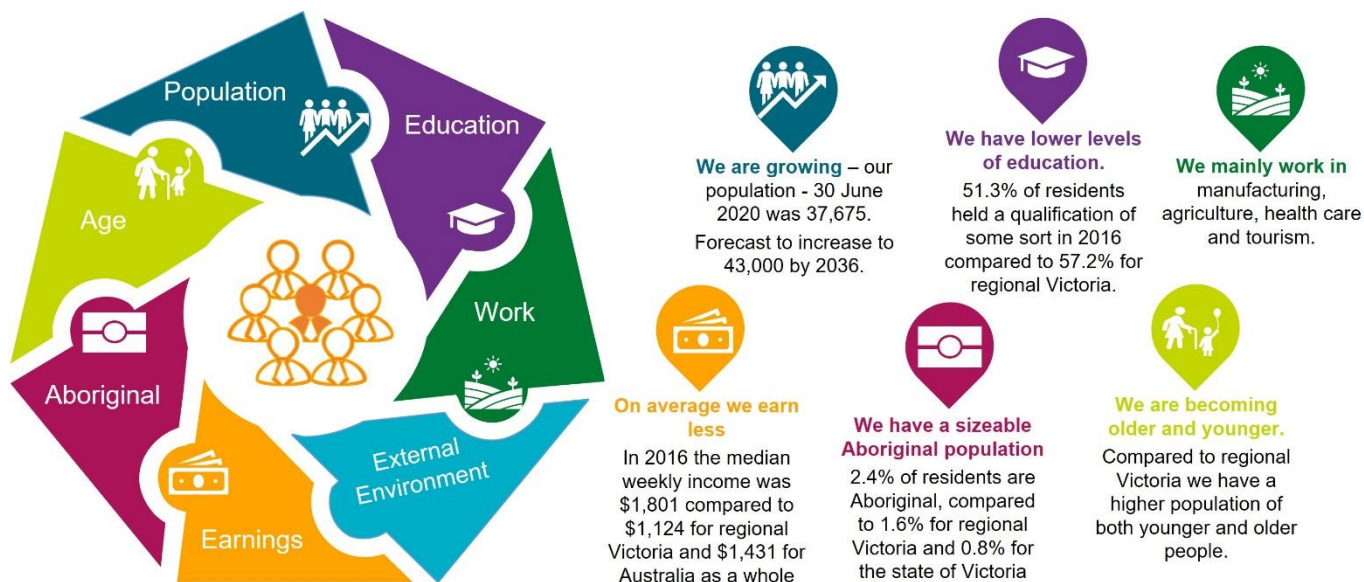
The shire encompasses a total land area of over 4,500 square kilometres and had an estimated residential population of 37,675 at 30 June 2020.

STRATEGIC ANALYSIS

Council’s external environment

During 2020/21 Council undertook an extensive engagement program to assist with informing the Community Vision, (*Campaspe Tomorrow*), as well as the development of the Public Health and Wellbeing Plan both of which were informed by current population data.

Through this work we know this about our community:



COMMUNITY VISION

Our places are vibrant and sustainable. Our people are strong and supportive.

VALUES

The following organisational values set the foundations and expectations for how employees perform their roles.

Respect	Customer Focus	Continuous Improvement	Teamwork	Accountability
<p>We embrace each individuals’ unique talents and value diverse life and work styles.</p> <p>We operate in a spirit of cooperation and value human dignity.</p>	<p>We listen to our customers and deliver services which meet their demonstrated needs.</p> <p>We focus on customer relationships that build trust, confidence, and loyalty.</p> <p>We are responsible for both external and internal customer satisfaction.</p>	<p>We work with enthusiasm and intellect and are driven to build upon what has already been achieved.</p> <p>We improve productivity, processes and ourselves through measurement, analysis, and review.</p>	<p>We listen to and respect each other whilst working together to achieve mutually beneficial results.</p> <p>We help one another, value one another’s views and make our work environment fun and enjoyable.</p> <p>We are not afraid to stand alone, especially when it is the right thing to do.</p>	<p>We conduct our business in accordance with the highest standards of professional behaviour and ethics.</p> <p>We are open, honest, and ethical in all our interactions with employees, clients, customers, vendors and the public.</p> <p>We are responsible for and take ownership of our actions.</p>

WORKFORCE PLANNING

As an organisation responsible for delivering a diverse range of services to the community, our workforce is the primary determiner of our ability to meet the current and changing needs of the community. Workforce planning is critical to ensure that CSC has the right people, with the right skills in the required roles.

Workforce planning enables the identification of current, transitional, and future workforce demand and supply and, in doing so, articulates the human resource requirements of the workforce.

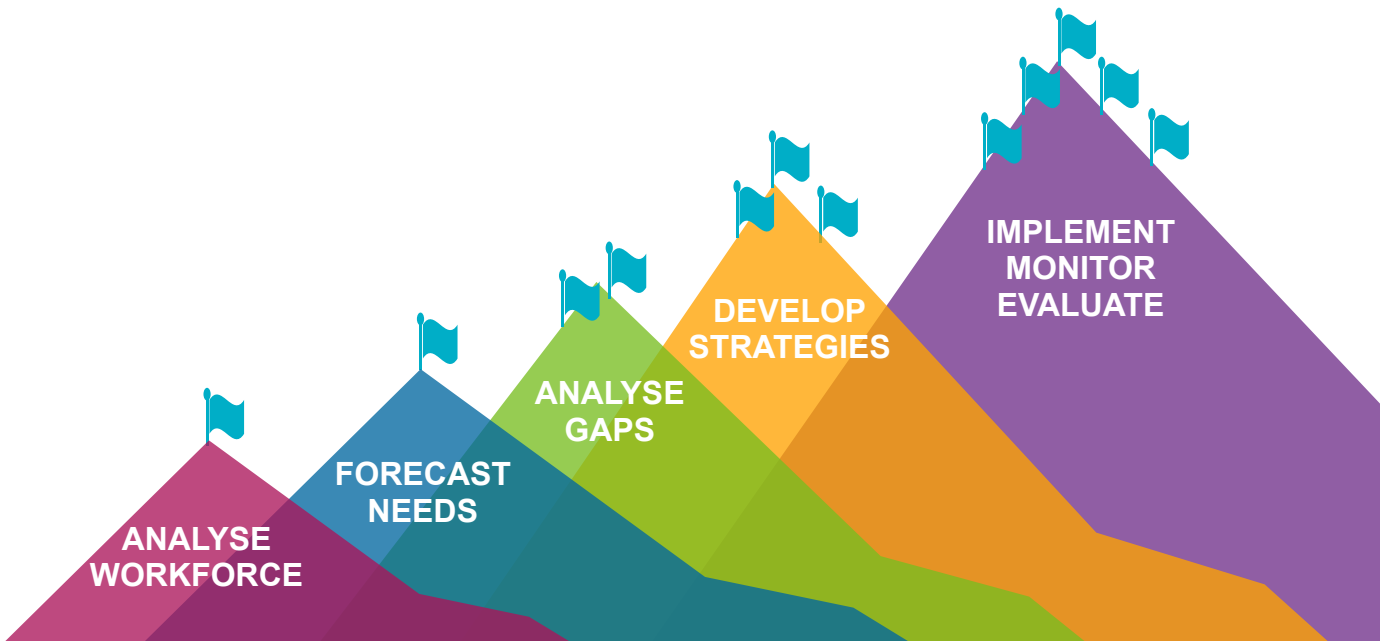
Costing 38% of Council’s operating budget, we proactively review the services we provide and identify opportunities for efficiencies. These activities have seen an overall reduction in the workforce over the past 4 years.

Council is committed to supporting the needs and expectations, as well as contributing to the aspirations of the current and future community.

The workforce plan will provide a framework for linking the workforce needs to operational functions.

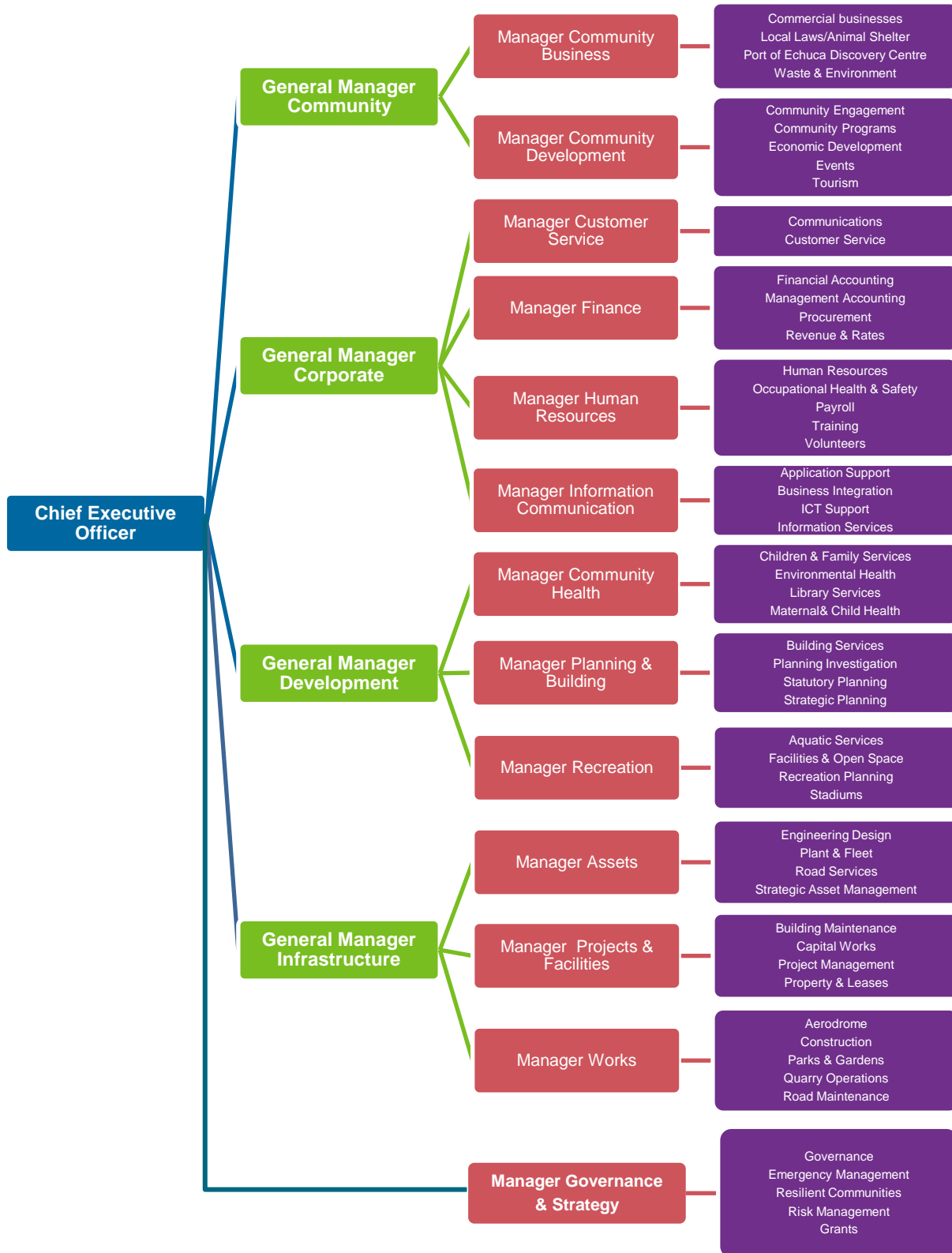
The Plan (2021-2025) will assist in the identification of workforce requirements and strategies for current and future operations over the next four years, as described in the Community Vision, Council Plan and long-term Financial Plan.

WORKFORCE PLANNING CYCLE

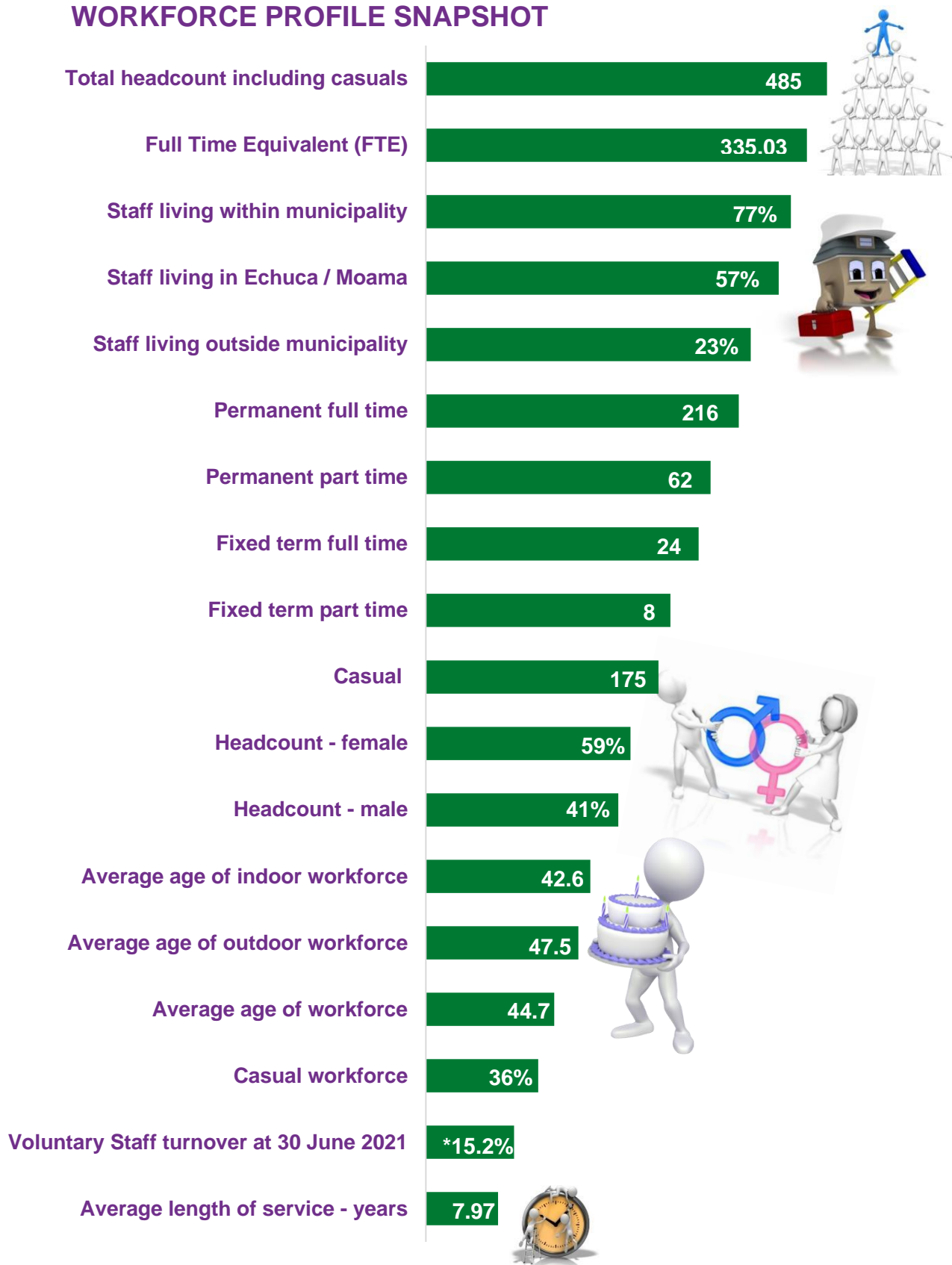


ORGANISATION STRUCTURE

Campaspe Shire Council currently employs 485 employees, (full time equivalent of 335.03). Council's structure comprises 4 Divisions which are: Community, Corporate, Development and Infrastructure, plus the Office of the CEO.



WORKFORCE PROFILE SNAPSHOT



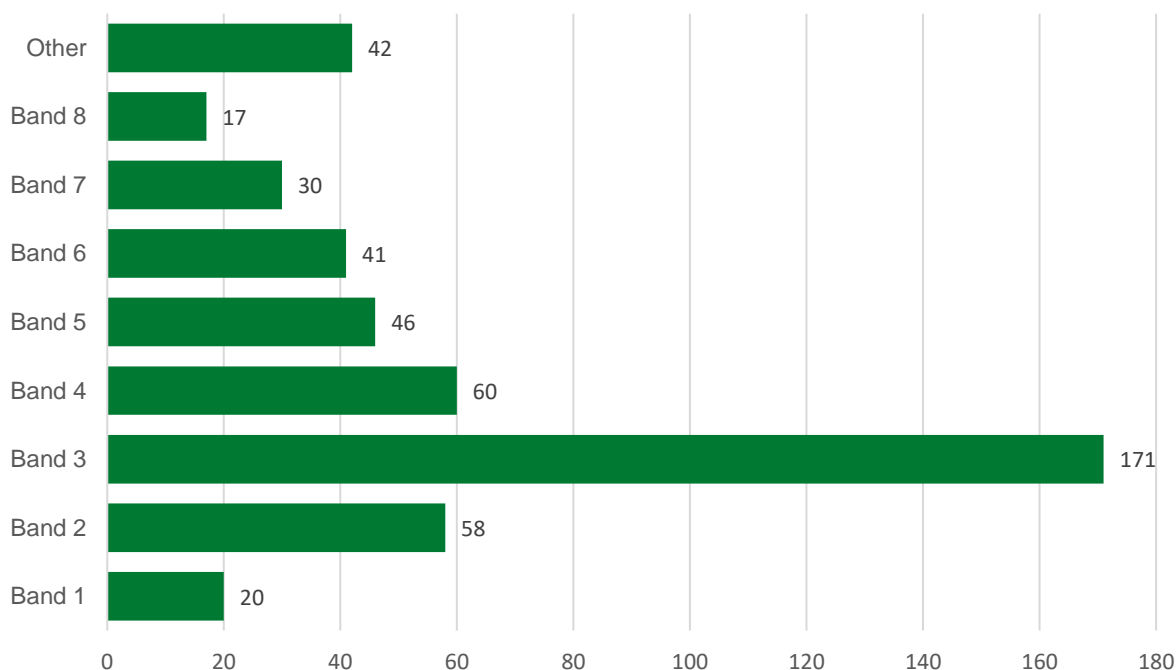
***Note:** Voluntary turnover is calculated by dividing the number of voluntary departures during that period into the average number of employees during that period. This calculation excludes casuals.

OVERVIEW OF COUNCIL'S WORKFORCE:

- There has been a reduction in staff numbers from 601 in 2019 to 485 in 2021. This is due to Council's proactive focus on service reviews, continuous improvement and looking for efficiencies in service delivery, sometimes transferring services to other providers.
- We have a slightly greater percentage of female employees (59%)
- One in six (15%) employees is aged over 60 years, however roles such as tour guide and volunteer animal carer, and school crossing supervisors, do allow older employees and volunteers to continue with meaningful work.
- 14% of our workforce are on limited tenure contracts, 56% of these being female employees, all banded employees and in roles such as pool lifeguard and childhood educator.
- 41% of our third-tier leadership group are female.
- The average age of our total workforce is 44.7 years.
- 35% of our workforce is employed at Band 3 classification – comprising mainly outdoor and recreation employees.
- Annual turnover, excluding casuals, is 15.21% compared with sector average of 9.49%.
- 2% of the workforce retired in the financial year 2020/2021
- Our average length of service is 7.97 years.
- 77% of our employees live within the municipality.
- 62% of those classified as Band 3 are casual employees predominantly in recreation and specifically pools.

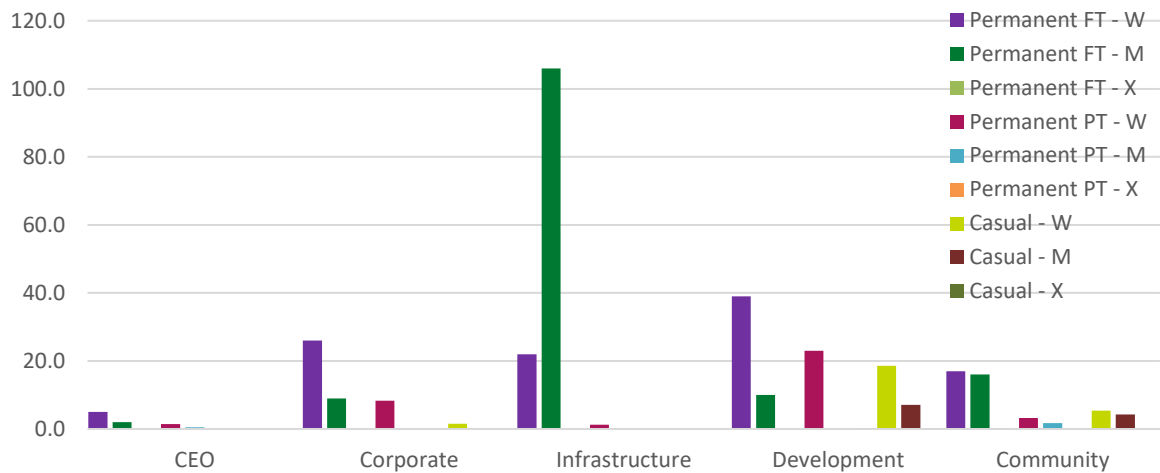
Number of staff by band

Band classifications as defined in the Victorian Local Authorities Award 2001.



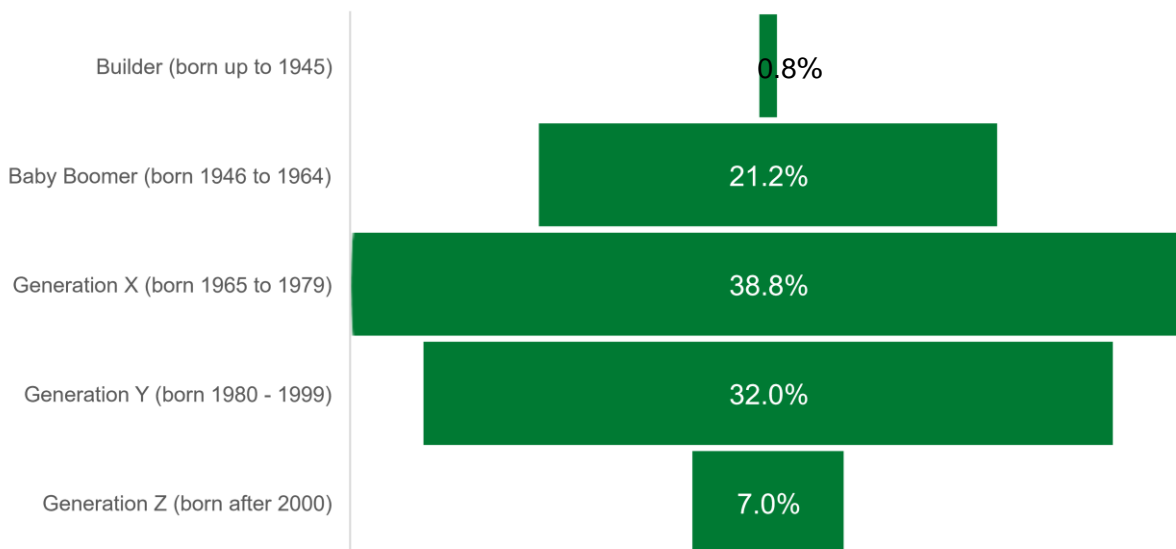
'Other' includes managers on contracts, maternal & child health Nurses and individual flexibility contracts.

Position tenure



- The spike in Infrastructure relates to the construction, maintenance and parks and gardens teams which is a predominantly male workforce.
- Despite the point above, the last two or so years, has seen an increase in female employees being appointed to the outdoor workforce.
- Seasonal employment accounts for 10% of the casual workforce, which means a fluctuation in staff between November and March. This previously casualised workforce is now engaged on fixed term contracts which will continue to drive turnover up. Removal of the seasonal workforce from reporting would see a reduction in the annual turnover figure.

GENERATION REPRESENTATION AT COUNCIL

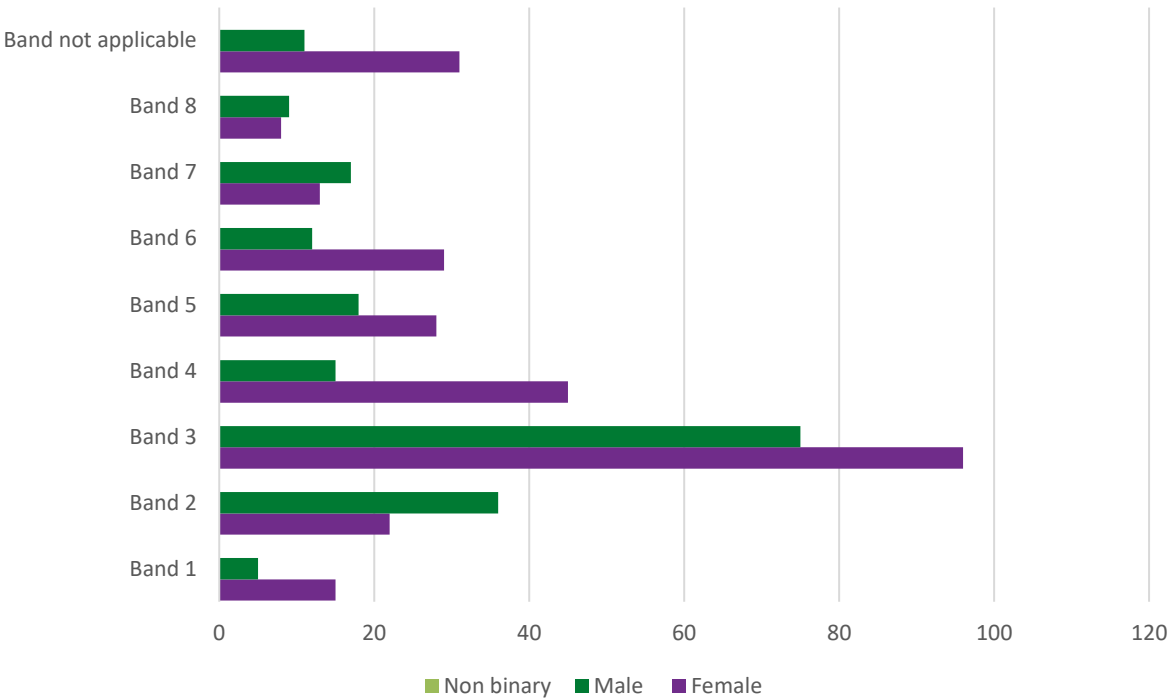


- 30% of our staff are between the ages of 57 and 76.
- Research shows that the labour force participation rate of older Australians has jumped from 47% in 2000 to 67% today. This has been attributed to improved health, accessible jobs, greater flexible working options and the impact of the global financial crisis on retirement savings which has forced some baby boomers to work longer.
- Mature workers are reported to offer greater experience and expertise, loyalty, and work ethic to their employer.

WORKFORCE PROFILE IN DETAIL

GENDER

Band classification by gender

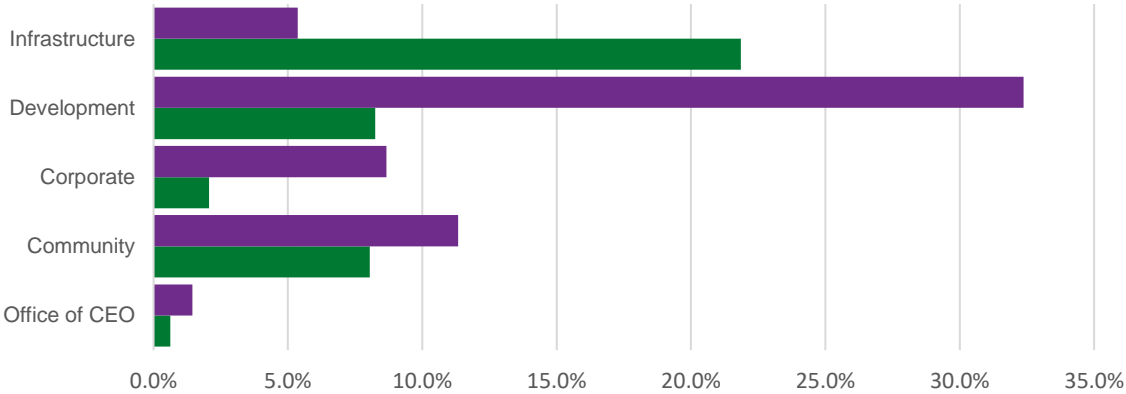


While the spread of male and female employees generally is relatively even:

- 35% of employees are at Band 3 level which has a somewhat even spread of gender equity at 59% female and 41% male.
- Band 3 comprises mainly construction, maintenance, parks and gardens, aquatics and leisure, early childhood teachers and library employees.
- Bands 4,5, and 6 and non-banded employees comprise mainly females who make up 70% of total employees in these bands.

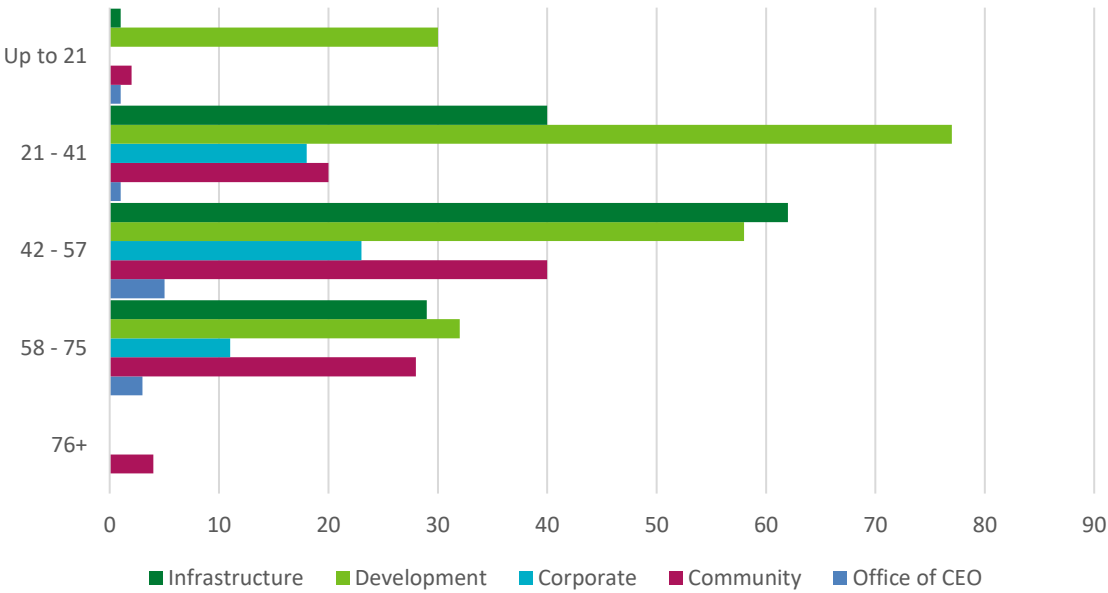
'Band not applicable' – managers on contracts, nurses, and individual flexibility contracts.

Gender by division



	Office of CEO	Community	Corporate	Development	Infrastructure
Female	1.4%	11.3%	8.7%	32.4%	5.4%
Male	0.6%	8.0%	2.1%	8.2%	21.9%

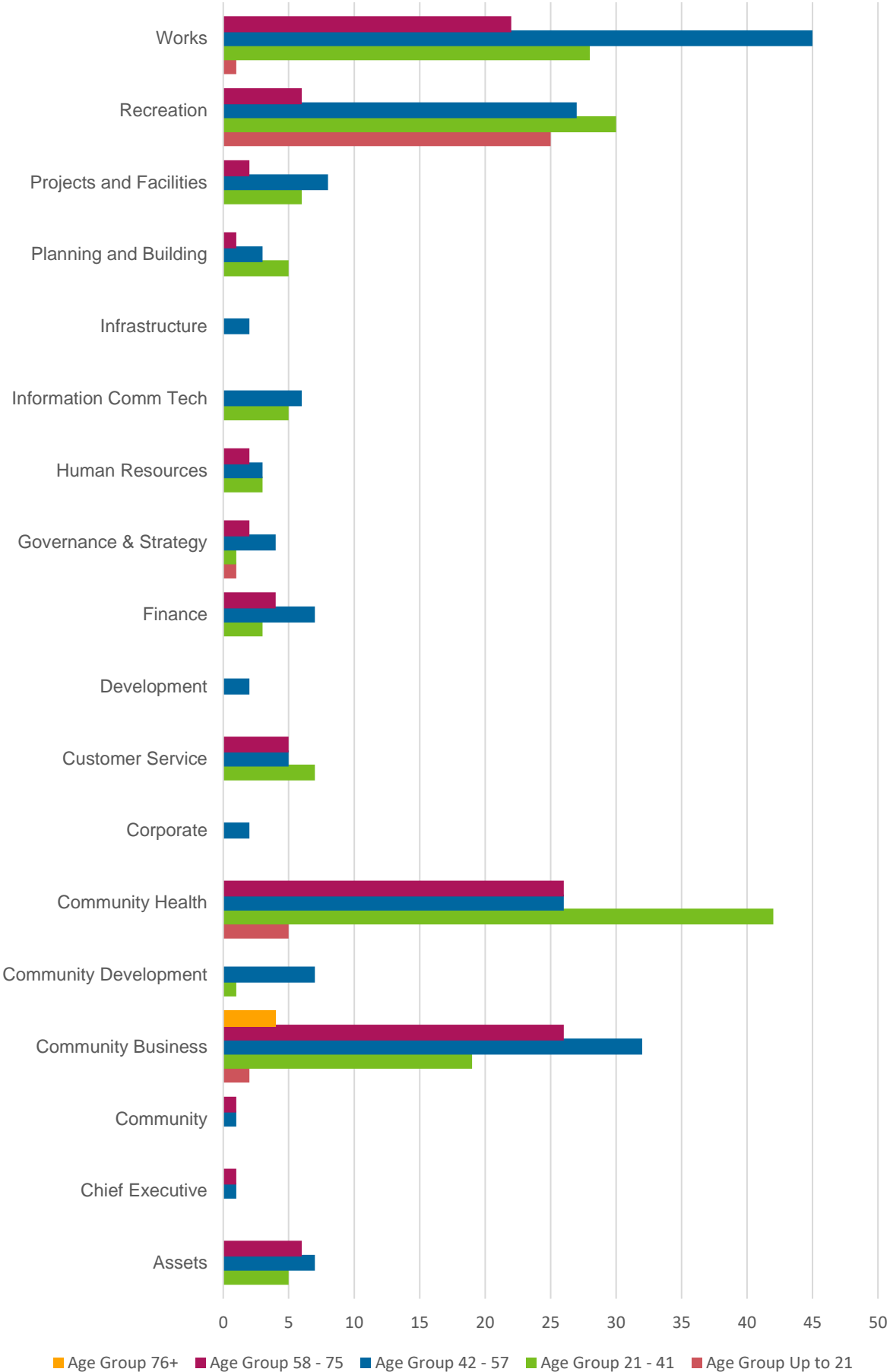
Age group by division



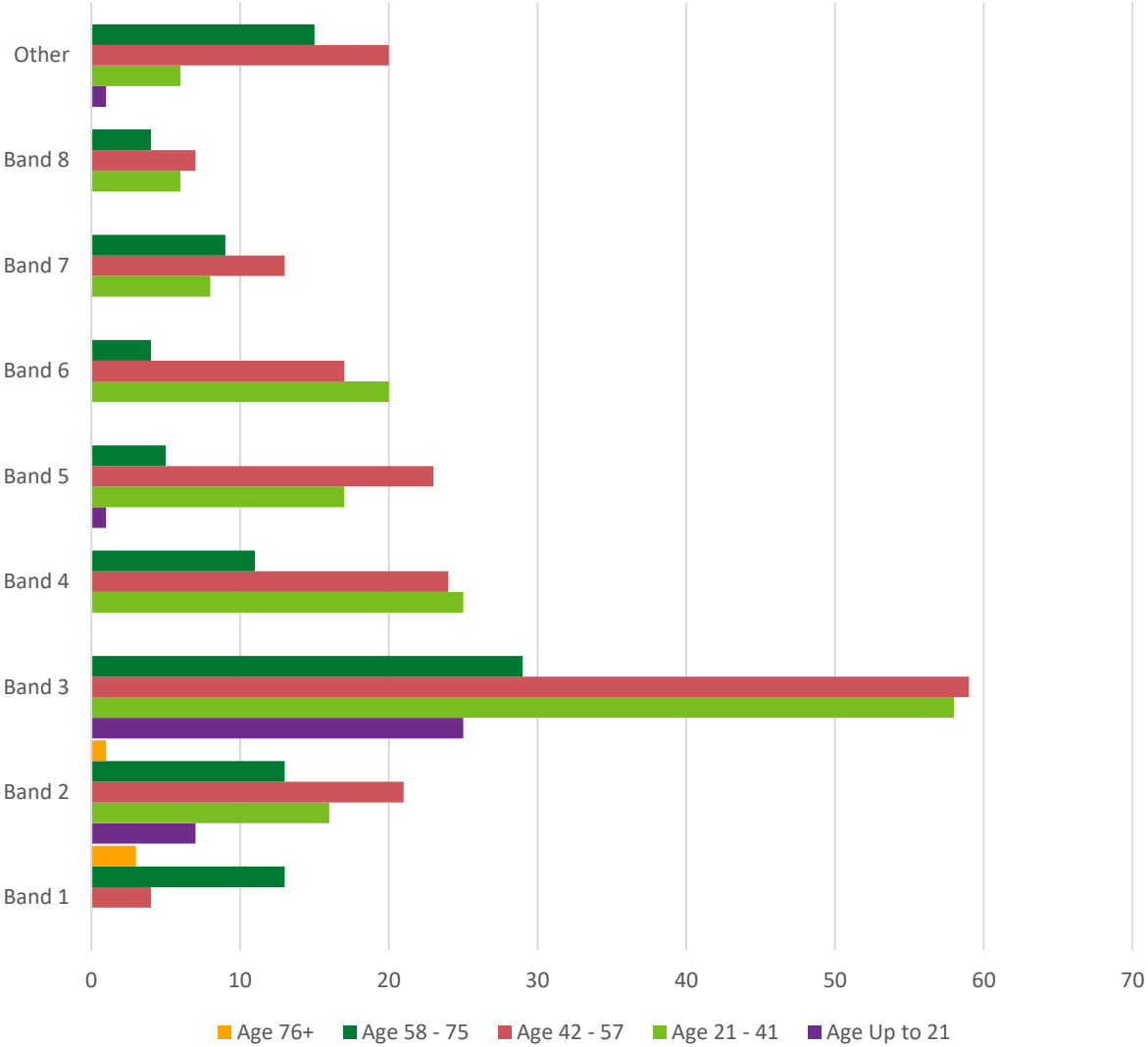
Division	Age Group (2021)				
	76+	58 - 75	42 - 57	21 - 41	Up to 21
Office of CEO	0%	30%	50%	10%	10%
Community	4%	30%	43%	21%	2%
Corporate	0%	21%	44%	35%	0%
Development	0%	16%	29%	39%	15%
Infrastructure	0%	22%	47%	30%	1%

- Overall, our workforce is not aged however, the concentration of our older population is in the lower banded positions or in areas that Council is currently experiencing difficulty to recruit. Managing this from both a service delivery and knowledge management perspective will be a challenge.
- It is highly likely that there will be significant turnover of the Executive Management team within the next 5 years.
- 61% of those employed in Community Health work in childcare including Maternal and Child Health – with the remainder in Environmental Health and 23% in Libraries.
- 88% of the Recreation workforce are employed as lifeguards or physical fitness and are casual/seasonally employed.
- 23% of outdoor staff are aged over 55 and 47% of outdoor staff are aged between 42 & 57.
- Average age of the outdoor workforce is 47.47
- Over the last four years there has been limited turnover in the Management Team.

Age by team

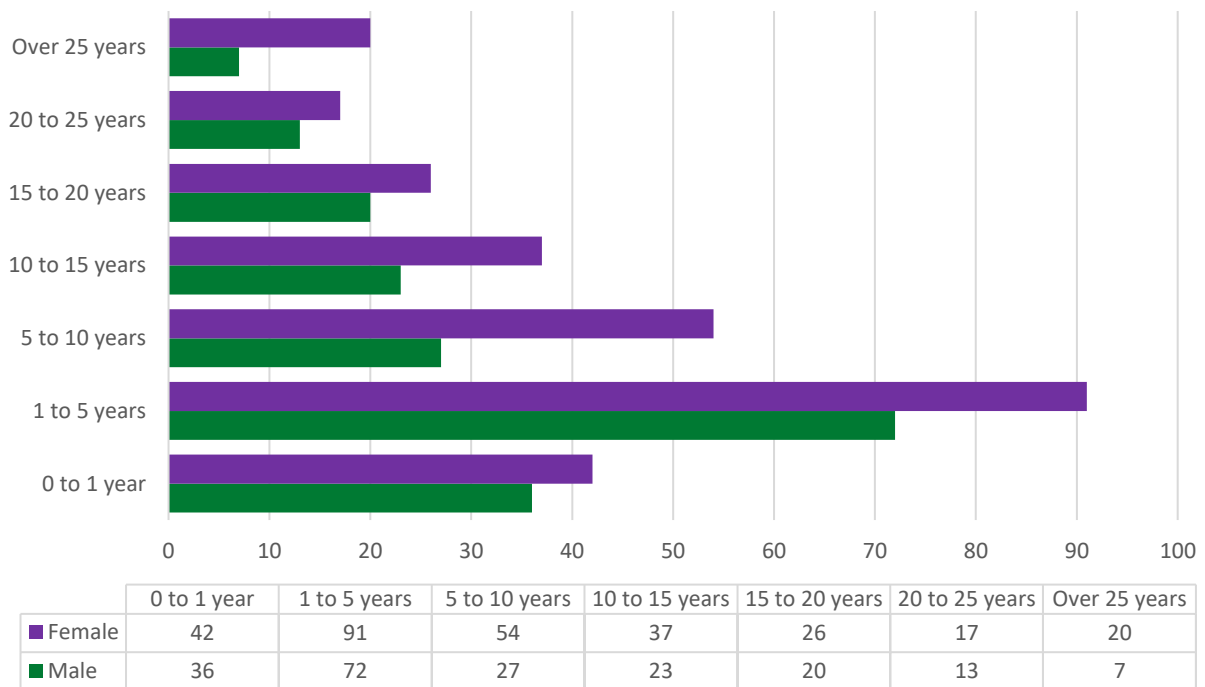


Age by band classification



• 35% of workforce is classified at Band 3 – and comprises mainly outdoor and recreation staff.

Length of service



- Average length of service is 7.97 years.
- 33% of our workforce have remained with Council for between one and five years.
- Generations x, y and z are less likely to remain with one employer for more than two or three years, therefore it is likely that the average length of service will further decrease. Council will need to:
 - determine how to get the best from people during their short tenure,
 - consider the cost of turnover, and
 - develop and implement an effective knowledge transfer methodology.
- The location of our municipality may influence these figures both positively regarding lifestyle and negatively in relation to perceived opportunity for career and progression.

Staff turnover

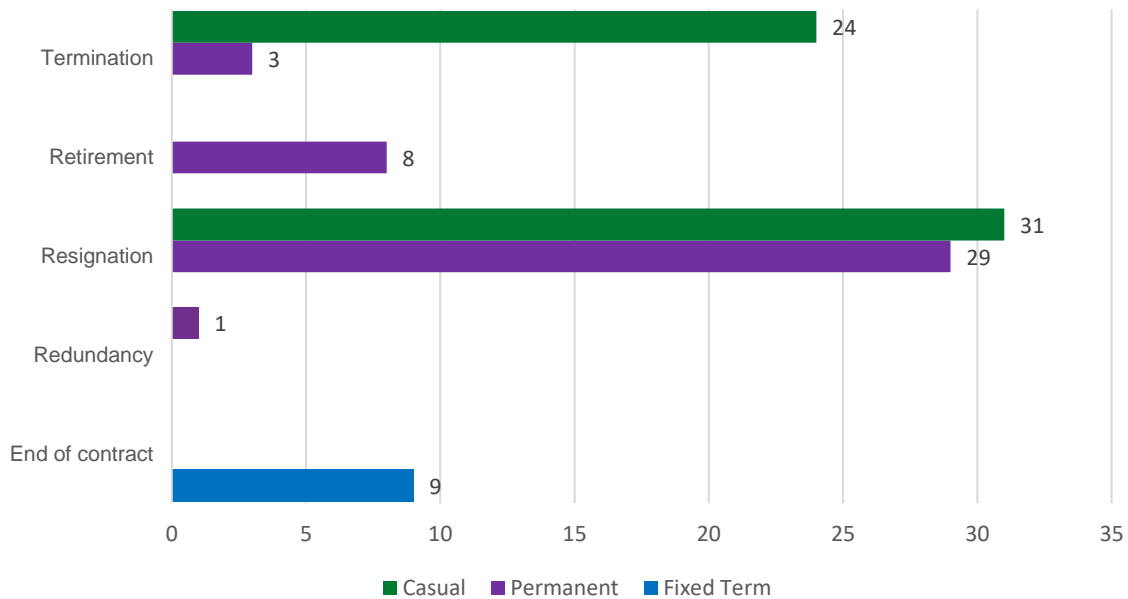
2018	2019	2020	2021
11.4%	11.9%	19.1%	15.2%

- The decrease in staff turnover from 2020 can be attributed to Council's exit from Aged and Disability services effective 30 June 2020. This exit saw 77 staff with an FTE of 30.3 made redundant from Council's employ, though almost all who sought employment with the new provider obtained it.

Staff Departures

To facilitate effective workforce planning it is important to consider the reasons staff leave our organisation. Research points to reasons for staff departures related to poor management and leadership style, misalignment of organisation and personal values or insufficient opportunity for professional development. As a major employer in the region, council needs to remain competitive in both remuneration and as a place employees want to work.

Of the 32 non-casual staff who departed council during the reporting period, 20 employees cited career opportunities and advancement as their reason. A further eight employees retired and three resigned due to ill health, and one redundancy.



- From a total of 107 employees who left Council in 2020/2021 – 66 were casuals who had not worked for council for over six months.
- 18 employees were seasonally employed as casuals for each pool season only.
- Of the 32 permanent employees, 20 resigned to pursue career opportunities.
- The one redundancy is a carry over from CSC's exit from Aged and Disability Services.

Recruitment by Division

Division and Gender/Type of Employment	Casual	Fixed Term		Permanent		Total
		Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time	
CEO Office				1	1	2
Female				1	1	2
Corporate	1	1	1	1	2	6
Female	1	1	1		2	5
Male				1		1
Development	24		1	6	2	33
Female	17		1	1	2	21
Male	7			5		12
Infrastructure	2	10		17	1	30
Female		3		1	1	5
Male	2	7		16		25
Community	10		1	1		12
Female	6		1			7
Male	4			1		5
Total	37	11	3	26	6	83

For the period July 2020 to June 2021:

- Average days vacant for all positions was 47.4 days.

Average days from:

- Vacancy to authority to recruit – 5.2 days
- Authority to recruit to advertising – 7
- Advertising to selection memo – 21
- Date of appointment to start date - 20.6 days.
- Council appointed 43 males and 40 females during the reporting period.

Council's annual seasonal recruitment drive see active recruitment activity, particularly related to lifeguards for the pools.

As part of an annual grant funding program, during the 2020/21 financial year Council received funding that enabled the fixed term engagement of six Working for Victoria roles. These temporary roles factor in our recruitment and our turnover figures.

All vacancies are reviewed by EMG to determine the best use of resources across the organisation.

For example, resignations in the Community Division resulted in a review of needs that led to the recruitment of three multiskilled Community Development Officers rather than single focused operators.

Leave and work life balance

At the time of the preparation of this report 10% of staff had leave accruals of more than six weeks. Approximately two to three years ago this figure would have been much higher, however EMG have been vigilant in ensuring employees maintain their leave accruals at or below six weeks.

Also, with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the inability of staff to attend work for periods of time, many chose to access leave accruals. Closures during the pandemic provided an opportunity for council to help employees reduce their excess leave accruals without significant disruption to services, many of which were temporarily closed during COVID.

It is important to maintain a safe and healthy workplace and by extension a healthy work life balance, and Council will continue to monitor and encourage employees to maintain reasonable leave balances.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

Campaspe Shire incorporates three Traditional Owner Groups: Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung; and Yorta Yorta. Effective relationships with these groups will support actions towards ongoing reconciliation.

While at this time, no employees have identified as ATSI, CSC will continue to work on encouraging both existing and future staff to do so, as well as improving the capture of such data.

Ethnicity

CSC has no data in respect to ethnicity. Although we seek this information employees have not been forthcoming. This may relate to a lack of understanding of the difference between ethnicity and nationality, as we do have data that identifies employees' nationality from countries such as Canada, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Singapore, Colombia, Nigeria, and India.

As nominating ethnicity upon commencement by employees is voluntary accurate information is limited however the Gender Equality Act 2020 requires the organisation to improve data collection in this arena with reference to gender. Our onboarding process will need review to ensure this information is captured.

SUMMARY

With Council's exit from Aged and Disability services and proactive approach to removing inactive employees from our systems, there has been a reduction in the number of staff employed at Council from 601 in 2019 to the current 485.

We have a relatively even mix of male and female employees 41% male and 59% female, the average age of our workforce is 44.7 years and 15% of our employees are aged over 65 years.

Overall, our workforce is not ageing, however a greater number of our band 2 and 3 employees are in the older age range. Roles at these levels have traditionally had lower formal education requirements and were generally outdoor, hands-on roles such as road maintenance or parks and gardens employees, although skill levels of these employees is high and training is always taken up.

Casuals make up 36% of our workforce, however with recent changes to the Fair Work Act regarding casual conversion, this figure will be reduced in future years as the number of positions previously occupied by casual employees will be taken up by permanent full and part time employees.

In seeking to recruit skilled employees on appointing on merit Council has sometimes had difficulty attracting staff with the desirable skills, qualifications, experience, and attitude for roles such as:

- Engineer
- *Paddle steamer engineer and drivers
- Mechanic
- Recreation Officers
- Customer Service and Administrative staff
- Nurses
- Building and planning personnel
- Project managers.

*It is noted that with Council's current progress towards a Beneficial Enterprise regarding the Port of Echuca operations, the need for paddle steamer engineers and drivers will become the responsibility of the new Beneficial Enterprise and are therefore not included as part of longer-term considerations in this Plan.

Observations about the current state of recruitment:

- Respondents to advertising are often not of the calibre being sought, eg. do not have the required skills or qualifications.
- Going forward the requirement for mandatory COVID-19 vaccination may be off-putting for some applicants.
- The media we advertise in may not be getting to the right applicants.
- Repeated advertising for the same vacant positions may cause reputational damage.
- The more traditional roles being advertised may not appeal to the current job seeker market.
- While CSC does hire candidates, predominantly engineers, from overseas, the skills and experience they bring to the role often needs to be supplemented by additional training.

Workforce Risks

A workforce risk is any issue that may pose a risk to service delivery. They arise if there is a misalignment between the council's existing workforce and the workforce needed to successfully deliver strategic objectives.

No risks identified would have a catastrophic consequence, but some may have the potential to develop into major risks in terms of cost and reputation.

Of particular concern are:

- regulation and compliance (governance)
- attraction and retention
- fitness for work (which may lead to Workcover claims)
- performance management.

PLANNED STAFFING TO 2025

We anticipate there will be unplanned changes in staff numbers, gender profile and employment type, eg full time, over the next four years and these are some of the things we know will contribute to that. Unless CSC exits further services, there will be minimal net impact.

Staff number changes anticipated over the next four years include:

- Changes as Campaspe Port Enterprise assumes management of the Port and staff transfer.
- Casual conversion provisions of the Fair Work Act may see slight FTE increases, though service budgets will not increase.
- In housing of services currently provided via contractors e.g. rapid response team trial.
- Budget bid for 2 additional road maintenance crew (plant & equipment) in 2022/23.
- Service level changes following reviews.

FUTURE WORKFORCE CONSIDERATIONS

Introduction

According to research conducted by RMIT Online and Deloitte Access Economics IT, general health, fitness instructor, management and procurement/contract officer roles will be the most sort after jobs by 2025. Similar research conducted by LaTrobe suggested that with a growing ageing population (expected 20% by 2037) and the introduction of the NDIS, roles such as aged and disabled carers, registered nurses and physiotherapists will be in high demand. STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) and all levels of education professionals will also be in demand.

It is expected that workers with digital and technology skills will be in high demand, the report citing that 87 per cent of jobs now already require digital skills, and that number is expected to grow. According to the report we are going to need 150,000 IT workers in this country in the next five years.

Advertisers such as Indeed are recommending the following as future proof jobs that job seekers should be training for: teacher, chef, digital marketing manager, designer, HR manager, video game developer, nurse, mechanical engineer, cybersecurity analyst, mobile application developer, data scientist and doctor.

Factors that may affect local government's future labour market and need to be considered include:

- The continuing focus on sustainability, efficiency and effectiveness in local government driving the need for a flexible, skilled, and committed workforce.
- The ongoing requirement for workplace programs that enable and promote healthier lifestyles.
- New legislative and compliance requirements with workforce implications.
- The way technology is changing the world of work.
- Enabling women to re-enter the workforce after taking maternity leave and mature age workers to stay longer in the workplace.
- Creating inclusive and diverse workplaces so we can facilitate the greatest potential from the workforce.
- Training and up-skilling of existing staff.
- Management of the shorter length of service of generations x and y – succession planning or a knowledge management system that effectively captures their knowledge.
- Greater degree of worksite flexibility – more employees may be seeking changes in hours, work patterns and work sites (district offices, homes).
- The casual conversion provisions of the Fair Work Act imposing a need for council to critically review the ongoing use of casual employees.

Organisational structure

Council are hierarchical organisations, as are all levels of government, and the staffing structure has recently been updated to focus on service delivery. Over the life of this first plan, CSC will review the structures in other councils (and their workforce plans) against the needs of CSC and feedback from employees.

Organisational culture

Organisational culture has a significant impact on effective service delivery and is critical to CSC's ability to meet strategic priorities. Staff had two opportunities in the last year to participate in surveys the results of which will be discussed with external facilitators over the next six months. Feedback from this process will inform work on workplace culture and the elimination of residual discrimination and/or bullying/harassment behaviours.

Job Design and recruitment

- Role design – CSC will reconsider the tasks of each role and the combination or separation of duties to attract suitable candidates. Given the skills shortage currently being experienced, there may be a need to rethink the design of roles.
- A review of elements of unconscious bias when recruiting for roles needs to be undertaken, particularly during the actual interview process. While not overt, interviewers may unconsciously have expectations of the gender or type of employee they think stereotypically fits certain roles.
- Why are more men are not applying for what have traditionally been female roles? This may include a view that our talent pool in the local community are entrenched in their own stereotypical expectations.
- While we believe it is gender neutral, CSC will conduct a review of our advertising media to determine whether we are featuring women or men more prominently in our advertising

which may be sending a subliminal message and unconsciously off-putting to potential candidates.

- Ability of prospective employees accessing suitable housing within the municipality is an issue when recruiting. CCS may need to consider opportunities to address this at least as a temporary measure.

Workforce options

- **Contractors and Agency Staff**

CSC engages contractors when it can be demonstrated that it is either a more cost-effective way of delivering services due to the particular expertise required, compliance requirements or timeframes.

- **Traineeships and Apprenticeships**

Council has an active traineeship and apprenticeship program which has seen several recipients engaged in ongoing permanent employment with council. This will be a valuable option for council to continue to pursue and allow us to grow our own workforce.

- **Work experience**

Although COVID-19 put a temporary hold on work experience, CSC supports our community with work experience for high school students, and work/study placement opportunities within several business units such as Parks and Gardens, Planning, Community Services, Childcare Services and Environmental Health and some non-specific administration roles. Work experience opportunities will continue to be supported into the future.

- **Cadetships**

While Council does have some cadetship programs in place, there may be opportunity to identify other roles that may benefit from these programs. Growing our own will ensure we develop the skills and attitude that aligns with our requirements and expectations.

- **Secondment opportunities**

Consider increasing internal secondment opportunities to cover backfill or temporary vacancies. To enable true upskilling, there should also be an emphasis on transferrable skills compared to the required qualifications and skills required, where possible, for the role when offering such appointments.

- While we are in the highest percentile for salary compared to our neighboring and similar size councils, we are often competing with metro employers who can and do offer a higher salary and benefits. We may need to reconsider using Individual Flexibility Agreements and contracts to attract and remunerate hard to fill roles such as engineers.

- **Volunteers**

CSC recognises and acknowledges the contribution volunteers provide to the community and the positive input they make to our operations. We currently have approximately 133 volunteers a reduction from 169 due to the impact of COVID-19 restrictions on our workforce.

Volunteers are managed in a similar manner to paid employees in that they receive a workplace induction and are provided with training, supervision, and ongoing support. Several paid employees provide support to our volunteers as an integral part of their respective roles.

While volunteering opportunities will continue to grow COVID-19 restrictions may hinder Council's success in actively engaging volunteers.

Council image / reputation

- Local government as an employer offers such a diverse range of opportunities however, we often fail to attract and retain skilled professionals. We need to consider exploring this perceived lack of confidence in government organisations. We may also need to review and consider smarter ways of achieving the same standard of work and reporting requirements.

Flexible work hours and sites

- With an average age of 44.7, our current workforce cannot be considered 'ageing'. However, within the next five or so years, the need for our older employees to take on carer responsibilities for aging parents may increase. This type of caring is very different to caring for young children in that it generally requires the carer to be available to take the parent(s) to appointments which may not be local and for frail or invalided parents, the carer may feel the need to be 'around' more often.
- On the other end of the spectrum, CSC will need to continue to offer flexible working arrangements for employees returning from parental leave or those wanting to take up caring responsibilities.

Older workers

- A report into older workers conducted by the Australian Human Resource Institute and the Human Rights Commission in 2018 found:
 - An older worker is now classified as someone who is 61 years of age or older.
 - Flexible work is the top reason respondents cite as encouraging them to remain in the workforce, an 8% increase on the 2014 survey.
 - Flexible working hours is the most common tool organisation's use to retain older workers.
 - The main advantages of recruiting older workers are the experience they bring and the professional knowledge they have acquired.
 - The most common recruitment practices for attracting older workers are flexible work arrangements and training recruitment staff to ensure practices are free of age bias.
- CSC supports and encourages flexible working arrangements where this can be accommodated without impacting service delivery.

Work flexibility

- Within the next five or so years, as our employees do begin to get closer to retirement age, we need to reconsider phased retirement opportunities for those roles where this can be accommodated. For example, adjusted start and finish times, nine-day fortnight, four-day week.
- Succession planning for critical roles will ensure skills and knowledge are passed on rather than leaving a hiatus and reducing the need for successors trying to get up to speed quickly or fumbling their way around trying to understand the 'what and why' of a role or task. Such a plan has benefits for the retiree giving them purpose and allowing them to move into retirement gradually rather than being thrown into the next phase of their lives.

Unconscious bias

- Unconscious bias is an attitude towards a person, or a group of people, which we may not even be aware of. It can be a favourable attitude, when we form positive impressions based on someone's skin colour, surname or where they come from. Or it can be unfavourable, with negative impressions.
- Unconscious bias is sometimes called a hidden bias because it's hard to detect, even in ourselves, but most people do hold some bias of one kind or another.
- Unconscious bias can lead to unfair outcomes for some people if it's not addressed, particularly in workplaces.
- It can also mean that some people get preferential treatment, compared to others.

ACTION PLAN

The following will be undertaken during the life of this first workforce plan.

Focus area 1

Recruitment - role description and clarity

1. Review role and position descriptions of hard to fill positions with a view to focusing on the key tasks and responsibilities and removing smaller roles that may have crept into the description that are not critically relevant to the position.
2. Identify and advertise specialist roles at least twice before reconsidering other alternatives.
3. Review position descriptions separating out individual roles and advertise part time positions.
4. Identify and deploy training in unconscious bias for all hiring managers and officers.
5. Review the recruitment procedure to ensure opportunities for unconscious bias are minimised.
6. Active management and use of casuals to limit the number of casual conversions.

Focus area 2

Workforce flexibility – blended work options

1. Review service delivery and role flexibility options.
2. Implement individual flexibility agreements with flexible working options that include different hours of work and flexibility of work sites.
3. Identify opportunities for older employees with ageing carer responsibilities and employees returning from parental leave.

Focus area 3

Succession planning – knowledge transfer – phased retirement

1. Develop and implement a succession plan to enable capture of knowledge from employees in critical roles such as development engineer, prior to departure.
2. Development of a phased retirement process that will enable older employees' opportunity to pass on their knowledge and skills while working part time and allowing them to prepare for retirement mentally and physically.

Focus area 4

Organisation culture

1. Unpack the employee experience at work within the organisation and identify opportunities for improving the organisation culture, while maintaining service responsibilities.
2. Develop and implement a staff recognition program.

Focus area 5

Training and Development

1. Review and improve the formal induction process.
2. Review CSC's mandatory training matrix for currency with organisational requirements and ensure that staff are provided appropriate opportunities to complete mandatory training relevant to their role.
3. Review CSC's current Training and Development Procedure to focus on encouraging and supporting more staff to undertake developmental (upskilling) training and development, vocational studies (certificate level) or tertiary studies.
4. Identify, encourage, and support future leaders who demonstrate an interest in undertaking management/executive training with LGPro or other providers.