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WORKFORCE PLAN 2022/23 – 2025/26

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1 INTRODUCTION

As with all Local Governments, the Shire of Victoria Plains requires a diverse workforce that encompasses a wide range of occupations, requiring a broad range of skills to ensure that the Shire can deliver on its primary functions including:

- Infrastructure services (e.g., local roads, bridges, footpaths, drainage, waste collection and management)
- Provision and administration of community, cultural and recreation facilities
- Community services
- Building services
- Planning and development approvals

The Shire of Victoria Plains Workforce Plan is intended to enhance the capacity of its workforce to meet community needs by ensuring the organisation has the required staff, capabilities and resources to ensure sustainable service delivery now and into the future. The Workforce Plan considers corporate and business objectives such as financial targets, service delivery objectives and community expectations. It also examines external influences that impact on workforce supply and demand.

2 INTEGRATED PLANNING

Workforce planning is one of the four key components of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework and Guidelines now in place across the local government sector in Western Australia. The Workforce Plan is an essential component of the integrated planning process as it identifies workforce requirements and strategies for current and future operations.

2.1 Our Organisational Commitments

We will listen, consult and engage with our communities

We will encourage, welcome and value constructive feedback

We will unite our communities

We will work together as a team and be empathetic of each other's responsibilities and commitments

We will lead and govern to the best of our ability

We will demonstrate ownership of decisions we make

2.2 Strategic Community Priorities

At a strategic level, this Workforce Plan considers the community's aspirations and priorities as identified in the Shire of Victoria Plains Integrated Strategic Plan 2022-32:

COMMUNITY

- Healthy, connected and safe communities
- Inclusive community activities, events and initiatives
- Recreational, social and heritage spaces are safe and are activated
- Support emergency services planning, risk mitigation, response and recovery

ECONOMY

- We understand traditional and emerging industries across the Shire
- Safe and efficient transport network enables economic growth
- Visitors have a positive experience across our communities

ENVIRONMENT

- Maintain a high standard of environmental health and waste services
- Conservation of our natural environment and resources

CIVIC LEADERSHIP

- Forward planning and implementation of plans to achieve community priorities
- Shire communication is regular, clear and transparent
- Proactive and well governed Shire

To ensure that the Shire can deliver on these priorities for the community, it will need staff that have strong project management and communication skills and the capacity to deliver key projects.

3 SHIRE OF VICTORIA PLAINS COMMUNITY

- Population: 802
- Median Age: 48yrs
- Our Community: 209 families
- Unemployment: 3.1%
- Income: family (\$2,200/wk) and household income (\$1,653/wk) is below WA averages, but personal weekly (\$963) income is above the Australian average. Average annual income is \$50,076

4 EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

4.1 The Western Australian Economy

The Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation publishes a monthly economic profile for Western Australia. The WA Economic Profile for August 2022¹ identified that employment in Western Australia rose 0.4% to 1.47 million in July 2022 and the unemployment rate fell by 0.2 percentage points to 3.2% (below the national rate of 3.4%). Furthermore, the underemployment rate fell to 5.4% - the lowest underemployment rate since September 2012 – and job vacancies remain at very high levels, highlighting the tightness of the labour market in WA.

The Western Australian Government's, Department of Treasury, Economic and Revenue Forecasting May 2022², provides the following employment and wage projections for Western Australia:

Percentage Annual Growth %				
	2022-23 Forward Estimate	2023-24 Forward Estimate	2024-25 Forward Estimate	2025-26 Forward Estimate
Unemployment	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75
Employment	2	1.25	1.25	1.25
Wage Price Index	2.75	3	3	3

With unemployment rates expected to remain low and wages to increase in the State over the coming years, there will be increased competition for labour across all industries which will exacerbate the challenge for Local Governments to attract and retain skilled workers.

¹ [Western Australia's economy and international trade \(www.wa.gov.au\)](http://www.wa.gov.au)

² [2022-23 WA Budget – Economic Forecasts \(www.wa.gov.au\)](http://www.wa.gov.au)

4.2 Local Government Environment

According to the Local Government National Industry Insights Report³, there were 190,800 employees in Local Government in Australia at the end of June 2021. The report identified that:

- 55% of the 537 Local Governments in Australia are in regional or remote areas
- 68% of the workforce is full-time, 16% is part-time and 16% is employed on a casual basis
- Approximately 45% of employees have a diploma or high-level qualification
- Employment levels in the Local Government sector increased between 2001 and 2021 and are projected to continue to increase over the coming five years
- Apprentice and trainee commencements and completions fell overall between 2011 and 2020 (there were just 47 commencements in 2020 compared to 250 in 2012)
- The most common intended occupation for apprentices and trainees was Earthmoving Plant Operators.

The Local Government Industry Reference Committee's (LGIRC) 2019 Skills Forecast⁴ that over half (45%) of the Local Government workforce was aged over 45 in 2016. The implications of this for the Local Government sector, according to the forecast, include:

- The need for career transition and succession planning management
- New methods to source/attract staff from further afield are needed
- People are staying in positions longer, which limits capacity to bring on young trainees
- Key employees retire without employees being trained to backfill the role
- Loss of key corporate knowledge/no knowledge exchange
- High turnover and loss of skill/skills gaps and shortages

Considering these implications, the LGIRC forecast suggests that efforts to retain the ageing workforce will be important to balance the lack of new entrants to the sector and establish valuable mentoring and training opportunities for new employees from older and experienced workers.

The Local Government Skills Forecast also reveals that similar to other sectors, Local Government is experiencing significant skills shortages. Some reasons for the skill shortages include:

- Inability to compete with the private sector on remuneration
- Lack of suitably qualified and experienced applicants
- High demand across the labour market for specific occupations
- Shortage of skilled locals – limited talent pool
- Remoteness – hard to recruit skilled and experienced staff
- Lack of opportunity for career progression, particularly in small councils
- Regional/remote location – lack of facilities/housing.

Local Government Professionals Australia⁵ suggested that key challenges facing Local Government, particularly in the face of prolonged skills shortages, include that the workforce is:

- Considerably older than the Australian all-industry workforce
- Struggling to attract and retain workers under 30 years of age
- Experiencing challenges in recruiting and retaining apprentices
- Facing major skills shortages in key professional and technical occupations, including Town Planners, Environmental Health Officers, Building Surveyors, Engineers, and Plant Operators
- Not well-positioned regarding new and emerging soft skills.

³ [Australian Industry and Skills Committee, January 2022](#)

⁴ [Local Government Industry Reference Committee 2019 Skills Forecast](#)

⁵ [Local Government Professionals Australia - 2021-22 Pre-Budget Submissions \(treasury.gov.au\)](#)

5 INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT - CURRENT WORKFORCE PROFILE

The Shire of Victoria Plains currently has 32 employees including 15 full time employees, 9 part time employees, 3 casuals and 5 contractors. The Shire also utilise external resources such as consultants and contractors to complement its internal capacity. This ensures that the Shire can fulfil all statutory obligations and deliver projects that require specialist or expert knowledge and skills.

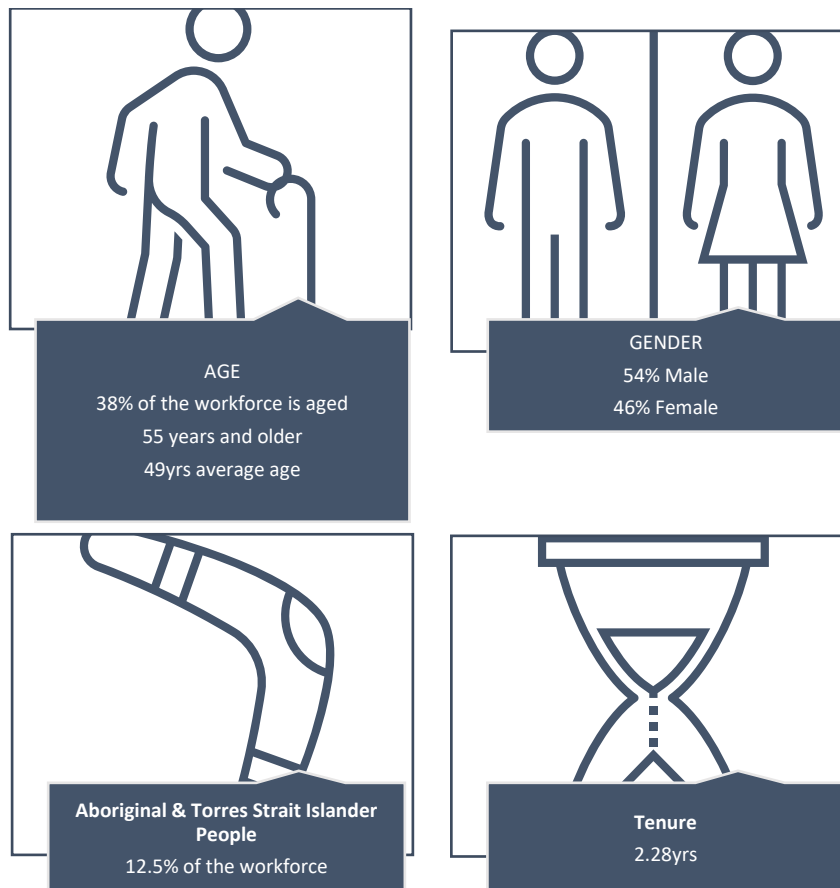
5.1 Workforce

5.1.1 Demographics

Women comprise 46% of the Shire of Victoria Plains workforce. This is slightly below the national workforce average, where women comprise 47.9% of all employed persons⁶. Women primarily occupy administrative positions within the Shire.

The Shire of Victoria Plains has a relatively new workforce with 15 employees commencing in 2022. One employee has worked for over 22yrs at the Shire, two have worked for 7yrs and 9 have worked for between 1-5yrs.

Average tenure of all employees (excluding contractors) is 2.28yrs.



⁶ [Gender equality workplace statistics at a glance 2022 | WGEA](#)

Years to Retirement

Age	Number of Employees
Under 25yrs	1
25yrs – 50yrs	11
50 – 65yrs	11
65yrs plus	2

**Excluding contractors

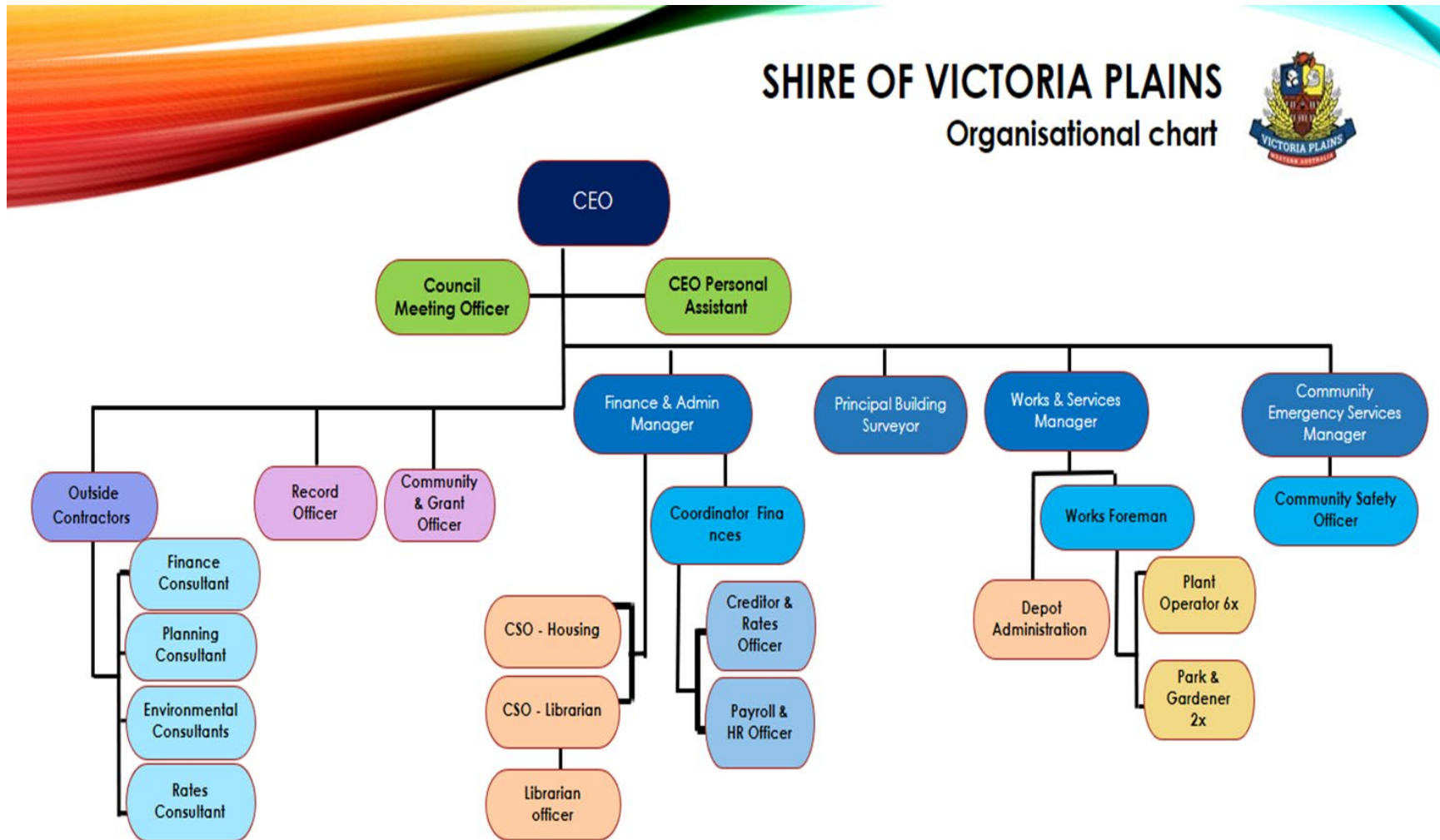
5.1.2 Employment Status

The majority of employees at the Shire of Victoria Plains are employed on a full-time basis (46%). The three casual employees are males in the Works team and there are 5 contractors.

5.1.3 Workforce Challenges

Challenge	Risk Assessment				
	Catastrophic	Major	Moderate	Minor	Insignificant
Relatively high number of contractors performing senior roles				X	
Lack of recruitment channels (no local high school etc)			X		
Low corporate knowledge and local experience (previous years turnover of staff)		X			
Technology can improve operational efficiencies however requires time for research, training and application			X		
Specialist skill sets required in the organisation (community safety, project management, finance etc)		X			
Increasing governance and compliance across majority of roles		X			
Ageing workforce and number of employees nearing retirement age (compared with overall workforce)			X		
Providing social opportunities for integration of multicultural members of staff				X	
Human resources are becoming a specialist skill set and requires time. Internal capacity is limited				X	
Continuing to maintain a high standard of workplace safety			X		

5.2 Organisational Structure



Business Unit	Responsibilities	Positions	Key Partnerships
CEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for the organisation and has powers delegated by Council • Delivery of the strategic goals of Council • Integrated planning • Records Management • Risk, governance (inc. Council support), and compliance • Tourism • Community and economic development • Emergency management 	<p>Chief Executive Officer</p> <p>Personal Assistant to the CEO</p> <p>Council Support Officer</p> <p>Community Development Officer</p> <p>Records Officer</p> <p>Community Emergency Services Manager</p> <p>Community Safety Officer</p> <p>Total current staff: 5.5 FTE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development ▪ Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries ▪ WA Local Government Association (WALGA) ▪ Avon-Midland Country Zone (Zone) ▪ Avon Region of Councils (AROC) ▪ LG Professionals ▪ Regional Development Australia (RDA) Wheatbelt ▪ Wheatbelt Development Commission ▪ Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) ▪ St John Ambulance ▪ WA Police ▪ Lotterywest
Finance and Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administration and customer service • Compliance • Human Resource management • Property management • Licensing • Libraries • Cemeteries • Recreation • Work Health and Safety • Financial management • Budgets • Monthly and annual reports • Compliance • Asset management • Long term financial planning 	<p>Manager Finance and Administration</p> <p>Coordinator Finance</p> <p>Payroll Officer/Debtors</p> <p>Customer Service Officers</p> <p>Creditors Officer</p> <p>Library Officers (external NFPs)</p> <p>Rates Officer – Contract</p> <p>Monthly Reports, FBT - RSM - Contract</p> <p>Total current staff: 5 FTE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ WA Country Health Service ▪ Department of Transport ▪ Department of Sport and Recreation ▪ State Library ▪ Department of Commerce ▪ Department of Biosecurity, Conservation and Attractions ▪ Tourism WA ▪ Local community groups ▪ Local Government Insurance Services (LGIS) ▪ LG Professionals ▪ Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries ▪ Office of the Auditor General ▪ Moore Stephens

Regulatory Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building approvals • Planning approvals • Refuse site • Environmental health • Animal Management 	Principal Building Surveyor Environmental Health Officer - Contract Town Planner - Contract See Community Safety Officer Total current staff: 0.9 FTE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Building Commission ▪ Waste Authority ▪ Department of Water and Environmental Regulation ▪ Department of Health ▪ Department of Planning, Heritage and Lands ▪ Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development
Works and Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road works and maintenance • Building, plant, and equipment maintenance • Parks, gardens, recreation grounds maintenance 	Manager Works and Services - contract Works Supervisor Team Leader Plant Operators Garden Team Total current staff: 10 FTE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Main Roads WA (inc RRG & SRRG) ▪ Water Corporation ▪ WA Return, Recycle, Renew (WARRRL)

5.3 Exit Rates

The primary reasons for leaving the Shire included voluntary resignation which may have included reasons such as career progression, lack of fit with the organisation's culture, seeking new opportunities, leaving the district etc. It should be noted that exit rates have significantly stabilised in 2022

Financial Year	Number	Unit	Reasons
2021/22	11	Works	Voluntary resignation
2021/22	6	Administration	Voluntary resignation
2021/22	2	Works	Abandonment

5.4 Employee Costs

Expense	2019/20	2020/21	21/22
Wages	1,458,315	1,385,387	1,697,752

5.5 Employee Incentives

The Shire of Victoria Plains currently offers a variety of workplace rewards and incentives including:

- ✓ Payment above award wages
- ✓ Matched superannuation contributions
- ✓ Flexible work arrangements
- ✓ Housing at reduced rental rates and utilities for position dependent positions
- ✓ Uniform allowance
- ✓ Training and professional development opportunities
- ✓ Paid parental leave
- ✓ Study leave and contribution to qualifications, licences and skill development
- ✓ Private use of Shire vehicles (position dependent)
- ✓ Payment of relocation expenses
- ✓ EBA Outside Crew

5.5.1 Employee Housing

Additional Key Worker Housing is required to accommodate Shire staff. At least four units are required over the next three years to accommodate existing staffing levels. This will allow existing housing stock to be allocated to staff with families. This will be grant funded where possible.

6 FUTURE WORKFORCE PROFILE

6.1 Future Roles and Gaps

The Shire has considered current and future staffing needs to deliver the strategies and outcomes identified in the Strategic Integrated Plan. Additional employee resources are indicated as follows:

Business Unit	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
CEO	0	0	0	0
Finance and Administration	0	1^	1^	1^^

Regulatory Services	1*	1***	0	0
Works and Services	2**	0	1****	1^^

* Principal Building Surveyor changed from contractor to employee.

** Resources reallocated to create Depot Administration/Work Health and Safety Officer.

Resources used for external support reallocated to the role of Works Supervisor.

*** Environment Officer – Shared with AROC

^ Trainee. Grant funded.

^^ Allows for growth of resources to match changes across the District. This may be required before the year currently indicated.

****GIS Officer – Shared with AROC. This may occur in 23/24.

Another staff resource that may be required in future is a dedicated economic development officer or an economic development support officer. Key economic impacts on the horizon include: defence contract works, the space industry, the freight task, mining and exploration, rapid changes to the agricultural sector and tourism.

6.1.1 Shared Arrangements (AROC)

In addition to the above, AROC members are currently looking at sharing:

- GIS Officer (Works and Services);
- Environment Officer (Regulatory Services);
- Environmental Health Officer (Regulatory Services).

6.2 Future Financial and Long-Term Projections.

The Shire of Victoria Plains Long-Term Financial Plan forecasts the following employee costs.

Expense	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	% change
Wages	1,910,137	2,068,679	2,240,379	2,426,331	21.27%
Professional development	45,000	65,000	70,395	76,238	40.97%
TOTAL	1955137	2,133,679	2,310774	2,502,569	21.87%

7 WORKFORCE PLAN

Based on an analysis of the internal and external workforce environment and an assessment of the future workforce requirements, the Shire of Victoria Plains have identified the following priorities for the four-year term of this workforce plan:

- 1) *Future proofing our workforce through well planned and executed employee attraction, retention, and succession strategies*

Given the number of new employees that occurred in 2022 it is imperative that the Shire of Victoria Plains have a well-documented attraction, retention and succession planning process that both allows for the gaining and transfer of corporate knowledge and encourages current employees to be retained, preferably in the local community, for longer than three years.

- 2) *Investing in our workforce by providing them with the right training, development and progression opportunities*

Investment in training and development is fundamental to creating a high performing organisation. In the current environment of sustained labour market shortages, up-skilling the existing workforce is an important strategy to ensure the Shire has access to core competencies and is able to comply with its legislative requirements. Developing internal talent and providing a clear pathway for career progression within the Shire will support employee retention and help fill future skills gaps.

- 3) *Enhancing our organisational culture through strong leadership, improved communication, and employee engagement*

Workplace culture influences the way people feel and the way that they perform. A supportive, encouraging workplace energizes people and makes them want to come to work each day and do the best job possible. The Shire will strive toward creating a culture that encourages high performing, engaged staff that are committed to delivering outcomes for the community.

- 4) *Ensure the right systems, processes, and policies are in place to support our workforce*

Organisational policies and procedures document the expected standard of behaviour, conduct and performance of employees. It is important to have clear, documented, and transparent policies and management practices, which are easily accessible by all staff, regularly reviewed and consistently followed.

1. Skills attraction, retention, and succession					
Action	Responsible Officer/s	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26
a) <i>Attraction:</i> Develop and implement an attraction strategy that identifies specific approaches to attract people to the Shire workforce and to live in the communities	CEO		X		
b) <i>Attraction:</i> Use of contemporary and efficient online systems to promote vacancies and receive applications	CEO	X	X	X	X
c) <i>Attraction:</i> Continue to offer apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities	CEO Manager Works and Services	X	X	X	X
d) <i>Retention:</i> Continue to offer flexible working arrangements for staff where practical and beneficial to both the employee and the organisation	CEO Manager Finance and Administration	X	X	X	X
e) <i>Retention:</i> Review employee wages, rewards and incentives to ensure that they remain competitive, attractive and fair, in the context of the Local Government sector	CEO Manager Finance and Administration	X	X	X	X
f) <i>Retention:</i> Continued investment in maintenance and expansion of Shire housing stock	CEO	X	X	X	X
g) <i>Succession:</i> Develop and implement succession processes for all business-critical roles	CEO		X		X
h) <i>Succession:</i> Internal promotion opportunities are advertised and invited - positive opportunity for existing staff to be retained locally	CEO Manager Works and Services	X	X	X	X

2. Training and Development					
Action	Responsible Officer	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26
a) <i>Training and Development:</i> Ensure all employees have a training and development plan, including career goal setting, which is completed as part of their annual performance review.	CEO Manager Finance and Administration Manager of Works and Services	X	X	X	X
b) <i>Training:</i> Hold regular administration and works staff meetings so that staff can discuss strategic projects, share job knowledge and identify cross-training opportunities	CEO Manager of Works and Services	X	X	X	X
c) <i>Development:</i> Provide opportunities for staff to act in other roles to facilitate knowledge transfer as part of a broader plan for succession and to reduce downtime when staff are away	CEO Manager Finance and Administration Manager Works and Services	X	X	X	X
d) <i>Development:</i> Contractors can add value to the local team (sharing skills, expertise, knowledge) through shared values and standards	CEO Manager Finance and Administration	X	X	X	X

3. Organisational culture					
Action	Responsible Officer	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26
a) Regular administration and works team meetings as well as whole of staff meetings. Ensure that all employees receive consistent and regular updates on Shire activities and decisions.	CEO, Deputy CEO Manager Works and Services	X	X	X	X
b) Encourage participation in whole of organisation social activities for inclusion and integration across teams and individuals	All staff	X	X	X	X

c) Undertake a bi-annual employee engagement survey to identify concerns, challenges and barriers to achieving the desired workplace culture	CEO		X		X
d) Improve accountability across the leadership group for effective people management by developing appropriate key performance indicators that are consistently reported and monitored	Council CEO	X	X	X	X

4. Systems, Processes and Policies					
Action	Responsible Officer	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26
a) <i>Industrial relations</i> : Plan and execute seamless transition to Federal State award system	CEO	X	X		
b) <i>Policies and Procedures</i> : Review and update the Shire's key human resources policies and procedures including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff onboarding and induction • Performance reviews • Exit process (including exit interviews) 	Manager Finance and Administration	X	X	X	X
c) <i>Policies and Procedures</i> : Ensure that the Shire's core values are reflected in all Shire policies and procedures	CEO	X	X	X	X
d) <i>Systems</i> : Undertake a review of position descriptions to ensure the activities of each role are aligned to the actual activities and priorities for that position	Management Team	X	X	X	X

8 EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Equal Employment Opportunity is the operation of non-discriminatory personnel policies and practices. It involves giving all individuals in the workplace the opportunity to compete equally for jobs and have equal access to training and promotion at all levels, limited only by their skills, knowledge, experience and qualifications.

The Shire of Victoria Plains recognises its legal obligations under the Equal Opportunity Act 1984 and actively promotes equal employment opportunity based solely on merit to ensure that discrimination does not occur on the grounds of gender, marital status, pregnancy, race, disability, and religious or political convictions. All employment training with Council is directed towards providing equal opportunity to all employees provided their relevant experience, skills and ability meet the requirements for such training.

All promotional policies and opportunities with the Council is directed towards providing equal opportunity to all employees provided their relevant experience, skills and ability meet the minimum requirements for such promotion.

All offers of employment within the Shire is directed toward providing equal opportunity to prospective employees provided their relevant experience, skills and ability meet the minimum requirements for engagement.

The Shire of Victoria Plains does not tolerate harassment within its workplace. Harassment is defined as any unwelcome, offensive action or remark concerning a person's race, colour, language, ethnicity, political or religious convictions, gender, marital status or disability.

The equal employment opportunity goals of the Shire are designed to provide an enjoyable, challenging, involving, harmonious work environment for all employees where each has the opportunity to progress to the extent of their ability.

8.1 Equal Opportunity Workforce Profile

The following table shows the actual representation of various diversity groups.

Percentage Representation

Diversity group	2022 Actual
Women in management – Tier 1	2
Women in management – Tier 2	2
Women in management – Tier 2 Outdoor	
Women in management – Tier 3 Indoor	7
Women in management – Tier 3 Outdoor	
People from culturally diverse backgrounds	
Culturally diverse backgrounds - Indoor	
Culturally diverse backgrounds – Outdoor	
Aboriginal Australians	1
People with disability	
People with disability - Indoor	
People with disability - Outdoor	
Youth	

The following table shows the calculated equity index.

Distribution (Equity Index)

Equity group	2022 Actual
Women	
Women Indoor	12
Women Outdoor	1
People from culturally diverse backgrounds	
Culturally diverse backgrounds Indoor	
Culturally diverse backgrounds Outdoor	
Aboriginal Australians	1
People with disability	
People with disability Indoor	
People with disability Outdoor	