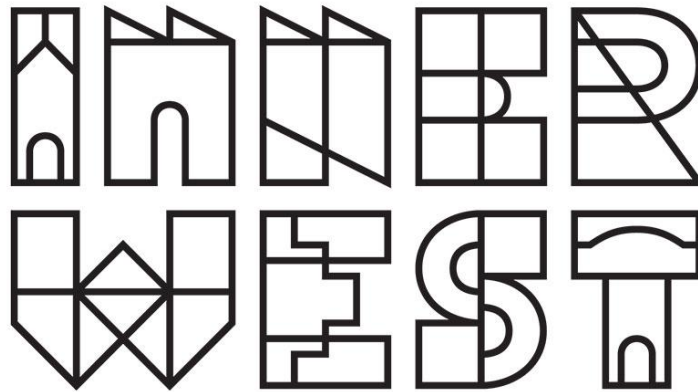


SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA 3

Distributed on 10 November 2020



COUNCIL MEETING

TUESDAY 10 NOVEMBER 2020

6.30pm

Location: Remote Meeting

MEETING AGENDA – PRECIS SUPPLEMENTARY ITEMS

The following reports appear as late items information required for the preparation of the reports was not available at the time of distribution of the Business Paper.

1 Mayoral Minutes

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C1120(1) Item 16 Mayoral Minute: Telstra Building in Balmain	3
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Item No: C1120(1) Item 16
Subject: MAYORAL MINUTE: TELSTRA BUILDING IN BALMAIN
From: The Mayor, Councillor Darcy Byrne

MOTION:

THAT Council:

- 1. Notes that ongoing delays by Telstra have prevented the completion of a new community open space and streetscape area at 366C Darling Street, Balmain; and**
 - 2. Writes to Telstra asking the company to immediately re-engage in negotiations with Council's legal team to solve any impasse and to allow the project to proceed.**
-

Background

The Telstra Public Park project is a collaboration between Inner West Council and Telstra Corporation to demolish part of the Balmain Exchange to create a public park.

Last year, Telstra secured the site and started demolition. The front (Northern) section of the Exchange was removed throughout latter part of the year. Council wants to build the new open space after Telstra makes good the end wall facing on to Darling Street.

However, the project is now stalled after Telstra has repeatedly failed to finish the required work and is dragging its feet over legal negotiations to hand over the site to Council.

At the moment, the building site is a terrible eyesore with metal barriers erected to prevent access to the site.

Council is calling on Telstra to immediately re-engage with Council's legal team to bring this drawn out affair to an end and to finally hand over the site to the people of the Inner West.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil.

Item No: C1120(1) Item 17
Subject: MAYORAL MINUTE: GENDER EQUITY IN EXECUTIVE POSITIONS
From: The Mayor, Councillor Darcy Byrne

MOTION:

THAT Council:

- 1. Notes Inner West Council's Workforce Management Strategy 2018-2022, which was adopted in June 2018 (Attachment 1);**
 - 2. Notes that a Gender Equity Strategy is being developed by Council officers, with a draft strategy due to come to Council by June 2021;**
 - 3. Supports the aim of having female representation in at least 50 per cent of senior executive roles.**
-

ATTACHMENTS

- 1. [Download](#) Workforce Management Strategy 2018-2022**



Workforce Management Strategy 2018-2022

Adopted June 2018



Executive Summary

Workforce planning is the process of identifying current and future staffing needs on the basis of current internal and external information. It focuses on retaining existing staff as well as attracting new employees to ensure we have the right number of people, with the right skills in the right jobs at the right time, now and in the future.

This Workforce Plan sets out the issues, evidence and strategies required to deliver a sustainable Inner West Council workforce capable of continuing to deliver high quality services to our community in 2018 and beyond and deliver on our vision. It builds upon the directions set out in the Community Strategic Plan and is aligned with the overarching NSW Integrated Planning and Reporting framework.

Key Principles

The key principles that underpin the Delivery Program are reflective of an integrated approach to planning i.e. finance, assets and workforce and are:

- No forced redundancies – all staff protections maintained
- No budgeted drop in current service levels
- No privatisation of current services
- Asset maintenance ratio needs to be 1 or greater
- Asset renewal ratio 100%+
- Any new initiatives must support adopted strategies that deliver to the CSP strategic directions and objectives

With these principles in mind, in building the new Inner West Council (IWC) we must focus on the integration of our workforce to enable Council to achieve:

- Harmonised, innovative and efficient services across the Inner West
- Continuous improvement approach to service delivery and achieving productivity gains
- A high performing and values based culture
- A financially sustainable Council

Key Issues

- The integration process and legislative employment protections which impact on the size of our workforce and employee costs. Staff resilience to cope in this change environment is crucial
- Furthermore, in 2017 the newly elected Council resolved to offer 5 year protections to all eligible former Council staff transferred under proclamation. To compensate, it was resolved that to mitigate the impact on employee costs and hence the long term financial plan, savings are to be made through vacancy management. As a result, the organisation must do more with less to maintain services and a business

excellence framework is being rolled out through the organisation to ensure continuous improvement results in productivity savings and cost containment

- The resolution to provide employee protections for five years and vacancy management necessitates a strategy of developing our staff capability to ensure business continuity and staff capable of succession opportunities. This strategy will provide skilled staff and enable employee cost containment
- Labour market skill shortages exist in a number of key occupations required by local government to serve the community. Our employee value proposition must ensure we can compete to attract and retain staff. Otherwise we are in a vulnerable position if employees were to leave/retire over a short period of time, as the current skills may be difficult to replace
- Increased employee expectations for harmonised working conditions, and flexible working arrangements may put pressure on ongoing fiscal containment
- Changes in our community's demand for particular services: changes in demographics and lifecycle needs and the pressure on Inner West development influenced by State Government will be one of the key drivers of the type and mix of services supplied by us to our community and the types of work patterns required, e.g. fulltime, part-time, seasonal, casual, labour hire.

Strategic priorities and actions

With the above key issues in mind, this workforce strategy looks at how we attract, retain and develop our workforce and inform our culture as our organisation evolves. It is engaged at all levels of the supply and lifecycle of workers and aims to influence how our workforce is educated, trained and developed into the future.

This Workforce Management Strategy has six strategic priorities. Collectively they aim to optimise the Inner West Council's workforce strengths, address our most critical challenges and help focus our continuing efforts in building a high-performing, values-driven workplace.

1. **Containment of employee costs within the constraints of five year employment protections**
 - Utilise vacancy management protocols to reduce total staff numbers
 - Link in with building current staff capacity for succession planning
 - Remuneration strategy aligned with other conditions and benefits to attract and retain
2. **Building a positive IWC Culture and staff engagement**
 - Building a suite of holistic people policies and procedures that add value to our Employee Value Proposition and Inner West Council brand in the labour market to attract and retain staff

- Maintain and expand on our Staff Health and Wellbeing Policy and programs to ensure we give our staff every opportunity to be fit, healthy and resilient
- Increased focus on flexible working arrangements and family friendly policies to attract and retain staff and improve staff satisfaction and engagement. Examples include: flexible working times, working from home, career break schemes, alternate core hours, job sharing

3. Building Staff Capability

- Mandatory corporate capability programs to embed a consistent language, methodology and learning across the organisation to develop
- Leadership development for all staff for consistent language and messaging to build self-leadership, resilience to change and a culture of high performance and continuous improvement
- Learning and development opportunities that grow our own skills to minimise the impact of the five year staff protections on staff numbers e.g. increase staff skills, encourage continuous improvement and business continuity

4. Harmonisation of work practices, resources, and staffing to enable productivity savings and improve service delivery to the community e.g program of open and transparent service reviews

5. Diversity

- increased focus on data collection to ensure appropriate representation of diversity groups in our workforce, particularly in decision making positions
- Entry level programs to provide young people with work experience, traineeships and apprenticeships, including targeted opportunities for minority and disadvantaged groups such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and those who identify with a disability. This will provide our young people with the opportunity to view and value local government work and can offer us a reservoir of ready and skilled candidates
- Continued commitment to organisation wide training in diversity and inclusiveness
- Continued partnerships with relevant minority group providers and gender equity programs

6. Retirement/ Transition Planning and Knowledge Management strategies

- identify the critical skills and knowledge at all levels within our organisation and develop our employees to ensure retention, transfer of these skills and knowledge as well as coverage of these skills and knowledge during absence or in case of retirement

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Abbreviations

These abbreviations are used in this document.

Abbreviation	Full term or explanation
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
CPI	consumer price index
EEO	equal employment opportunity
ELE	employee leave entitlements
FIRST	An acronym from the Inner West Council values of: flexibly, integrity, respect and spirit of team
HR	Human resources
IWC	Inner West Council
LGBTI	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex
LGNSW	Local Government NSW

Introduction and overview

What is workforce planning?

Workforce planning is the process of identifying current and future staffing needs on the basis of information we currently have. It focuses on retaining existing staff as well as attracting new employees to ensure we have the right number of people, with the right skills in the right jobs at the right time, now and in the future.

Why is it important?

If we did not engage in strategic workforce planning, we could face a loss of skills and (corporate) knowledge, and higher staffing costs making maintenance of service levels difficult. This plan sets out the issues, evidence and strategies required to deliver a sustainable Inner West Council workforce, capable of maintaining high quality services to our community over the next 4 years. This includes developing strategies to build the culture of Inner West Council and contain employee costs and putting in place strategies to develop and retain existing staff. This plan aims to influence how our workforce is educated, trained and developed into the future, aligning to the Community Strategic Plan goals and deliverables with the right people to ensure the job gets done. In considering inputs in preparing the Workforce plan, strategies must align with our Asset Management Plan and the Long Term Financial Plan. The Plan is also an extension of our already existing workforce programs, policies, procedures and plans and should continue to link in with these processes.

The main benefits derived from the workforce planning process are:

- appropriate numbers of staff are recruited and developed to meet future needs. This ensures business continuity for service delivery
- improved employee productivity through improved job design, technological advances and use of resources so that staff are used effectively and efficiently. This will become increasingly important as we continue to conduct service reviews to harmonise work practices, use of resources and staff
- increased job satisfaction, organisation culture and reduced staff turnover
- a clear rationale for linking expenditures for training, development, career progression, and recruitment
- Maintain or improves workforce diversity more accurately reflecting the diversity of our resident population

What are our goals for the Workforce Management Strategy 2018 -2022?

The Workforce Management Strategy provides a framework for aligning decisions about human resources (such as recruitment, employment options, staff capability and

development, internal deployment, etc.) with the outcomes and strategies of the Community Strategic Plan. It is a key element of the Resourcing Strategy it informs, and is informed by the:

- Long Term Financial Plan (overall Employee Benefits and On-Costs)
- Asset Management Strategy in terms of the skills required now, short term and into the future to sustainably manage the services Council delivers
- Information and Communications Technology Strategy.

This Strategy aims to provide an understanding of demand and supply, an assessment of the shortages and gaps and to outline strategic priorities to successfully retain, attract and develop the appropriate workforce. These strategic priorities will inform actions and performance indicators to track, monitor and measure progress.

How does this link to our Vision and the Integrated Planning Framework?

The Community Strategic Plan includes this Vision for the Inner West in 2036:

We are Inner West, land of the Gadigal and Wangal peoples, whose rich cultures, heritage and history we acknowledge and respect. We are defined by our diversity of people, places and ideas. We are an inclusive, vibrant, caring and progressive community where everyone is welcome, people and nature live in harmony and creativity is a way of life.

This Workforce Management Strategy sets out the issues, evidence and strategies required to deliver a sustainable Inner West Council workforce capable of continuing to deliver our vision and provide high quality services to our community from 2018 and beyond. It builds upon the directions set out in the Community Strategic Plan

The Workforce Strategic Plan and Resourcing Strategy have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the State Government's Integrated Planning Framework and gives consideration to the capacity for Council to deliver on its responsibilities within the Community Strategic Plan.

How does this link to our Values?

Inner West Council's Values are at the very core of how we provide the service to the community and how we behave with our work colleagues, to deliver a values based culture that is high performing and resilient and, together with family friendly policies, builds our brand in the market place. The values are 'FIRST':

- Flexibility

- Integrity
- Respect
- Spirit of Team

The FIRST values guide our behaviour, how we go about our work, how we engage with each other and our customers, the choices we make and how we spend our time. They also provide a framework for improving the way we do things. The values are embedded into people processes so they are reflected in our everyday actions and decisions and by all employees, regardless of their position and whether they are with us for a short time or long term career.

We measure our success by how we live up to these values each day with Inner West Council.

What is our Workforce Planning Framework?

The Workforce Management Strategy is underpinned by the Workforce Planning Framework.



Figure 1: The Workforce Planning Framework

The key steps are:

1. **Workforce analysis:** Establishing the profile of our existing workforce and includes a snapshot of workforce trends

2. **Forecast needs:** Establishing the future profile of our workforce based on the business direction over the mid to long term. This involves identifying changes to the service delivery requirements of our organisation, tying in closely to our Community Strategic Plan.
3. **Analyse gaps:** Understanding the gap between our existing workforce and the future profile of our workforce. This step involves using the results of workforce analysis and forecast needs to identify current and future gaps between the demand for services and the supply of labour to meet those demands
4. **Develop strategies and action plans:** Establishing strategies to develop the skills internally to match the future needs and, where applicable, source the skills externally and overcome any constraints. This involves the planning and design of specific programs and projects that will enable us to develop and maintain a workforce capable of delivering the Community Strategic Plan.
5. **Implement strategies:** This is the delivery of the specific programs and projects required to develop and maintain the capability and capacity of our workforce. The implementation of these strategies is integrated into the broader business planning and operational management activities of our organisation.
6. **Monitor and review** the application of the strategies. This step is conducted to determine the effectiveness, efficiency and appropriateness of the workforce planning strategies and activities. Performance information is required to determine the impact of workforce planning on the overall achievement of organisational objectives and our Community Strategic Plan. This will be an ongoing process once the strategies have been implemented.

Workforce analysis

Global workforce trends

Australia is confronted with the global phenomena of technological and demographic changes that are slowing growth of the global workforce and dramatically changing the way we work. These national and global trends all contribute to skills shortage in particular key areas. Long-run trends related to technological development and the accompanying structural changes are also likely to affect the nature of economic growth.

According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) world labour force participation rate continues to decline in the Southeast Asia and Pacific region. Global economies are inextricably linked, and this connection has vast implications for talent acquisition teams as trends facing the global labour market impact how we hire.

Current macro trends include:-

- employment worldwide is shifting towards a service economy
- productivity growth is stalling
- people spend less time at work
- the global population is ageing
- not enough young people are learning the technology skills that are needed
- today's global job seeker is well-informed about where the best employment opportunities are, and will move for the right offer
- as job seekers become more mobile, some countries are retaining and attracting more talent than others
- growing interest in flexibility is a global trend
- people are searching for jobs all the time and they're searching on mobile
- the labour market is becoming more polarised as middle-wage jobs are dropping out while both high skill, high-wage jobs and low wage jobs increase

These macro trends explain how many candidates are available, where talent is coming from and going to, and where the labour market is headed in the near future. Understanding the ebb and flow of talent, and what's driving the change is a central, but often overlooked, piece of successful hiring campaigns.

One potential explanation of the slower productivity growth is that it's a symptom of the talent shortage. Critical roles in healthcare, tech and transportation are notoriously hard to fill, and local government experiences similar strains in childcare, urban planning and engineering. In Australia, 12% of job postings are still open after 60 days. Low

productivity rates could be a sign that employers can't hire fast enough to distribute the workload and that current employees are overburdened as a result.

Another trend identified by the ILO is that although overall productivity growth is lower, in countries where people work less productivity rates are higher. This trend suggests that both employees and employers benefit from working better, not just working longer.

The number of Australians aged 65 and over is expected to increase rapidly, to 6.2 million in 2042 or around 25% of the population. This demographic shift means that more services will be aimed at those 65 and older, a trend which is already creating demand for workers in healthcare and aged care services. In future we will need to create talent pipelines to keep pace in likely changes to services we deliver to the community.

As the population ages older workers will need to be kept engaged to avoid losing them to retirement. Flexible work arrangements are one way to do this.

The Indeed Net Interest Score ranks 55 countries on how many people are interested in coming to as well as leaving a country. According to this ranking, Australia ranks 28th—meaning that the country overall is losing talent and not attracting enough to make up the difference. This impacts on our people strategies and the need to “grow our own” through career development and apprenticeship, traineeships, and graduate programs. People retention strategies are becoming more important as are reporting metrics providing evidence on return of investment to demonstrate the ensures effectiveness and value add of the retention strategies .

Globally, 70% of the labour force is actively looking for, or open to considering, a new job. There is a growing trend for job seekers today to search for their next job online.

Australian workforce trends

Australia's employment statistics are an important indicator of socio-economic status. The levels of full or part-time employment, unemployment and labour force participation indicate the strength of the local economy and social characteristics of the population. Employment status is linked to a number of factors including age structure, which influences the number of people in the workforce, the economic base and employment opportunities available in the area and; the education and skill base of the population. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2016 Census revealed that

10,683,838 people living in Australia in 2016 were employed, of which 62% worked full-time and 36% part-time.

The following trends are from the ABS data Labour Force, Australia, November 2017:-

- the unemployment rate remaining steady at 5.4 %
- the participation rate increasing by less than 0.1 percentage points to 65.4 %
- the employment to population ratio remaining steady at 61.8 %
- The female labour force participation increased to an historical high of 60.1 %

An ageing workforce

Australia's population is ageing, mainly due to sustained low levels of fertility and increased life expectancy. Population projections by the ABS indicate that around one in four Australians will be 65 years or older by 2056. The ageing workforce will directly impact on the potential pool of employees available to Council.

Local government, in particular, has a high proportion of aged workers. Over the next decade, a substantial proportion of key workers with critical skills and experience in the local government sector will be lost as the 'baby boom' generation reaches retirement age.

The ageing Australian workforce will also impact on the structure of the demand for council's services. Demand for health and aged care related services will increase and demand for education and child care services as a proportion of total expenditure will, theoretically, decrease. These challenges can affect workforce capacity and the capabilities required by Council to achieve its strategic priorities for the future.

A shrinking workforce

Australia's workforce is shrinking. This is a direct result of the ageing population, as well as a fall in the number of young people of working age. This will obviously result in a much smaller workforce and will also directly impact on the potential pool of employees available to Council.

Differing needs and expectations of a multi-generational workforce

As is reflected within Council's workforce, the characteristics of the labour force will look different across each age cohorts. For example, younger employees have different expectations of their jobs, careers and employers. These varying attitudes and expectations towards work means that we need to adopt flexible workforce strategies to meet the needs of various workers.

Skills shortage

Skills shortage is a major issue facing Australia's workforce. Skill shortages have been identified in a number of occupations required by local government, including engineering, and in particular traffic management, stormwater and asset managers, town planning, environmental health, web developers and social media managers and early childhood teaching. Typically Council experiences difficulties in recruiting for these roles and must adopt targeted recruitment and retention strategies.

Increasing Competition

There is increasing competition across local government and private industry to attract and recruit employees with the right skills and experience, which means employers need to continually set themselves apart from others and market and promote themselves accordingly. Branding and the Inner West Council employee value proposition will be key.

Other factors

In addition, technological changes, rising expectations of the community, financial reforms and changes in legislation could also impact on our future workforce requirements.

Current Inner West Local Government Area trends

It is important to consider the Inner West in long term strategic planning, as Council has resolved to maintain service levels. This will inform not only local workforce analysis but also likely changes to community service needs. The data below is from the 2016 ABS census and demonstrates that the Inner West Local Government Area is diverse in both cultural and socio-economic factors with contrasts between relatively affluent areas with a well-educated labour force and pockets of social need.

The Inner West Council area estimated resident population for 2016 is 192,030, with a population density of 54.57 persons per hectare. The age structure of the Inner West provides key insights into the level of demand for age based services and facilities such as child care and recreation facilities. It is an indicator of the Inner West's residential role and function and how it is likely to change in the future.

The size of the Inner West labour force in 2016 was 104,588, of which 30,265 were employed part-time and 67,813 were full time workers. Overall, there are significant differences between the Inner West and the Greater Sydney resident labour force.

The Inner West has:

- a larger percentage of 'Young workforce (25 to 34)' (20.3% compared with Greater Sydney 16.1%)
- a larger percentage of 'Parents and homebuilders (35 to 49)' (24.8% compared with Greater Sydney 21.1%)
- a higher proportion of residents in the labour force (67.9% compared with Greater Sydney 61.6%)
- 95.2% of the labour force was employed and 4.8% unemployed (compared with 94.0% and 6.0% respectively for Greater Sydney)
- more professionals (37.6% compared with Greater Sydney 26.3%)
- a larger percentage of persons employed as Managers (16.4% compared with Greater Sydney 13.7%)
- a smaller percentage of persons employed as Technicians and Trades Workers (8.5% compared with Greater Sydney 11.7%) and a smaller percentage of persons employed as Machinery Operators And Drivers (2.5% compared with Greater Sydney 5.6%).

This data correlates with the analysis of household income levels in the Inner West Council area in 2016 compared to Greater Sydney, which shows that there was a larger proportion of high income households (those earning \$2,500 per week or more) and a lower proportion of low income households (those earning less than \$650 per week). This impacts on Council's ability to recruit from the Inner West for key general worker positions.

At June 2016, Inner West Council area had a median house valuation of \$1,357,121, which was \$719,588 higher than the median house valuation for New South Wales. Housing valuation and rental data are a measure of the economic desirability of living in the local area. High housing prices usually indicate access to high-paid jobs and a very desirable area. However they can present issues in attracting and retaining key lower skilled workers.

Of the 62,354 local workers in the Inner West in 2016 31.3% also lived in the Inner West. This demonstrates the degree to which the local economy draws on the wider region to supply labour for its industries. It is also useful in planning and advocacy for roads and public transport provision.

When considering changes to service needs in the long term, analysis of the household/family types is invaluable. In the Inner West Council area in 2016 there was a lower proportion of couple families with children as well as a lower proportion of one-parent families compared to Greater Sydney. Overall, 25.3% of total families were

couple families with children and 7.9% were one-parent families, compared with 35.3% and 10.4% respectively for Greater Sydney.

Areas of specialty also inform planning for service needs/changes. In 2015/16, Arts and Recreation Services was a major specialisation in Inner West Council area in terms of employment.

Forecast Needs

In an attempt to project future resource requirements, Council has made a number of assumptions on the likely impacts on the workforce over the next 10 years.

Our assumptions include:

- Council is not proposing an increase to the total workforce in the 2018-19 financial year and is in a tight financial environment for the next 5 years and beyond
- No forced redundancies are predicted over the 2017- 2021 financial years
- Business as usual, with services and service levels to remain at similar levels unless otherwise identified, but with harmonised work practices, resources and staffing requirements
- Efficiencies and increased revenue opportunities will be investigated
- Council will at least maintain the infrastructure renewal program
- Significant amount of construction by State Government within the Inner West and surrounding areas over the next 4 years will impact on Council's services and put pressure on competing in the labour market for similar skill sets.

Given that Council is not proposing any increase to the workforce in the 2018- 2022 financial years, the infrastructure renewal program, for example, may need to increase contract labour and external providers to complete planned projects.

Workforce Priorities

Since amalgamation inner West Council has developed and implemented a range of significant workforce and organisational development programs. These have been developed with significant consultation of managers, staff and unions. The result has been a robust, practical set of solutions considered fit for purpose and easily adopted by our workforce.

This strategy builds upon this earlier work and takes account of the key influences related to:

- No forced redundancies – all staff protections maintained
- No budgeted drop in current service levels

- No privatisation of current services
- Asset maintenance ratio needs to be 1 or greater
- Asset renewal ratio 100%+
- Any new initiatives must support adopted strategies that deliver to the Community Strategic Plan strategic directions and outcomes

Gap Analysis

What has led us to where we are today?

Local Government reform and the amalgamation of the three former councils of Ashfield, Leichhardt and Marrickville in May 2016 started the journey for Inner West Council, under an Administrator until September 2017 when the new Council was elected.

To deliver on our vision and achieve our key principles, we must operate as a high-performance, values-driven organisation that is resilient and accepting of change. To achieve this, a new Leadership Model was introduced in September 2016 that devolved accountability and responsibility and moved away from the traditional hierarchical local government executive team model.

Our Workforce Profile

The Inner West Council Leadership Team consists of the General Manager, three Deputy General Managers and comprises four service divisions:

- Community and Engagement
- Assets and Environment
- Finance and Administrative
- Office of the General Manager

We have 18 service groups that deliver services and projects across these four divisions.

To deliver these services we require a diverse workforce with a range of skills and qualifications from specialist/technical occupations, such as town planners and engineers, to people to clean the streets and maintain the amenities of our area.

In order to deliver our diverse range of services, including both services direct to the community and internal services to support Council's community service delivery, some 1014 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff were employed as at 31 October 2017. This consists of approximately 900 full time employees, 211 part time employees (headcount) and a varying number of casual staff, dependant on our operational requirements. Our current casual pool headcount is 419.

Council's casual employees are largely employed in the Recreation and Aquatic Services, Children and Family Services, and Library and History service groups within the Community and Engagement division. We utilise a casual workforce in these areas as much of the work is either seasonal or requires staff service ratios that necessitate backfilling of jobs on a needs basis, such as the vacation care programs during school holidays, and to respond to the increased patronage at the aquatics services over summer. This allows us to adapt to changing demand and target resources where they are needed most. We acknowledge that casual employees will be an ongoing requirement for our workforce, particularly in these areas, however, as they are a transient workforce, they have been excluded from the data and analysis in this Workforce Plan. We also employ contractors for various works, including building maintenance, cleaning, waste removal and recycling, footpath construction and plumbing.

Workforce Data

Employment Status: Council's casual rate, at approx 27%, is higher than the NSW Local Government Urban Council average of 18.13%. This difference is due to the greater level of services we provide in Children and Family Services including Vacation Care, Recreation and Aquatic Services, and Community Services & Culture.

Figure 2. Employment status of Inner West Council staff

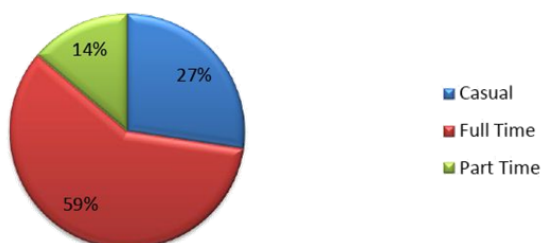
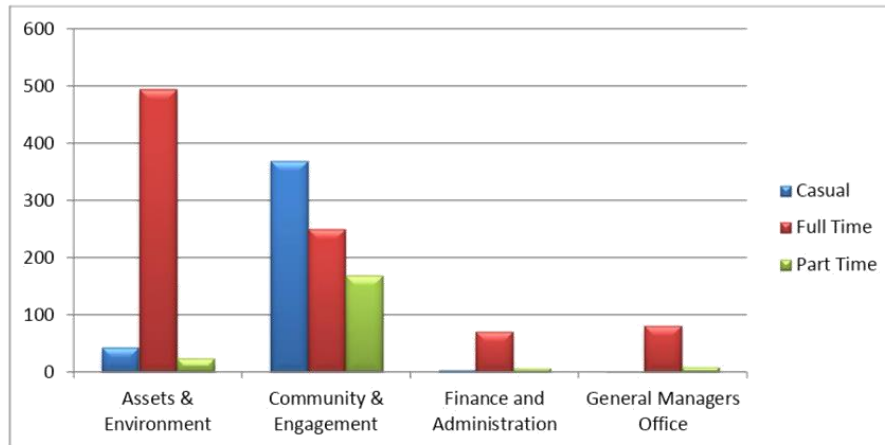
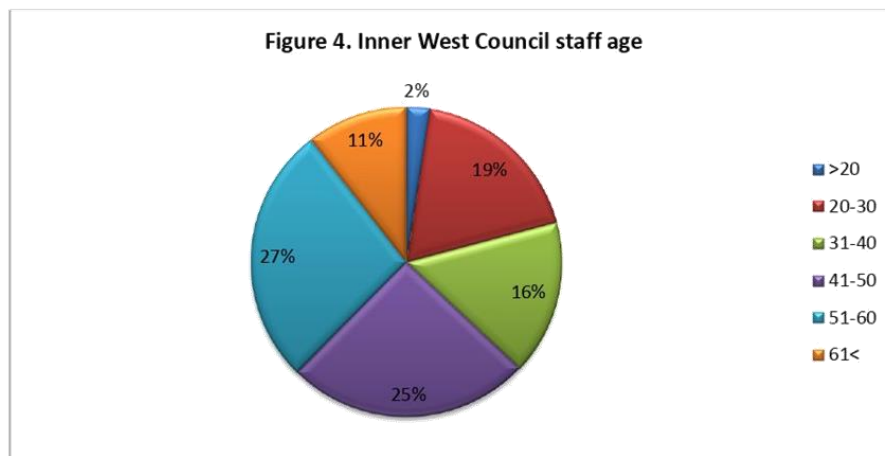


Figure 3. Inner West Council staff employment status by division



Age: The age diversity of employees brings significant benefits such as diverse skill sets, varied experiences, talent and knowledge sharing to the workforce. Workforce planning efforts across Council need to consider the impact of almost one third of the workforce moving towards retirement over the next decade, many of these in senior roles. 38% of Council staff are within 15 years to retirement and less than 2% are younger than 20 years of age.

Figure 4. Inner West Council staff age



Length of Service: Council staff have a high length of service with 66% of the workforce being employed by Council for 5+ years. This is not anticipated to change, especially given the staff employment protections.

Figure 5. inner West council staff Length of service

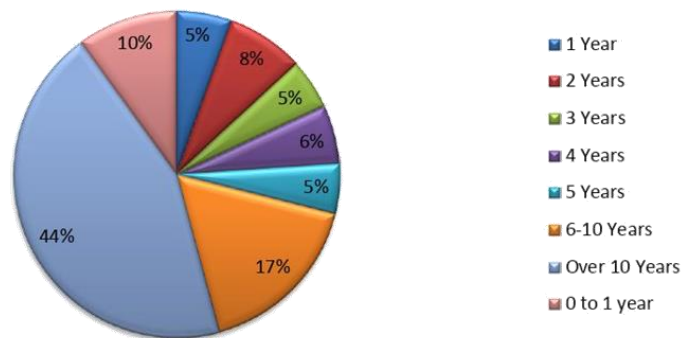
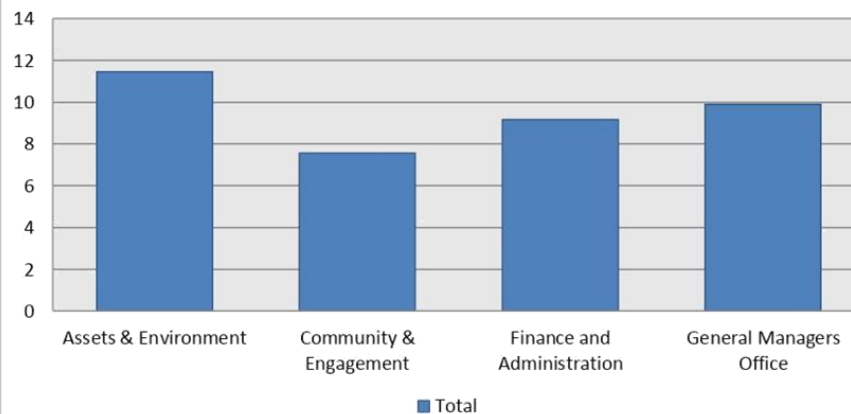


Figure 6. Inner West council average length of staff service by division



According to the 2017 NSW Local Government Human Resources Metrics Benchmarking Report Voluntary turnover rates within NSW local government are currently 11.56%. Council's voluntary turnover statistics were at 6.8% for the period 2016-2017 and the projected rates for 17-18 are 10.51%.

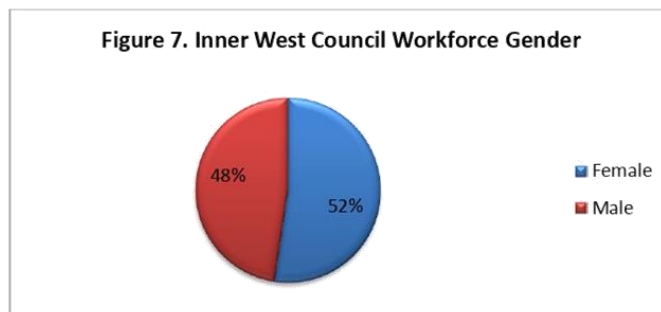
The low rate of voluntary turnover is related to local government amalgamations, the employment protections afforded transferred staff and general uncertainty in times of change.

Diversity

It is important that within a community, the diversity of the general public is reflected in those employed within its public sector, and particularly local government, for a more cohesive, inclusive and well represented society. Inner West Council is committed to a focus of developing a diverse and inclusive workforce that includes people of different genders, cultural and linguistic backgrounds, Aboriginal people and people with disability. Our people strategies also align to increase diversity in broader dimensions such as education, knowledge, skills, work styles, experience, values and ideas.

Challenges remain in understanding and measuring the level of diversity at Council. Workforce profile data on diversity groups is captured through voluntary staff self-identification. This often leads to under-reporting as some employees may feel identifying with a diversity group may not be relevant to their role, they may have a fear of stigma or discrimination, or they may not have access to update their diversity status. The Workforce Management Strategy is to increase and improve workforce data, though the use of staff voluntary surveys. As culture improves the confidence in identifying will increase, resulting in more reliable data.

Gender: Total Workforce, gender balance - Inner West Council has a higher representation of female workers at 52% than the NSW Local Government Urban Council average of 44.21%.



2017 Gender diversity leadership balance:

- Leadership Group (Level 1 General Manager, Level 2 Deputy General Managers, Level 3 Group Managers – plus General Counsel): 57% (12) female; 43% (8) male.
- Within the Level 3 Group Managers: 75% (12) female; 25% (4) male.

More women are employed in management/ decision making roles. However, at the Executive level there is no permanent female representation and this is an area we can focus people strategies on to develop the capability of our Level 3 Managers for succession planning and also consider a targeted recruitment campaign in the event of an Executive vacancy.

2017 Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) diversity statistics:

- 2.1% staff indicate they have an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background compared to 1.1% of residents.
- 3% staff indicate they have a disability

Council has also resolved to increase this representation of staff from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background and staff identifying as having a disability through a targeted traineeship program.

Culturally and linguistically diverse employees: Current data is not complete from the former Councils and is an area identified for data capture to inform people strategies. Identified data to date shows over 44 staff with English as a second language.

Comparative data: Inner West council diversity is comparable to the NSW Public Sector data and LGNSW Urban Council data. In 2017, an estimated 3.2% of non-casual employees identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander in NSW Public Service and an estimated 2.7% of Public Sector employees have identified themselves as having disability in NSW Public Service. In NSW Local Government Urban Councils 1.63%

identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and 1.77% identified as having a disability.

EEO Commitment: Council's EEO Management Plan is being developed in conjunction with its Workforce Strategic Plan to ensure alignment. The Inner West Council Inclusion Action Plan also informs strategies in the Workforce Management Strategy and EEO Management Plan. Council has become a member of 'Pride in Diversity' to help improve our culture and approach to the ever increasing diverse workforce and will be conducting training in 2018.

A High Performance Leadership Coach program is being rolled out to all manager levels within the organisation. This program will be modified so all staff have to opportunity to gain self-leadership, resilience and team skills. The former Councils were awarded the National 50:50 Vision Councils for Gender Equity accreditation program and IWC will seek to continue to work though the award grading for this accreditation program.

Long Term Financial Plan

In 2017/18 Council had a budgeted workforce labour cost of \$126,368,000. With employment protections extended until 2021, and direct staff costs increasing in accordance with the CPI and Award increases on an annual basis, the anticipated total salaries and wages curve on the long term financial plan is significant and over 52% of total operating expenses. With an increased focus on management of our operating costs, and in particular employee costs, Council has resolved to consider vacancy management as a means of employee cost containment and review vacant positions with a view not to replace where practicable.

Council's Employment Leave Entitlement Liability

As a means to improve the long term financial plan in relation to employee costs, Council is considering a number of risk management measures to put policies in place to effectively reduce the liability associated with Employee Leave Entitlements, particularly in relation to leave in lieu and leave balances. This is necessary as Council incurs employee liability for annual leave, long service leave and sick leave. This liability is fully funded as at 30 June 2017 and is reviewed on an annual basis. Assuming the liability increases each year as wages increase, Council must budget to continue to set aside funds to match this increase in liability now and in the future.

Strategic Priorities and Actions

This Workforce Management Strategy has six strategic priorities. Collectively they aim to optimise the Inner West Council's workforce strengths, address our most critical challenges and help focus our continuing efforts in building a high-performing, values-driven workplace.

1. **Containment of employee costs within the constraints of five year employment protections**
 - Utilise vacancy management protocols to reduce total staff numbers
 - Link in with building current staff capacity for succession planning
 - Remuneration strategy aligned with other conditions and benefits to attract and retain
2. **Building a positive IWC Culture and staff engagement**
 - Building a suite of holistic people policies and procedures that add value to our Employee Value Proposition and Inner West Council brand in the labour market to attract and retain staff
 - Maintain and expand on our Staff Health and Wellbeing policy and programs to ensure we give our staff every opportunity to be fit, healthy and resilient;
 - Increased focus on flexible working arrangements and family friendly policies to attract and retain staff and improve staff satisfaction and engagement. Examples include: flexible working times, working from home, career break schemes, alternate core hours, job sharing;
3. **Building Staff Capability**
 - Mandatory corporate capability programs to embed a consistent language, methodology and learning across the organisation to develop
 - Leadership development for all staff for consistent language and messaging to build self-leadership, resilience to change and a culture of high performance and continuous improvement
 - Learning and Development opportunities that grow our own skills to minimise the impact of the five year staff protections on staff numbers e.g. increase staff skills, encourage continuous improvement and business continuity
4. **Harmonisation of work practices, resources, and staffing to enable productivity savings and improve service delivery to the community e.g. Program of open and transparent service reviews**

5. Diversity

- increased focus on data collection to ensure appropriate representation of diversity groups in our workforce, particularly in decision making positions.
- Targeted entry level programs to provide young people with work experience, traineeships and apprenticeships, including targeted opportunities for minority and disadvantaged groups such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and those who identify with a disability. For a social responsibility perspective, this will provide our young people with the opportunity to view and value local government work and can offer us a reservoir of ready and skilled candidates
- Continued commitment to organisation wide training in diversity and inclusiveness
- Continued partnerships with relevant minority group providers and gender equity programs

6. Retirement/ Transition Planning and Knowledge Management strategies

- identify the critical skills and knowledge at all levels within our organisation and develop our employees to ensure retention, transfer of these skills and knowledge as well as coverage of these skills and knowledge during absence or in case of retirement

Strategic Priority 1: Containment of employee costs within the constraints of five year employment protections

The challenge in our competitive market place is to meet the asset renewal ratio within current budget and with no privatisation of current services. Therefore we must meet our service delivery capability while maintaining salary and wages that are sustainable over the longer term. Direct employee costs represent over 52% of the IWC's total operational expenditure. Our remuneration strategy must enable Council to remunerate at the levels required to attract and retain skilled staff, but within existing service employee cost budget levels. Actions to improve working conditions that increase our employee value proposition but don't add to employee costs are a way of providing an attractive package to attract and retain staff.

Our ageing workforce, particularly in the outdoor services, also presents challenges in work health and safety and management of workers compensation premiums. The majority of our older employees work in areas where they are more likely to encounter higher risks than more sedentary, office-based occupations. This has the potential to increase Workers Compensation claims from injured workers impacting on our

insurance liability. Council must ensure that it manages the financial liability of a workforce with 11% of employees due to retire within 4 years.

Movement of our aging workforce also impacts the LTFP through superannuation where increases in costs can be offset by the number of staff retiring over the next five years. Due to high tenure of staff, some relatively higher superannuation costs have arisen from employees that have access to the Defined Benefit Superannuation Schemes.

The financial sustainability of the Inner West Council is a significant area of focus for us over the next four to ten years. It is forecasted in the LTFP that the cost of our workforce will notionally increase by planned award increases plus staff salary movement. Focus will be to examine our internal functions to identify and implement initiatives for cost savings or efficiencies that could be realised without impact on service delivery to our customers. Many identified improvements will be realised through the implementation of technology or systems that ease the administrative inputs required by staff, allowing us to increase service levels and outputs with the same employee costs. Service reviews of our workforce and operational needs will be part of the corporate priority process. Current service changes include new child care centres. This will require a targeted recruitment campaign as traditionally Council struggles to attract staff due to the overall market shortages in this field.

Due to the employment protections, Council will need to adapt the composition of the workforce while keeping the overall structure affordable and sustainable.

A significant portion of the IWC's cash and investment reserves is restricted. These restricted balances are forecast in order to ensure that overall cash balances adequately cover the restricted amounts whilst retaining an appropriate level of working capital. Council's Employee Leave Entitlements liability is fully funded from normal annual payments of leave entitlements funded from operating income.

Actions

1.1 Vacancy Management

The five year employment protections will be offset by a strict vacancy management protocol, using natural attrition and not replacing staff where practical. Improvements in technology and process and work practices regarding use of equipment, plant and staff will be utilised to better align remaining functions and roles, resulting in savings in salaries and wages.

1.2 Focus on Reducing Staff Leave Liability

Council will develop policies to address accumulation of time in lieu and implement limits on annual leave accumulation to reduce liability. This will be managed

through better reporting and monitoring, and to ensure our leave liability is reduced.

1.3 Harmonisation of working conditions and HR policies and procedures
Development of IWC HR policies and procedures will align with the strategy to provide flexible and attractive working conditions for staff to increase our employer brand to attract and retain staff as part of a competitive overall remuneration and benefits package. Our branding will be improved on our website and advertisements.

1.4 Critical Roles and Skills Gaps Identification
As part of the holistic approach to our people programs to ensure we develop our own staff for succession planning to mitigate skills gaps in critical roles, identification of critical roles and planning for gaps will form part of the business continuity and staff achievement and development framework.

Strategic Priority 2: Building IWC Culture and Staff Engagement

The dilemma of balancing employee cost containment with employee engagement is crucial as we build the IWC culture and maintain quality service delivery. Strategies that effect measures taken to address employee engagement will positively influence productivity.

Best intention fiscal constraint measures are ineffective if the workforce is culturally disengaged from the organisation and its vision. While the remaining strategies have a lesser impact on fiscal constraint, their less quantifiable value cannot be underestimated. Council's November 2016 external staff engagement survey was conducted at a time when the organisation had yet to appoint Level 3 service Group Managers or develop service organisations structure saw 65% of staff committed to the success of Inner West Council. Understandably morale was one of the weakest theme areas due to the amount of change and disruption on staff.

Holistic people strategies are needed to value and empower staff by devolving accountability and responsibility and holding staff accountable through consistent processes, language and messaging to develop a positive culture and engagement. Our business excellence continuous improvement model will embed this culture and alignment to staff achievements will provide holistic cost effective strategies. Embedding Council's values within these programs is critical to building a positive, high performing, values based culture. Designing a new staff performance and development framework and reward and recognition programs, focused on staff achievement and capability building and rewarding in real time, will motivate staff, increasing productivity and engagement. It will recognise tangible results and behaviours linked to our values and be developed in consultation with employees and managers.

A healthy workplace will support productivity and can reduce costs due to sickness, injury or reduced performance. Harmonisation of our work, health and safety strategy seeks to develop a strong safety culture where there are high levels of personal accountability and responsibility across the organisation.

To ensure staff are valued we must maintain and expand on our Staff Health and Wellbeing policy and programs to ensure we give our staff every opportunity to be fit, healthy and resilient. This is also critical in areas that have an aging workforce where we must build on our duty of care.

Change is the constant that staff are currently experiencing and a balance to maintain health and wellbeing is sensible to reducing unplanned absences. Resilience learning contained within the leadership program will also embed a culture of acceptance of change. These skills implemented over time lead to greater productivity and engagement as staff feel valued.

Aligned to health and well-being, is an increased focus on the importance of enabling working pattern flexibility with flexible working arrangements and family friendly policies to attract and retain staff and improve staff satisfaction and engagement.

Conduct of bi-annual external surveys and internal staff surveys will provide evidence of the return on investment of the people strategies in relation to improvements to engagement and staff satisfaction and provide actions plans for continuous improvement. These develop a culture of openness and transparency required for high performing organisations.

Actions

2.1 Empowerment of staff

Continue to devolve accountability and responsibility by revising delegations. Provide forums for open and transparent communication up, down and across the organisation.

2.2 Focus on Staff Achievements and Reward and Recognition

Development and implementation of a staff performance framework that places a focus on achievement and building staff capability to demonstrate that staff are valued and to motivate in real time to increase productivity and engagement.

The values will be embedded into the performance framework to build a positive workplace culture to ensure a holistic approach.

2.3 Flexible and attractive working conditions

Continue to build a suite of holistic people policies and procedures that add value to our Employee Value Proposition and Inner West Council brand. For IWC to mature as an organisation it needs to provide a range of HR policies and procedures that are flexible for the needs of the differing generations of staff within the organisation to suit all work/life balance needs for our staff. Examples to be considered include: flexible working times, working from home, career break schemes, alternate core hours, job sharing, and allowing staff to stagger start and finish times to avoid traffic congestion and reduce travelling time.

An increased focus on flexible working arrangements and family friendly policies to attract and retain staff will improve staff satisfaction and engagement. Examples include: flexible working times, working from home, career break schemes, alternate core hours, job sharing.

2.4 Staff Health and Well-being

Maintain and expand on our Staff Health and Wellbeing Policy and programs to ensure we give our staff every opportunity to be fit, healthy and resilient. Report and monitor usage of programs and review metrics such as unplanned absences trends to provide correlation and return on investment of strategies.

2.5 Leadership Program

Roll-out of a common leadership program to all levels. Piloted at the senior leadership level and then modified and rolled out to all staff. This will provide consistent learnings and messaging of self-leadership and providing staff with tools for resilience and how to perform under stressful environments to cope with constant change within in a merged environment.

2.6 Staff Surveys

Externally facilitated staff surveys are to be conducted bi-annually and results benchmarked for improvement from the November 2016 survey results and subsequent internal pulse surveys. Action plans for improvements are to be communicated to all staff and supported by the Leadership Team. Internal pulse surveys will be conducted in the gap years to do a quick health check on satisfaction and engagement.

Strategic Priority 3: Building Staff Capability

Developing the leadership and management capability of our people leaders is a key focus as we build the Inner West Council. Leadership capability significantly impacts on the culture of an organisation. By role modelling behaviours, “walking the talk” and empowering staff, leaders influence the direction of culture in the development phase. Building the leadership capacity of IWC was crucial in the development of the

organisation after amalgamation. Starting with the Leadership Team development, to build common leadership language, messaging and methodology a program has been rolled out to the senior managers (levels 1, 2 and 3) initially. This program received high feedback ratings and is being rolled out to the middle managers, coordinator and supervisors. Learnings will be applied to building teams within the new service structures.

To provide self-directed leadership, with the same messaging and tools, the program will be rolled out to all staff in a planned approach. To build capability and consistency across the organisation a range of mandatory corporate programs must be rolled out to establish uniformity of methodology and standards for service levels in key areas e.g. project management, contract management, customer service, conduct of service reviews.

To reduce the impact of the five year staff protections on staff numbers, our cost effective investment strategy will be to 'grow our own' through building capability to provide for succession planning, business continuity and cap rising staff numbers. In keeping with best practice principles, Council is moving away from traditional classroom-based learning, to provide 'on the job' learning experiences, learning from others and on-line learning resources. Through our leadership program our managers have learnt skills to develop their employees through authentic regular conversations, more effective coaching and staff empowerment. Ongoing education policies will be redesigned to enable this strategy.

This strategy is also aligned with the staff achievements and review program to demonstrate staff are valued and build organisational capacity in critical skills gap fields. Increasing staff skills also encourages empowerment and continuous improvement as employees utilise the skills on the job and enables a sound business continuity approach.

Actions

3.1 Mandatory corporate capability programs

To build skills and embed a consistent language, methodology and learning across the organisation in key functions a rolling program will cover including project management, contract management, customer service and finance for non-financial managers.

3.2 Leadership development

To align the people strategies and build the IWC culture is important for all staff to be provided skills in self-leadership for consistent language and messaging.

Learnings will also cover resilience to change and authentic conversations for team building and creating a culture of high performance and continuous improvement

3.3 Grow our own skilled workforce

Learning and development opportunities will be embedded within the staff performance framework to grow our own skills to minimise the impact of the five year staff protections on staff numbers e.g. increase staff skills, encourage continuous improvement and business continuity through development and demonstration on the job. The need to recruit is minimised in an already competitive marketplace, particularly for critical roles traditionally in short supply.

Strategic Priority 4: Harmonisation of work practices, resources and staffing

Initial internal integration activities have focused on systems and technology improvements to date. Staff will be empowered to use the technology available to them, through appropriate 'just in time' training, and the use of change champions.

The other focus has been on bedding down the new structure of services and colocation of staff. A consultative industrial strategy has been employed and will continue to provide for a partnership approach with trade unions. It allows us to work in harmony, working to meet the needs of staff and the organisation and minimise the risk of industrial action impacting on service delivery and financial costs.

The next phase requires scheduled service reviews to harmonise work practices, resources and working conditions to provide for efficiencies in use of plant, work practices, work locations and staffing. An open and transparent program of service reviews will increase resilience to change and allow for staff buy-in.

This will provide Council with the ability to maintain services at their current levels, and provide additional revenue for renewing and maintaining our infrastructure and our asset renewal ratios. This option would result in achieving our Capital Renewal program without a commensurate increase in the size of our workforce. To improve quality, a development program in project management will be rolled out to targeted positions to effectively manage the ongoing maintenance and development of these asset types, and ensure consistent methodology is used across IWC.

Continual reviews of our workforce and organisation structure against our four year budget and operational plans, will ensure that Council is delivering the best value service to our customers and can be measured by community survey metrics.

Actions

4.1 Program of open and transparent service reviews

An IWC framework for the conduct of service reviews is to be developed. It must be flexible and adaptable to be used for large or small service reviews. The program will align to the corporate priority plans to ensure resourcing requirements can be met. The program must also be communicated in advance to all staff to ensure buy-in and in keeping with an open and transparent approach.

4.2 Industrial Instruments and HR policies

A strategic and programed approach to development of IWC industrial instruments will be taken when considering harmonisation of working conditions for staff. Council will continue to work in consultation with the unions and staff in developing the suite of working conditions for IWC. Funding for harmonisation has been costed and aligned to employee costs ongoing in the long term financial plan.

Strategic Priority 5: Diversity

Inner West is committed to its focus on developing a diverse and inclusive workforce that includes people of different genders, and cultural and linguistic backgrounds; Aboriginal people; and people with disability. It is important that the diversity of the general public be reflected by our workers for a more cohesive, inclusive and well represented society.

'Values based' is an increasingly important driver of a high-performing and committed workforce, which is both equitable and diverse. To build on our culture, we must foster inclusion and leverage diverse perspectives, and have a strong sense of connection with the community we serve if we are to be successful in attracting and retaining talented employees. This will build our employer brand and we will be recognised as an employer of choice for our commitment to being a leading, ethical, socially responsible and exciting place to work, where all staff are valued.

We will increase our focus on workforce data collection to measure representation of diversity groups in our workforce, particularly in decision making positions. Then targeted programs can be implemented to demonstrate our commitment. Examples include partnering with the NDS, generous and inclusive parental leave policies, inclusion actions and training programs to increase cultural awareness. Introduced initiatives such as flexible work practices, gender equity programs, LGBTI awareness and disability and mental health awareness, will provide a link between IWC as an employer and our broader role in the community.

Actions

5.1 Diversity Metrics

Council will conduct an EEO survey as part of our EEO Management Plan to gather diversity data for IWC and establish a benchmark data set. Once established we can identify relevant programs including targeted recruitment campaigns, training and

partner with external providers as necessary. We will continue to benchmark against local government averages and implement dedicated programs as needed.

5.2 Partnerships for Training

Continue to support and partner with minority and disadvantaged groups through programs such as Pride in Diversity and National Disability Services. . Promote awareness and training e.g. White Ribbon Day, International Women's Day, LGBTI awareness training, 50:50 Vision Councils for Gender Equity Awards Program.

5.3 Traineeship Program

An entry level program to provide young people with work experience and meaningful work through traineeships and apprenticeships, including targeted opportunities for minority and disadvantaged groups such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and those who identify with a disability will be rolled out when financially able. From a social responsibility perspective, this will support with youth employment and provide our young people with the opportunity to view and value local government work, and can offer us a reservoir of ready and skilled candidates.

5.4 School Experience Placements

We will also support work experience placements as part of a student's structured education program or where industry experience is a requirement of the study. Graduate programs in critical skill shortage areas will continue particularly in the planning field.

5.5 Volunteer Program

We recognise the significant contribution of volunteers within our community. Volunteers bring a wide range of skills, commitment and diversity providing services which may otherwise not be available to the IWC community and are cost effective in meeting service delivery. These programs will continue across relevant service areas.

Strategic Priority 6: Retirement/ Transition Planning and Knowledge Management strategies

Council's aging workforce and turnover through voluntary redundancy requires a business continuity approach in identifying the capture of critical skills and knowledge at all levels within our organisation and developing our employees to ensure retention, and or transfer of these skills and knowledge as well as coverage of these skills and knowledge during absence or in case of retirement.

These activities can be managed through the staff achievement and development program to ensure a cost effective approach. Learnings through the Leadership Program

provide skills in coaching, mentoring and empowering and developing teams and individuals to assist this process.

Policies will be developed to consider transition to retirement for the ageing employee such as retraining to transfer to another position, phased retirement before exit from Council and job share arrangements.

Actions

6.1 Critical Roles and Skills Gaps Identification

As part of the holistic approach to our people programs to ensure we develop our own staff for succession planning to mitigate skills gaps in critical roles, identification of critical roles and planning for gaps will form part of the business continuity and staff achievement and development framework.

6.2 Flexible Work practices to assist transition to retirement

As part of the suite of HR policies and procedures developed for IWC, flexible work practices and mentoring opportunities will be incorporated to provide for phased retirement and transfer of skills.

6.3 Dedicated Training Program

A program of superannuation sessions and Transition to Retirement seminars open to relevant employees will be rolled out to manage and plan for retirement. This program will benefit both the employee and the organisation plan for the future.

References

International Labour Organisation – Asia Pacific Labour Market Update Sept 2017

Australian Bureau of Statistics – labour force statistics - www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs

i.d community demographic resources - <https://profile.id.com.au/inner-west>

Local Government NSW - 2017 NSW Local Government HR Metrics Benchmarking Report


Item No: C1120(1) Item 18
Subject: MAYORAL MINUTE: LEICHHARDT OVAL
From: The Mayor, Councillor Darcy Byrne

MOTION:

THAT Council:

- 1. Notes the recent announcement revealing the NSW Government intends to announce funding for new stadiums at Kogarah, Brookvale, Liverpool and Penrith in the State Budget on 17 November (Attachment 1);**
 - 2. Notes that Council has been seeking investment from the State Government for the upgrade of Leichhardt Oval for several years and has yet to receive any funding for the ground; and**
 - 3. Writes to the Premier and Treasurer requesting the NSW Government distribute this suburban grounds funding through an open and fair grants application process instead.**
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ATTACHMENTS

- 1.  Daily Telegraph Article from Monday November 2, 2020.**



The sun will set on the current Kogarah Oval with plans to revamp the ground in a Budget boost for NRL fans. Picture: Brett Costello

EXCLUSIVE
ANNA CALDWELL

A SUBURBAN football ground plan to build boutique stadiums in the suburbs is shaping up to be a key plank of the NSW budget.

The Daily Telegraph can reveal the government will announce funding for planning a local stadium at Kogarah, and will foreshadow an intention to push ahead with stadiums at Brookvale, Liverpool and Penrith, in this month's state budget.

It comes as part of its plan to drive jobs and growth in the economy through fast construction opportunities.

The November 17 state budget is expected to include planning funding for the Kogarah stadium, with an expectation that funding will be increased in the following financial year, alongside a vision for the full suite of suburban stadiums.

The stadiums — expected to be in the 18,000 to 20,000 seat capacity range — would not only drive suburban-based sport and be used by major clubs, but they would also be made available for use

in community projects such as fairs, markets, concerts or Christmas carols.

One plan under consideration is to build one boutique stadium per year, although it is understood the NRL is keen for any program to be accelerated to capitalise on the need to kickstart the state's economy.

The government is planning the budget commitments with the knowledge that there will be three budgets in quick succession — this year's budget on November 17, a half-year update in February and then the 2021/22 budget in June.

Local councils have presented a plan to the government that costs the boutique stadium for Kogarah at approximately \$200m.

The decision comes months after the government's razor gang decided to walk away from the planned ANZ Stadium rebuild on the back of the economic crisis of COVID-19. It is understood that following this, the NRL continued to sell the suburban grounds proposal to the government.

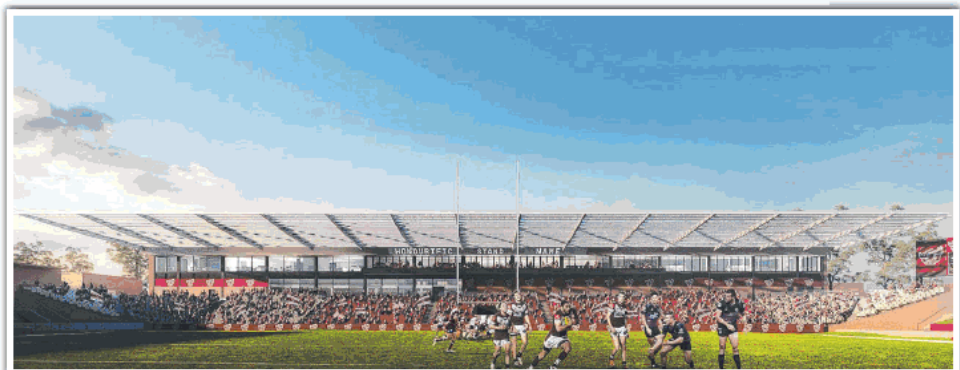
Senior government figures also supported the suburban grounds concept, arguing that smaller projects which were screwdriver-ready and could be delivered more quickly also met the criteria of boosting the COVID-riddled economy.

They described the proposals as akin to "mini Bankwest stadiums", referencing the highly popular 30,000 seat stadium that opened in Parramatta last year.

Under the plan, Kogarah Oval would be shared by the Dragons, the Cronulla Sharks and possibly Sydney FC.

Brookvale could be shared by the Manly Sea Eagles, and rugby union clubs the Manly Marliners and Warringah Rats.

Liverpool would be used by the Tigers and the Bulldogs. But last night, sources at Cronulla said they remained strongly committed to playing at their Woolooware home ground, which is located within the site of a new \$300 million development.



An artist's impression of the new 3000-seat grandstand set for Brookvale, the home of the Manly Sea Eagles.