

14.1 Workforce Plan – 2025 to 2029

Governance & Compliance



Date:	16 September 2025
Location:	
Responsible Officer:	Manisha Barthakur, Chief Executive Officer
Author:	Kahli Rose, Manager of Governance and Community Services
Legislation:	
Sharepoint Reference:	
Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Attachments:	Attachment 14.1A – 2025 to 2029 Workforce Plan

Purpose of Report



Executive Decision



Legislative Requirement

Summary

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's endorsement of the Shire of Dowerin Workforce Plan 2025–2029 as an informing strategy under the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IPR) Framework.

Internal workforce consultation commenced Friday, 5 September 2025 and closed Friday, 12 September 2025.

Background

The Shire of Dowerin has developed a comprehensive Workforce Plan 2025–2029 to ensure the organisation has the right people, in the right roles, at the right time, to deliver quality services and achieve community and organisational priorities.

The Workforce Plan forms a critical component of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework and complies with Section 5.56 of the Local Government Act 1995 and the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996.

The Plan provides a structured approach to:

- Forecasting workforce requirements to meet operational and strategic needs
- Identifying skills gaps and succession planning requirements
- Supporting staff retention, recruitment, and training initiatives
- Addressing high workforce turnover and knowledge retention risks
- Ensuring workforce strategies are aligned with the Strategic Community Plan 2025–2035, Corporate Business Plan, and Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP).

Internal workforce consultation has been undertaken across all departments, with feedback to be incorporated into the final plan.

Comment

The Workforce Plan has been developed to ensure the Shire can maintain efficient operations, deliver services effectively, and meet compliance obligations while adapting to emerging workforce and community demands.

Key considerations addressed within the Plan include:

- 32 employees (26 FTE), with an average workforce age of 46.5 years and approximately 30% of employees expected to reach retirement within the next five years.
- 65 staff departures since January 2021, including 28 exits in the past 24 months (~120% turnover).
- Workforce costs represent 28% of total operating expenditure in 2025/26, down from 41% in the previous workforce plan.
- Streamlined two-level management structure has been implemented, with three Manager roles overseeing Governance & Community Services, Infrastructure & Projects, and Corporate Services.
- Key Risks: High turnover, upcoming retirements, compliance pressures, and skills shortages.
- Retention and attraction strategies, succession planning, capability building, flexible workforce models, improved systems and processes, and a stronger workplace culture.

Consultation

Manisha Barthakur, Chief Executive Officer

Kahli Rose, Manager of Governance and Community Services

Ben Forbes, Manager of Infrastructure and Projects

Solomon Mwale, Manager of Corporate Services

Employees, Shire of Dowerin

Policy Implications

The Workforce Plan 2025–2029 sets the strategic direction for workforce management and planning.

While the Shire does not currently have standalone policies for attraction and retention, training and development, performance management, or health and wellbeing, the Plan identifies the development of these policies and associated frameworks as actions to be progressed during its implementation.

Statutory Implications

Local Government Act 1995

Section 5.56 – Planning for the Future

- (1) A local government is to plan for the future of the district.
- (2) A local government is to ensure that plans made under subsection (1) are, to the extent set by the regulations, made in accordance with and contain any matters prescribed by the regulations.

Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996

Regulation 19C – Strategic Community Plans, requirements for

- (1) A local government is to ensure that a strategic community plan is made for its district in accordance with this regulation in respect of each financial year after the financial year ending 30 June 2013.
- (2) A strategic community plan is to set out the vision, aspirations and objectives of the community in the district.
- (3) A strategic community plan for a district is to cover the period specified in the plan, which is to be at least 10 financial years.

Regulation 19DA — Corporate Business Plans, requirements for

- (1) A local government is to ensure that a corporate business plan is made for its district in accordance with this regulation in respect of each financial year after the financial year ending 30 June 2013.
- (2) A corporate business plan for a district is to:
 - (a) Set out, consistently with any relevant priorities set out in the strategic community plan for the district, a local government's priorities for dealing with the objectives and aspirations of the community in the district; and
 - (b) Govern a local government's internal business planning by expressing the activities that the local government will undertake over the period of the plan, having regard to the resources required to deliver those activities, including assets, finances and workforce; and
 - (c) Develop and integrate matters relating to resources, including asset management, workforce planning and long-term financial planning.

Strategic Implications

Strategic Community Plan

Community Priority:	Our Organisation
Objective:	<i>Deliver a high standard of governance and administration.</i>
Outcome:	4.1
Reference:	4.1a

Asset Management Plan

Nil

Long Term Financial Plan

Nil

Risk Implications

Risk Profiling Theme	Employment Practices
Risk Category	People
Risk Description	Localised damage rectified by routine internal procedures
Consequence Rating	Moderate (3)
Likelihood Rating	Likely (4)
Risk Matrix Rating	High (12)
Key Controls (in place)	Training and Development Retention Strategies Succession Planning
Action (Treatment)	Implementation of Workforce Plan
Risk Rating (after treatment)	Effective

Financial Implications

Implementation costs associated with the Workforce Plan relate primarily to:

- Professional development and training initiatives
- System and process improvements
- Succession planning and capability-building programs

These costs will be incorporated into the Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) and annual budgeting process. No additional unbudgeted expenditure is anticipated.

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Officer's Recommendation

That Council, by Simple Majority, and in accordance with Section 5.56 of the Local Government Act 1995 and Regulations 19C and 19DA of the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996:

1. Adopts the Shire of Dowerin Workforce Plan 2025–2029 as a key informing strategy within the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework to guide workforce planning, capability development, and resourcing over the next five years.