

Workforce Plan

2017 to 2027



SHIRE of
WYNDHAM
EAST KIMBERLEY



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The Workforce Plan has been developed and endorsed by the Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley



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Our Shire

The Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley is located in the northeast of Western Australia stretching from the Northern Territory border to the northern most tip of Western Australia, and;

- Covers an area of 121,000 square kilometers,
- includes the towns of Kununurra and Wyndham and around forty smaller Aboriginal communities including Kalumburu and Doon Doon,
- is one of four local government Shires in the Kimberley region.

Vision and Mission

The basis of decision making in this plan is the identified priorities of the *Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley Strategic Community Plan 2012-2022*. Identified below are the vision, mission, and goals and strategy that relate most particularly to the work within this document as an overview. The *Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley Workforce Plan 2017- 2027* provides more detail on the activity to be undertaken to achieve these goals.

Vision: For the East Kimberley to be a thriving community with opportunities for all.

Mission: To enable the East Kimberley to develop in a manner that will achieve social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits for all.

Values: Inclusivity, Unity, Sustainability, Responsibility for our own future, Leadership.

Goal 1: Strong leadership and governance that underpins a more strategic approach to community engagement, regional development and organisational sustainability.

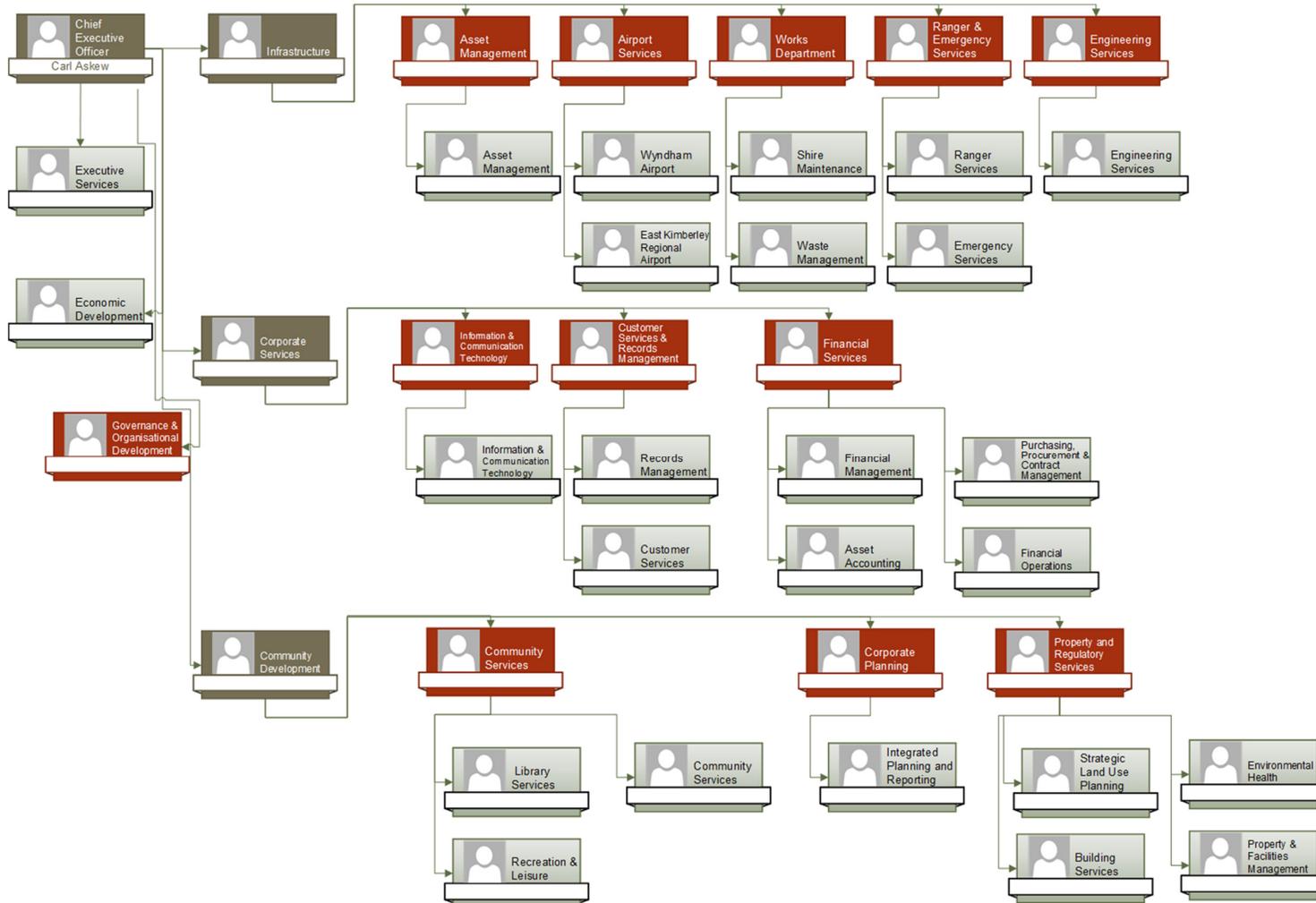
Objective: 1.4 Business innovation, efficiency and improved service.

Strategy: 1.4.5 Attract and maintain a skilled, motivated and professional workforce.

Performance measure: Reduced staff turnover

The Shire's Community Plan highlights challenges for all agencies and businesses in the region, including the cost of housing, remoteness, cost of living and collaboration that reduces duplication of effort. In feedback the look, feel, safety, social, environmental, educational and economic aspects of living in the Shire are key priorities for our community. Improvement where possible on these priorities and challenges are influencers on the workforce at the Shire and will be part of consideration, where possible, in forming strategies in workforce planning. The objectives of the community plan do not specify expectation in relation to operational workforce planning but they do identify the necessity to ensure service planning and workforce directions for the future in regard to delivery of community expectations. In order to link these expectations and workforce decision-making to achieve positive outcomes, service planning, annual planning and responsive, flexible workforce profiles need to be an area of investment for management.

Our Structure



NB. This may be subject to change over the period of this document

Office of the CEO

The role of the CEO, in brief, under the *Local Government Act 1995* is to:

- (a) *advise the council in relation to the functions of a local government under this Act and other written laws; and*
- (b) *ensure that advice and information is available to the council so that informed decisions can be made; and*
- (c) *cause council decisions to be implemented; and*
- (d) *manage the day to day operations of the local government; and*
- (e) *liaise with the mayor or president on the local government's affairs and the performance of the local government's functions; and*
- (f) *speak on behalf of the local government if the mayor or president agrees; and*
- (g) *be responsible for the employment, management supervision, direction and dismissal of other employees (subject to section 5.37(2) in relation to senior employees); and*
- (h) *ensure that records and documents of the local government are properly kept for the purposes of this Act and any other written law; and*
- (i) *perform any other function specified or delegated by the local government or imposed under this Act or any other written law as a function to be performed by the CEO.*

Community Development

The Community Development Directorate leads team to support Council in the areas of community services, planning, building, environmental health, recreation and leisure, library services and property and regulatory services.

Corporate Services

The Corporate Services Directorate leads a team to ensure the provision of high quality corporate support to Council in the areas of financial services, information communication and technology, customer services, records management and contract and procurement.

Infrastructure

The Infrastructure Directorate leads a team to support council in the areas of engineering, parks and gardens, asset management, emergency and ranger services, works and maintenance, waste management and Kununurra and Wyndham airport operations.

Our Local Government Community Feedback

Community feedback contributes to choice making in priorities for Council. Within the Shire there are several externalities that make completion of these priorities challenging, and several that support valuable outcomes for our community.

The landscape, location and natural beauty of the Shire identify as valuable to residents and visitors. Library services, sporting activities and outdoor spaces are important to residents and access to these amenities are important to ratepayers.



Roads, rates, waste, water, recycling options and diversion from landfill in our towns continually provide challenge due to our size, remoteness, extreme weather, distances between the Shire and facilities, the cost of transport, the cost of infrastructure renewal and funding from non-rates related income.

Carrying a relatively low population to size, and low related capacity to engage economies of scale, the Shire faces challenges in maintaining all services at a level that would support the needs of all ratepayers. Continual prioritising and review of approaches, with a focus on the most necessary valuable services and programs to ratepayers is critical for the community to clearly see their aspirations for the Shire come to fruition.

Governance is also an area that affects our delivery against priorities and attraction and retention of staff and community engagement with the Shire. Considered approaches that are transparent and relevant to our community will continue to be part of our ongoing practice within the organisation. The relationship between the operations of the Shire and the ratepayers has improved with our new Corporate Business Planning processes including engagement with a broad set of stakeholders in production of the agenda and ongoing communication on outcomes. The Shire's Community Survey is a benchmark of community sentiment on our work and it guides much of the focus of communication and activity undertaken to meet community need. Communication and inclusion are important to the rate paying community and will be a focus in future to ensure engagement, clarity of priorities and targeted outcomes.

Culturally, staff in the organisation remain welcoming, supportive and engaged. This is a valuable asset to the Shire and continuing to support and grow a culture that is positive, forward thinking, and engaged, will be critical for achievement of community agenda in the future. Tailored approaches to our inherent location based staffing challenges that affect business in the Kimberley will continue to be a focus, including succession and backfill arrangements, procedural and document control



processes, ongoing review of workloads and skill sharing and flexibility between roles and portfolios in order to align to known location based challenges.

Strategic focus of this plan

Workforce planning at the Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley aims to represent both best practice and community aspirations in workforce management practice. This document is a guide to the Shire's workforce to achieve against commitment to community in line with relevant legislation, best practice in human resource management and the principles of good governance. It also works to inform Shire specific plans to best fit current and future workforce needs and improve upon current and future workforce related treatments in systems, processes and practice.

Key agenda for workforce planning includes a commitment to:

- Create a performance culture and embed our vision, mission and agenda into roles at the Shire and ensure managers and staff enact this through review and promotion process that strongly links KPIs to community agenda.
- Capture and develop structures that provide insight into informing workforce data that enables identification of critical needs, highlights required staffing and has a forward thinking approach to ensure responsive workforce planning.
- Develop feedback and engagement systems in teams and across the organisation and commit to responding to staff identified matters that improve business activity, outcomes and value.
- Invest in team planning days, cross directorate collaboration, annual all staff events and regular family and staff social events.
- Encourage and promote staff engagement in community activity that aligns with the values of the community and develops and promotes our workforce capability and value.
- Review salary and benefits and seek smart approaches tailored to our workforce.

The Shire has responsibility for its staff delivering the key priorities of its community. To do this the workforce plan highlights the need for:

- Becoming a place based employer of choice
- Investment in workforce planning, development and expertise that provides strong structures in practice for our workforce
- Retaining our staff and attracting a diverse, skilled workforce
- Investing in skills and systems that keep us contemporary, resilient and responsive
- Improving workforce productivity through good workforce planning tied to service plans, community and corporate business planning.
- Developing management and leadership skills that act to increase our resilience and agility as a business in relation to our workforce and challenges in workforce planning
- Collaborating more productively internally and externally to promote and continually improve our workforce capability

Overview

Workforce planning aims to have the right people in the right place at the right time. The *Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley Workforce Plan 2017–2027* (the Plan) aims to build, attract and retain a relevant skilled workforce to meet the needs of the Shire sustainably into the future. It contains a range of focus areas to support Shire workforce development challenges and improvements. These priorities will be based on the following core considerations, over the period of the plan, including:

- examination of existing capacity and capability of the workforce
- assessment of current and future demand for workforce skills and responsive management of those capabilities
- the development of realistic and achievable workforce development strategies
- The external environment and trends that relate to workforce planning to inform our strategies
- The cultural, environmental and social setting for staff in the Shire and development of the Shire as an employer of choice

Our Workforce Plan aligns with our Strategic Community Plan and Corporate Business Plan, and has reference to the State Government's *Skilling WA – A workforce development plan for Western Australia (Skilling WA)*, the *Kimberley Workforce Development Plan 2014–2017*, and identified references relating to best practice in workforce management. It acts to inform workforce activities in the *Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley* for the next ten years, and offer approaches that ensure service delivery that is supported by a strong staff resource. The plan should be considered and monitored annually to ensure it delivers against goals and remains responsive and relevant as a decision making tool.

The framework of workforce planning is relatively new to local government, indicating a need for the work outlined in this plan to be flexible enough to allow for changes, not only due to changing workforce demographics and community expectation over a ten year period, but also inclusion of learnings in this area of local government business over the same period.

A range of issues impact the current and future workforce at the Shire and align with several of the pressure points highlighted in the *Kimberley Workforce Development Plan 2012-2017*. These issues include:

- Competition for experienced and skilled labour at senior levels and technically skilled staff in the region.
- Population and demographics that may not always offer specialised and experienced people locally to the level required by business.
- Comparatively high staff turnover in the local government and other sectors which is also a feature of the Kimberley region workforce by nature.
- The cost of living, relocation, housing choices, prices and rent.
- Low breadth of skilling options at certificate to post graduate level, low-level of available skilling choices locally, and, high cost of imported skilling mechanism

- Reputation, historic associations, current workforce practice, understandings and leadership approaches.
- Perceptions of uncertainty in economic environment, regardless of the comparative stability of work at the Shire.

Another impact on workforce planning in the Shire is the lean nature of the business and focus on more visible areas of business outside of workforce management that reduce the available systems and resources that can:

- Grow the Shire as an employer of choice,
- reduce the time to recruit unfilled positions,
- build a learning organisation,
- grow pathways into the Shire,
- compete for staff and attract a skilled and invested workforce,
- retain an invested workforce,
- ensure sustainability through robust business frameworks,
- facilitate and capture corporate knowledge,
- increase employment flexibility options,
- develop tailored incentives and benefits for employees; and,
- develop staff through career pathways with the Shire.

To continually improve upon these highlighted challenges in workforce planning, the *Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley Workforce Plan 2017–2021* aims to build, attract and retain a relevant skilled workforce to sustainably meet the needs of Shire.

Strengthening the local government sector represents an excellent opportunity to secure and strengthen the economic, environmental and social foundations of rural and regional communities across the breadth of the country.

Workforce Planning in Practice

Workforce planning ties to the State Government Requirements for the Shire to produce a Corporate Business Plan and a Strategic Community Plan to achieve compliance with the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996. Under Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996 Regulation 19C (3), a Corporate Business Plan for a district is to:

- a. set out, consistent with any relevant priorities set out in the strategic community plan for the district, a local government's priorities for dealing with the objectives and aspirations of the community in the district; and
- b. govern a local government's internal business planning by expressing a local government's priorities by reference to operations that are within the capacity of the local government's resources; and
- c. develop and integrate matters relating to resources, including asset management, workforce planning and long-term financial planning.



In the preparation of the annual budget the local government is to have regard to the contents of the Plan for the Future in terms of Section 6.2(2) of the Local Government Act 1995.

Workforce planning is a vehicle to achieving against the legislated compliance and administration of our business toward community outcomes. Workforce planning sits within the *Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework*, legislated and adopted in late 2011, to allow Local Governments to plan and to equip their organisations to respond to short, medium and long-term community requirements.

The core plans in the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework are the:

Strategic Community Plan

- A long-term plan that identifies vision, goals, outcomes and strategies, which drive the development of our informing strategies and plans.

Corporate Business Plan

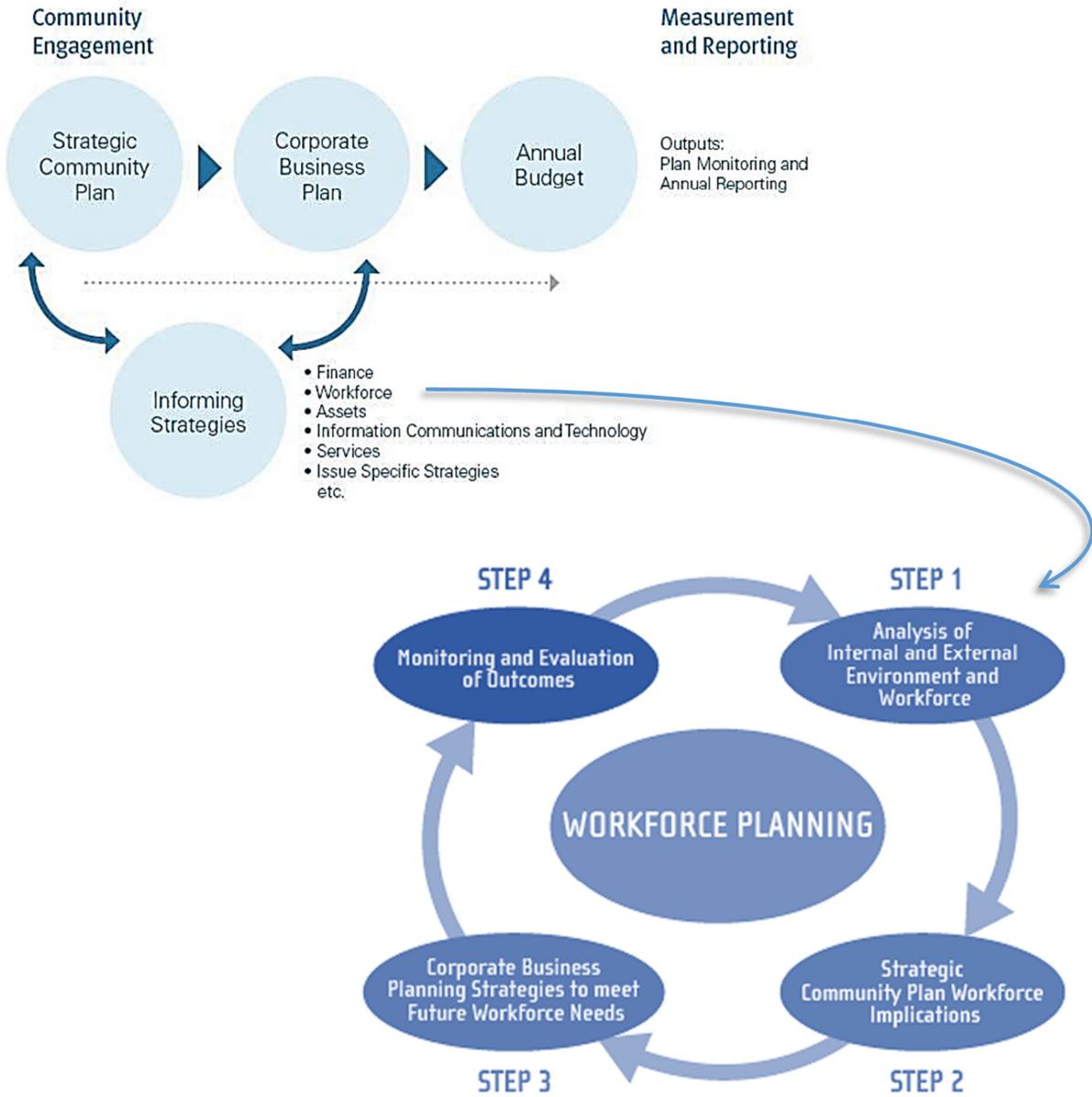
- A rolling four year plan, identifying services, activities, projects and resourcing requirements to deliver the Strategic Community Plan.

Annual Budget

- Identifies the financial resources available to deliver the Corporate Business Plan on an annual basis.

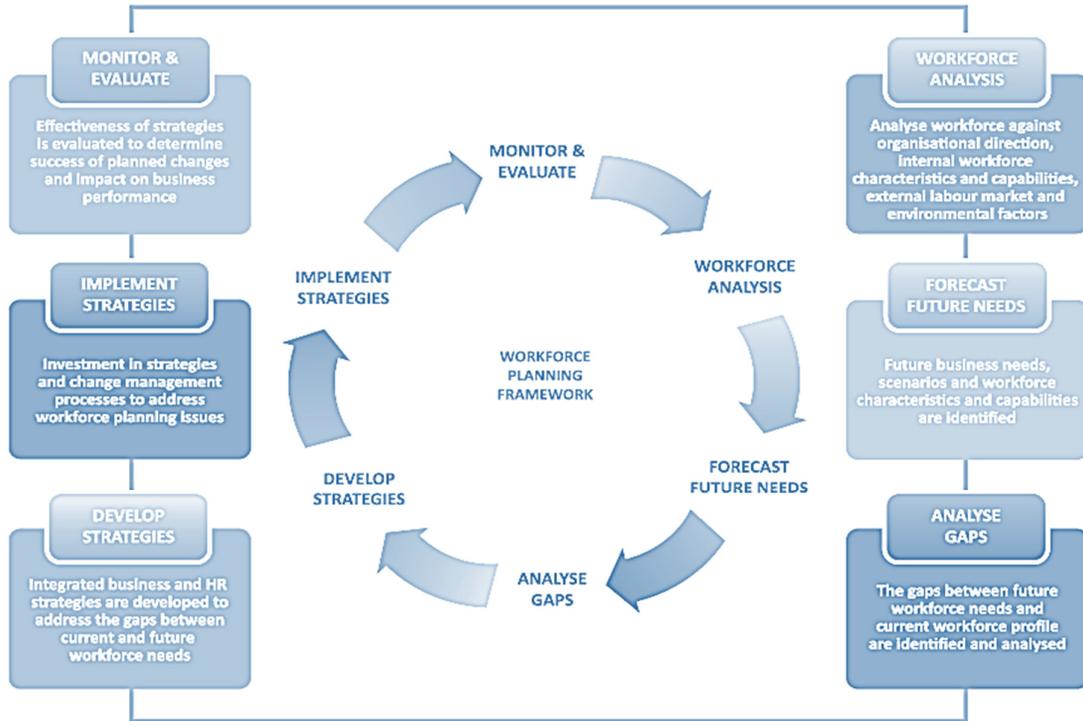
To ensure the *Corporate Business Plan* is resourced and delivers the assets and services required by the community, a number of informing strategies have been developed. These include the *Workforce Plan*, *Asset Management Plan* and *Long Term Financial Plan*. These strategies allow the Shire to set its priorities within its resourcing capability and deliver short, medium and long-term community priorities and aspirations, and ensure sustainable and risk responsible financial, human and asset management practices and decision-making.

The following diagram illustrates the relationship between the plans and the iterative process the informing strategies will play in the implementation of the framework.



Developing the Plan

The conceptual framework and cycle of activity for application over the period of our Workforce Plan is illustrated below.



In the development of the Plan, information and data has been drawn from a variety of sources. Internal data has been obtained from historic and 2016/17 data, audits, reviews undertaken, employee surveys, exit and feedback systems, and payroll data.

References are listed when cited and in the [reference](#) section of this report.

Current Workforce Capacity

Performance based reward systems are in place in the Shire, applied similarly over time to those at other local governments. A more formalised review and tailoring of these reward, development and recognition systems could benefit the business and staff, with a focus on transparent systems of application based on outcomes against key performance agenda. In addition the Shire has an Enterprise Agreement with the majority of its workforce covered by that agreement.

A review of structure and role responsibilities is a regular part of business for the Executive and works toward better achievement against focus areas and reduction of unnecessary double up of duties, and between portfolios. This has been introduced in regard to position description reviews as part of the overall annual performance review process and will continue to occur. As a lean organisation, the time and investment in workforce planning and development needs to continue to be an area of focus.

Consistently reviewing organisational, portfolio and role expectations, with a focus on flexibility for future needs and current demands, will work to support workforce accountability, sustainability and capacity. A focus on developing, supporting and promoting the behaviours of staff that achieve and are critical to organisational, business and team outcomes is an area for investment.



Regular reviews of the structure of the organisation to ensure efficient staffing to task allocation is part of business practice. The process applied includes task to role activity reviews to reduce time spent by senior employees on lower level administration, resulting in a focussed and strategic approach to achieving outcomes. Addressing this could support engagement of trainees, school leavers and less qualified or experienced staff to

support succession-planning, reduction of the time consuming lower level administration and the current cost of general and lower level activities to the organisation.

It is counterproductive to identify prescriptive future staffing needs in long term workforce planning as the key is to develop a resilient, responsive and agile workforce that suits our business profile and meets business needs as they arise. The annual review of staff establishment prior to budget, service planning and alignment to the Community and Corporate Business Plans should act to inform and adjust our staffing annually as necessary. The operating ratio in our budget, when reviewed against staffing need and task allocation may or may not allow for positions not in the establishment to be part of future investment.

Reviewing our workforce profile, how our services are delivered and at what level is critical. This may include looking at:

- How and what we deliver, and can deliver in reality, and at what level of service planning.
- Whether a different approach is necessary, gives more benefit and is viable, for example outsourcing activity.
- Changing structures and task allocation.
- Reviewing process and systems to identify efficiencies and reduce tasks that may not be necessary to the strategic outcomes of the activity.
- In response to outcomes of the above, review of roles that remain or are unnecessary in future planning and correct treatment of any changes in this area.

In the short to medium term, areas for potential investment in staff recruitment, upskilling or task allocation that have the ability to improve business quality and continuity currently identify as:

- Information Technology
- Records Management
- Compliance (Building and Planning)
- Occupation Health and Safety
- Administration support
- Organisational Development
- Apprenticeships and/or Traineeships.

Salaries and Budget

For the 2016/17 financial year the total employee costs were \$10,236,234 and against a budget of \$10,925,701 equating 55% of the overall actual operating expenses. Generally, over time, the salaries budget has been stable, with small increases recognizing living expense changes, unchanged staff levels and service planning for staffing in line with current delivery program of the business. Expectation from community, government frameworks and compliance has increased.

Workforce management planning capacity within the Shire is improving and will bring with it more scrutiny of market spend on positions including the recently undertaken benchmarking against other local government undertaken in house in offered salaries and reclassification processes against the *Local Government Industry Award 2010*. Reduction in the use of contracts to attract staff which differ between roles and have not been internally assessed against other similar level roles but may also reduce disparity in salary spend in the future.

It is important for the Shire to develop systems of management in salaries and recruitment that ensure overspend and total spend on staffing are clearly managed. This would include expectation of management by portfolios of budget in requests for recruitment, pay increments, education, professional development and training (compliance and development related) and associated benefits, with sign off on spends in this area. To achieve this frameworks in both the Organisational Development and Finance portfolios would need to be engineered to ensure understanding and treatment that clearly identifies an emphasis on financial management systems and training in the areas related to staffing. These frameworks would also enable reporting against performance in workforce spend and management within executive areas and form KPIs for each executive that could be monitored and reviewed for improvement ongoing.

Vacant positions and the cost of vacancies to the business, and spend on recruitment are also influencers on the cost of staffing, although salaries budgets do not reflect these direct and indirect costs to the business. These costs include increased attrition and burnout rates and delivery delays against community agenda, and, create and added pressures due to understaffing on existing roles as a consequence. The costs for staffing that are not direct payroll costs should also be reported against each executive area and manager.

Focussing our Workforce

The Shire needs to focus on longer term approaches to workforce planning that ensure relevance and flexibility in its workforce. This is the current approach and the sustainability of our workforce, culture and outputs will benefit from a commitment in this area of business.

In order to meet the outcomes potentially available to our workforce the Shire needs to invest in planning that identifies current, future and potential workforce profiles. Choices on workforce tend to be budget driven and fit to annual budget timeframes, funded positions and/or reactive responses to short-term business needs. To move away from this pattern of decision-making, the Shire needs to embed committed service oriented thinking on governance, compliance and community need.

Key agenda for workforce planning includes a commitment to those identified in our Strategic Approach including:

- Consistently work to support our reputation as an employer of choice.
- Ensure leadership and top down investment in our workforce and a learning culture that promotes a flexible, responsive, considered and valued staff body.
- Review structures regularly against community agenda, to ensure our workforce remains relevant to the needs of the community.
- Ensure staff are empowered to make decisions and take responsibility for their performance.
- Communicate and include staff in organisational information and agenda and encourage positive activity against achievement of agenda.
- Facilitate and capture corporate knowledge, knowledge management and knowledge transfer systems.
- Include accountability and performance measures in managerial roles for timely and relevant contributions to workforce agenda including planning, review, time management, reviews, feedback, workload, and, equity in professional development support.
- Develop management awareness that staff judge on equity in treatment and how positive and negative performance is managed. This strongly influences investment and culture. Investment in management capacity to apply performance management and prioritisation agenda in leadership is essential.
- Develop internal and external recognition frameworks that regularly encourage success, positive outcomes and desired behaviours, and, identify how this can be achieved.
- Include cross-jurisdictional, organisational and team accountability in individual role performance measures and expectations identified in the performance review process.

Attraction

Although the Shire faces challenges in competition, location and availability of skilled staffing, approaches that may address this have not been fully developed to determine whether external factors or internal practices are key influencers on attracting our workforce. It is likely it is a mix of both. In regard to improvements there are internal approaches to attraction that have not been fully realised and may positively improve our attraction rates.

These include approaches that:

- Grow pathways into the Shire.
- Build the reputation of the Shire and promote the value of employment with the Shire.
- Remain in touch with the external workforce and what attracts staff.
- Build relationships with external stakeholders to encourage pathways into the Shire.
- Grow our capacity to tailor approaches in leadership to attracting a skilled and invested workforce.
- Continually consider avenues that support staff in living in the Shire in a holistic sense, including in the areas of the cost of living, relocation, housing choices, prices and rent.
- Work on developing staff from within the Shire.
- Grow our linkages to training, education and skilling to build avenues that ensure a committed workforce.
- Look for creative approaches to support new and existing staff in contributing to the Shires workforce development and community outcomes.
- Grow managerial capacity to support and engage in ways that have not been traditionally applied.

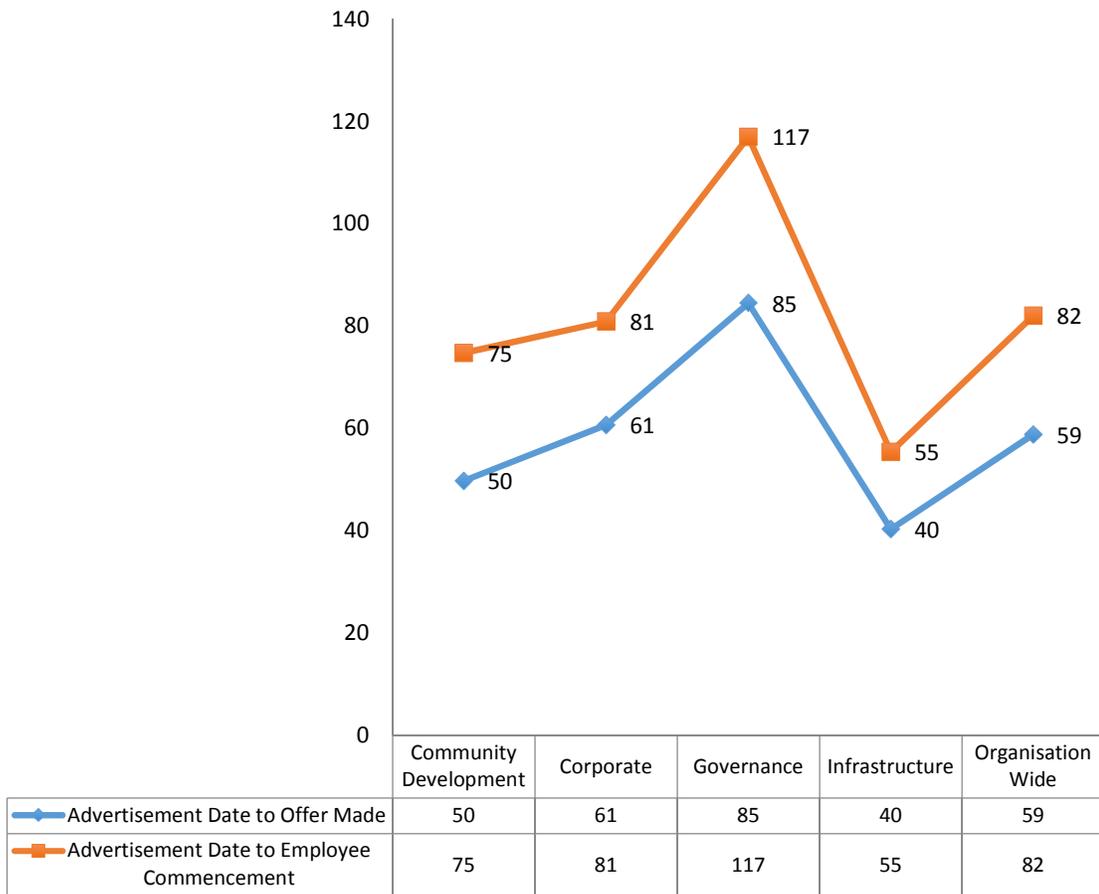


Recruitment

Due to the scarcity of applicants, particularly qualified and specialist applicants, some positions in the Shire have remained unfilled for longer than in other local government generally. This affects existing workloads and reduces our responsiveness as a business. Of offers made, not all are accepted and this often relates to externalities to the role offered. For example location, schooling options, the cost of moving where relocation support is unavailable to the role, housing, spouse employment and counter offers are regularly reasons for decline of offers of employment.

This identifies that we need to improve turnaround time on recruitment where possible, and work harder to engage and represent professionally in the recruitment process, not only through pre interview, but post interview and in the offer stage. It also indicates that staff at senior levels, where support to relocate is offered are more likely to take up offers, whilst skill shortages generally in the area at lower levels of business with remain competitive, and, employer of choice and reputation will potentially impact success of business in these instances of competition.

Recruitment Period (days)



On average, 26% of positions in the Shire are re-advertised. This is due to lack of applicants, lack of qualifications at a standard and/or skills necessary to take on position expectations. Competition also attributes to unsuccessful or long recruitment processes. The Shire competes with local business in positions attracting lower salary and skill levels. In order to take on positions at this level it is more likely staff are local and have accommodation or the move to the Shire does not incur financial costs that are untenable balanced with remuneration. For this section of staffing, we need to ensure our reputation as an employer is good or we will struggle to attract and retain local talent.

Reputation is also critical when recruiting for higher-level positions within the organisation. Local talent will have a better understanding of opportunities, competition and reputation, and will have more information available than most on working in the region generally. Non-local talent will be attracted, and the opposite, by the locality of our business, potential career advancement and benefits. They will also, if from a local government background, do their homework on reputation and be familiar with the local government business model, outcomes and achievements. Because of these hurdles in geography and competition, the Shire often takes on staff working toward the next level in their careers, rather than those fully conversant or experienced in the areas of responsibility or associated complexity roles may require.

Turnover and Retention

The Shire currently experiences an average staff turnover rate in excess of 30%. Trends in turnover are generally increasing in Australia, this may be generational as the less transient older generation of workers retire, or it may be due to other factors such as competition for employees, and, increased expectations on employers from staff bodies. The younger generation Y are less inclined to remain in one role for long periods, two years being the average for this age group. Seeking opportunity in work options and a social and technologically engaging culture is important to this age group continuing in a role.

The Australian Human Resources Institute identifies why staff leave and these are key strategies the Shire can investigate to address turnover and increase length of service:

- Most staff leave due to career opportunities.
- Feedback consistently indicates that turnover rates strongly influence workplace performance negatively.
- Key influencers on retention are training, flexible work opportunities and performance appraisals and feedback.
- Most turnover is experienced in the junior or less experienced levels of staffing, in the age bracket of 26-35 year olds.
- Career pathways and potential promotion are key to retaining staff.
- Staff who engage productively in activities that improve the business, or require feedback for joint benefit, are generally those who are longer-term staff members.
- Relationships with manager or co-worker/s is one of the main reasons staff leave.
- Work life balance is an influencer on the decision to leave.

And why staff stay:

- Good relationships with colleagues and manager.
- Job satisfaction, training and opportunity to progress.
- Work life balance and flexible working arrangements.
- Pay, benefits and location.
- Opportunities to be heard and make a difference in the organisation.

Several management practices in workforce management are proven to improve retention and these need to be investigated and applied by Shire Management. These include:

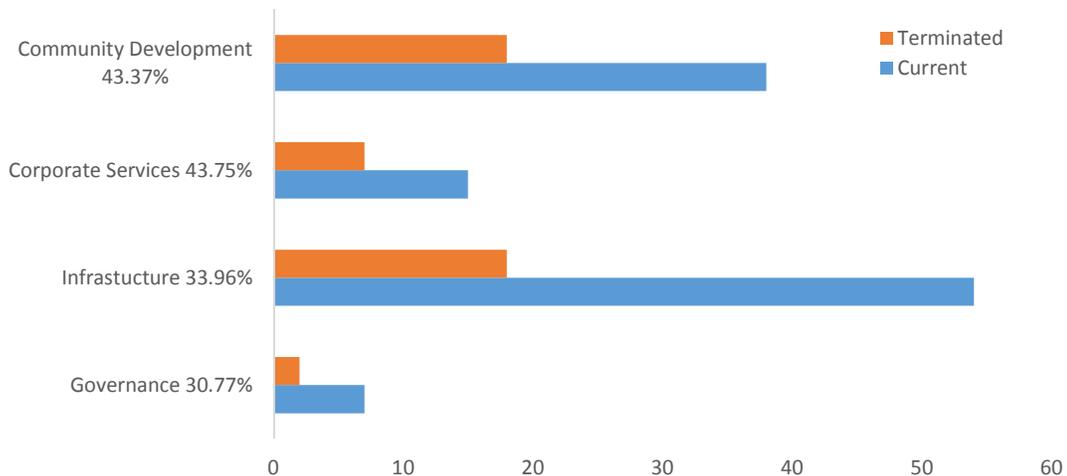
- Effective leadership and management
- Work related training and development
- Performance appraisals and feedback in various forms
- Clear strategy and plan that link to role and contributions
- Recognition of employee contributions
- Work life balance initiatives
- Quality inductions

- Mentoring
- Effective recruitment processes
- Flexible working arrangements
- Competitive salary and benefits
- Responding to employee opinion surveys and communicating back to staff on positive responses to this feedback

Turnover Rates and Length of Service

National workforce turnover rates listed by the ABS in 2012 were 10.6 per cent. The Australian Centre for Excellence Survey 2012 recorded total staff turnover in 108 local governments ranging from zero to 46.5 per cent, with an average of 12.7 per cent and a median of 10.3 per cent. The Shire has an average turnover rate of in excess of 30%, almost three times higher than the median for other local government statistics. Turnover rates at the Shire too high to be based solely on environmental or personal choices of staff considering continuation of employment. It is clear from local data that staff do not remain for longer than about three (3) years and often attrition occurs in the early stages of their time in the Shire. This indicates opportunity to improve the periods of career that staff face with the Shire; pre, early, mid and long term.

Turnover Rate by Directorate

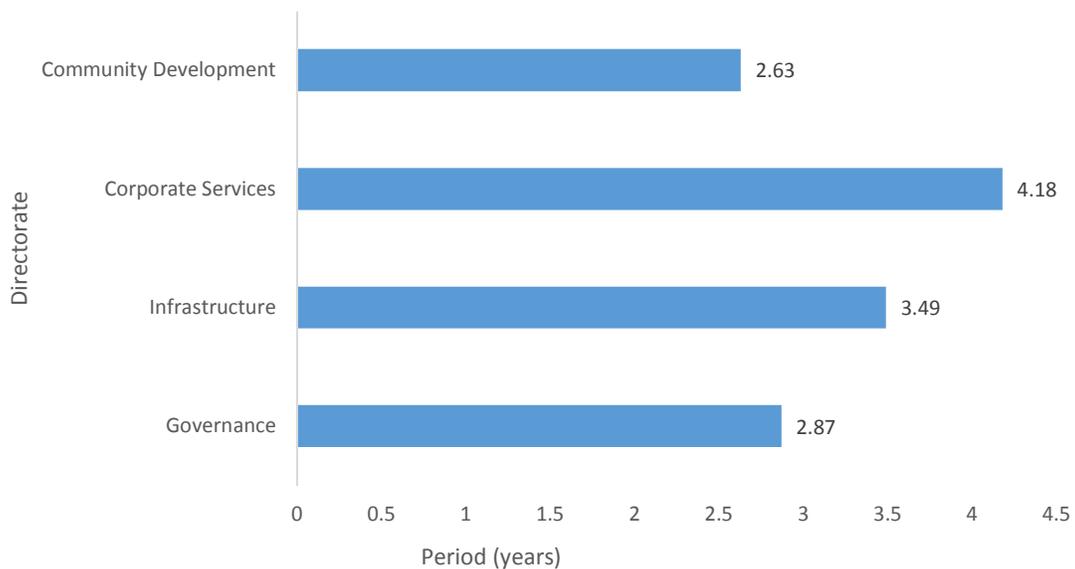


Length of service relates to turnover rates and it should be noted that there are several long-term employees in corporate services, community development and infrastructure that positively affect this data. In reality length of service is most usually under three years and this indicates an opportunity to improve the preparedness, engagement and process we apply to ensuring new starters stay with the Shire. Feedback identifies a need to improve pre-employment expectations and research identifies that various treatments are applied to similar issues for new starters around logistics, this needs to be reviewed and a process on communications and information needs to be incorporated

into activities. Perceptions of our professionalism in pre-employment and initial employment impact when combined with the first few months and reflection by employees on the hurdles that the business inadvertently places on new starters as a culture. This combined with the cultural change that many new staff to the region experience can set our business up to grow a successful and productive employee, or one who disengages somewhat from immersing themselves in our business and their role. This requires a collective invested approach to new colleagues, through pre-employment experience and perceptions, the first six months of employment, and embedded in our behaviours and values in teams ongoing. The Shire's investment in the process and communication and engagement with potential staff, on boarding staff, and inducting staff into the business and their team, needs to be a priority for management and all staff to ensure a welcoming, clearly defined agenda and role for new starters.

From the initial time with the Shire, it is important for all staff to remain up to date as employees in the Shire to better serve the community and achieve against business and community goals. Continual education on Shire priorities, values, expected workplace behaviours and responsive change mechanism required are essential to ensuring staff have a consistent and well-informed understanding of business priorities. The Shires monthly staff meetings, Senior Leadership meetings and OHS Committee do work toward this and seek to embed a consistent engagement in items that staff need to know about collectively. Six monthly inductions on key items of business and practice would strongly support understanding and collective approaches to matters such as core business priorities based on our Community Plan, OHS, Code of Conduct, what directorates do and how to engage with them and various other agenda as necessary. By ensuring that all staff attend this session at least every two years the business will also ensure that key expectations and understandings in our staff have the opportunity to embed. This agenda would also work to identify collective agenda and to engage staff in directorates with one another. Other forum that could support cross-pollination and peer support are agenda versus unit based committees and teams. For example, staff with similar role expectations, such as administration officers, could meet, discuss and engineer collective practice and share joint tasks to produce more efficiently. The Shire has the capacity to apply this model in several areas of the business cross-jurisdictionally.

Average Length of Service by Directorate



Items identified by staff in exit interviews and surveys that relate to commitment to roles include the lack of accessibility to work related information, career pathways, leadership and management and opportunities for growth and/or promotion. Externalities identified in reasons for leaving included the lack of a feeling of safety, childcare and the difference in place from which staff had relocated, these reflect general community sentiment in surveys. Some staff have partners within the community who also relocate for work and as a consequence move on when their partner moves i.e. State Government employees such as police, health, education as well as business more generally.

In order to ensure we improve these areas, we need to focus on a set of tailored approaches to focus and grow our skill in responding to staff retention issues where we have the capacity to do so. Work related information sharing, procedures and access could be improved. By ensuring that each role has a succession plan and a procedure in place management can support new and existing staff to integrate and take leave. Where this is part of most organisational practice, it is possible that at the Shire staff turnover, consistent vacancies and a lean workforce have not engineered these process in practice. The positives of having process and guides to work is that staff are more quickly self-sufficient and confident, capable of increasing their capacity in a self-paced fashion, and, there is less reliance on existing staff to be available to take new staff through every part of their role. Further review and introduction of any effective exit interview questions and treatment that provide informing data on improvement mechanism in future.

Career pathways within the Shire could be developed in our workforce planning. There are a few successful cases of staff entering at one level in one role and progressing to technically skilled and management staff are in evidence, but that may be more individually driven than by practice in management. By tying annual reviews and pathway programs for potential school leavers to staff aspirations in career placement and progression, the Shire could benefit from a more invested and responsive staffing profile.

Leadership and management represent one key area with an opportunity to improve and lead change and business improvement. The 2036 Blueprint for the Kimberley identifies the following transformational agenda for regional leadership and development readiness that does link to the outputs of managerial staff in the Shire:



Regional leadership and development-readiness - towards a culture of strong local leadership that is engaged proactively and maturely in achieving the potential of our region and its people.¹

Manager level positions within the Shire are most often filled through external applicants, and, to a significantly lesser extent through internal promotion. In each instance, there is not a consistent approach to managerial education that is part of induction or ongoing education with staff. An important factor is information about the region, its priorities and its people. This is a shortfall in practice that may identify individual managers' gain more or less support as they take up managerial roles, depending on the staff managing them and the quality of this management.

By proactively improving the understanding of expectation and

producing support mechanism for managers, the organisation could strongly support outcomes, accountability and on boarding of staff to produce effective management outcomes. This could take various forms, for example; new manager information packs, education on policy in application of managerial responsibilities, external workshops to improve understandings and confidence in key areas of responsibility, assigned mentors and, as identified above, peer group activities that are similar in requirement and invite collective approaches.

¹ 2036 and beyond a regional investment blueprint for the Kimberley, the Kimberley Development Commission

Summary conclusion

This plan highlights the many and complex issues that impact on workforce planning and management and the recommendations reflect areas of improvement which will work to ensure the Shire achieves against having the right people in the right place at the right time. The *Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley Workforce Plan 2017–2027* (the Plan) will align with other planning frameworks, internal and external agenda toward best practice human resource management in future.

This plan will provide a basis for flexible and responsive choice making in future around our human resource development, capability and capacity to ensure we meet our service delivery requirements professionally, with a skilled, happy and invested staff body.

Future focus on an agenda that grows the Shire as an employer of choice in the region, supports staff enrichment and investment in our business and promotes a learning culture that works to attract and retain our staff in future has been a priority in this plan and will remain so over the period of the plan.

To enact this plan priority items that investigate, deliver and improve our human resource capital will include:

- Knowledge capture
 - Develop training matrices that support skill sharing
 - Develop system and process capture – document our procedures
 - Grow cross team activities that support knowledge sharing
 - Develop succession planning in all roles
- Performance Review and Appraisal
 - Identify and implement a “best of breed” performance appraisal system
 - Highlight technical, OHS and team behaviour weightings in performance appraisals
 - Identify how staff can progress their career on several levels in the process through providing opportunities to recognise positive performance activities and behaviours
- Recruitment and Selection
 - Review all aspects of recruitment and identify efficiencies
 - Look at more effective processes and systems in internal and external recruitment practices
 - Review and enhance the current Induction process
- Pathways into the Shire
 - Build our capacity to support a range of targeted pathways for our staff
 - Grow linkages with our community to develop a range of pathways into employment at the Shire.
- Workforce Alignment
 - Align performance appraisal processes with Corporate Business Plan KPIs
 - Develop staff understanding of service planning and management behaviours that grow positive outcomes in Shire priorities
- Staff Development and Retention
 - Review existing staff incentives and benefits in regard to relevance and sustainability

- Identity possible incentives and practices that could improve retention and recruitment and put in place practice that support these.

- Focus areas for investment in recruitment, upskilling or task allocation
 - Information Technology
 - Records Management
 - Compliance (Building and Planning)
 - Occupation Health and Safety
 - Administration support
 - Organisational Development
 - Apprenticeships and/or Traineeships.

APPENDIX 1 -References

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APPENDIX 2 – Supporting Data

Staff Satisfaction Surveys and Feedback

Below is a set of feedback from existing and past staff members in regard to suggested improvements in our current approaches to workforce planning:

Employer of Choice

- Promote the values of the Shire externally and engage in activities that promote positive positioning of the Shire as an employer of choice.
- Focus on what the business does to attract and retain staff to gain positive improvements in turnover and retention rates.
- Build a learning organisation that has the capacity to transform itself to meet community needs through innovative activity that encourages flexibility and responsiveness and increases cross jurisdictional reflection and engagement.

Career Paths

- Consider existing staff and progression over the current external recruitment pattern for senior roles.
- Retain an invested workforce through good management, investment throughout careers of our staff and provision of a culture that embraces new and existing staff.
- Increase employment flexibility options and build the concept of value in flexibility within directorates.
- Include succession planning in annual review processes.

Engaged Management

- Ensure management gives feedback, takes time and invests in staff and their development, not only for contributions individually but in the organisation as a whole.
- Reduce staff fatigue in covering unfilled positions.
- Enforce leave management commitments, improve team planning in time management, and consider this as a managerial performance agenda item.
- Improve capacity in leadership and management including in the areas of managerial accountability, people management and managerial understanding of expectations within the organisation.
- Grow the capacity for staff to work on key projects across the organisation and engage in outcome driven, non-directorate teams to deliver outcomes as they arise.
- Seek out opportunities for staff at all levels to lead agenda and take ownership of outcomes.
- Continually reward and monitor positive performance and manage and mentor staff as a priority when performance levels are not being met.

Tailored Incentives

- Develop tailored incentives and benefits for employees, and, develop staff through a career path with the Shire.
- Ensure procedural manuals are developed for each position responsibilities

- Invest in life long retention of staff and apply quality approaches in retention at specific times in staff employment.
- Invest in staff that invest in the business.

Effective Human Resource Management

- Develop effective process in induction that focusses on continued understanding of business and role focus over the life of employment with the Shire.
- Ensure systems and process are professional and committed to welcoming new staff from diverse backgrounds.
- Build on new starter experiences both in the workplace and in the Shire.

Diversity

- Continue to enact the Indigenous Engagement Organisational Directive and RAP agenda and identify approaches in workforce planning that invest in a broad and diverse work profile to attract Aboriginal and other cultures and age groups, and become recognised for welcoming diversity and supporting diversity in our business.
- Ensure our culture does not exclude new staff and encourages engagement formally and informally with activities in the Shire.
- Review gender and pay regularly regard to levels and equity.
- Seek activities that encourage engagement with community and our local workforce agenda and increase options for entry into the workforce.

Development

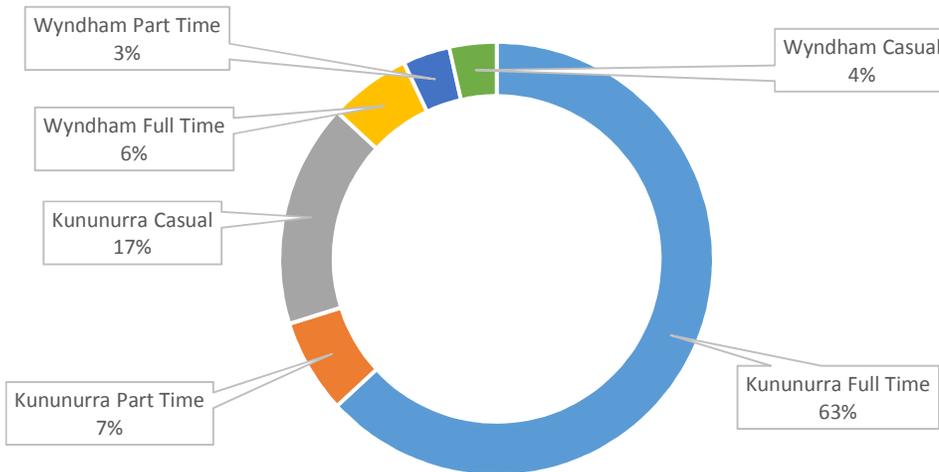
- Roll out of a focussed training schedule that invests in in-house talent toward leadership and executive positions in a considered longer-term approach.
- Develop the skills of current employees so they are able to move flexibly between occupations experiencing skills shortages would yield positive outcomes.
- Ensure that training and professional development are encouraged, supported and bring back valuable learnings to the Shire, and ensure those who do engage are expected to identify benefit to the community share learnings and record activity as it occurs.
- Develop lunchtime talks of 15 minutes and other avenues to ensure that external training and spend on development activities has an accountability agenda to bring ideas and learnings to our workforce and community.
- Grow mentoring and diverse development options that are both internal and external and enhance traditional approaches to professional development activities.
- Invest in approaches and practices that that promote learning in workplace activity and grow capacity in our staff to develop leadership capabilities.

Population and Staffing

In 2016, the Shire had a residential population of 7,148. The majority of residents, 5,526, live in or around Kununurra. Wyndham, 100km from Kununurra to the northwest has 1,003 residents. The remaining 619 members of the population are scattered in other smaller rural and remote locations throughout the Shire. Of the total resident population, 130 are staff with the Shire. The general population swells with tourism, seasonal farm and tourism related workers over the dry season between May and September. Fly in fly out workers have influenced population to a lesser degree in recent years. On average, each residence has 2.1 persons residing in it in the Kimberley. Of this

population the Shire's workforce of 130 are based in the townships of Kununurra and Wyndham. The Shire works to ensure that where work sites are separated geographically a culture that is universal is important. Management have an investment to broaden the opportunity for cross-locational interactions based on activity, work related priorities and opportunities that ensure connectivity between teams with similar and varying work focus and knowledge sharing.

Shire Workforce Distribution by Locality



With diminishing growth rates in early working age in the Shire, there is a need to supplement, engage and improve the attractiveness of the Shire's workforce opportunities through tailored local programs that encourage movement into the Shire and ensure options for growth with the Shire throughout a career. Engaging a workforce from outside of the region, where necessary, to ensure technical capacity and critical mass of the Shire's workforce is also needed. Both local and external engagement can work to support the needs of our community. Key in local government is the reputation of the Shire in attracting those from a local government background to the area and into our workforce. By ensuring the on boarding, induction and support of new local and non-local employees, and providing a professional, diverse and vibrant workplace this can be achieved.

Population by Age Comparison



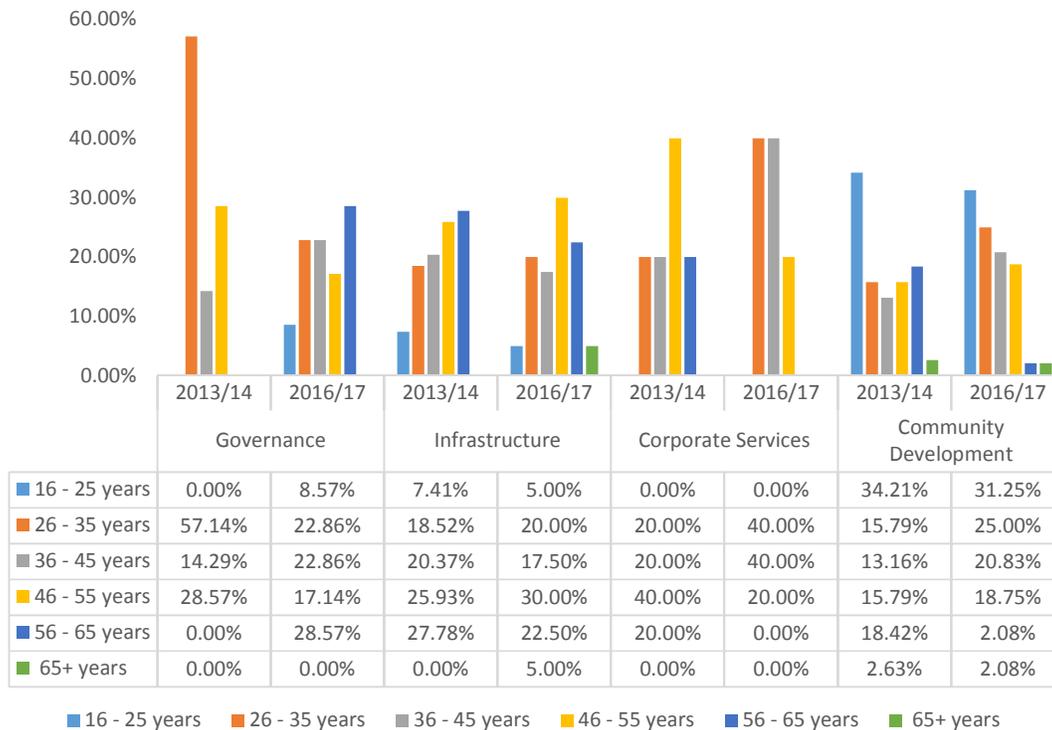
Source: ABS, Population by Age and Sex, Regions of Australia, 2015 (cat. no. 3235.0)

The changes in population age in the Shire between those aged 15-24 and 25-64 may be influenced by the limited university level educational options for locals, housing affordability, cost of living, employment pathways, social opportunities or the general moving out of people in the Shire to other opportunities. Due to the relatively young population, key priorities for the region are youth attainment and transition to post school education, post school training and employment.

Increases in the 25-64 year old age group may be related to return of locals to home base post study or travel, employment relocations, settling in the area for family reasons or movement into the area for other reasons. This age group also influences the demand on infrastructure and services to meet their particular needs. Community service and infrastructure priorities particular to 25-64 year olds will likely reflect strongly in community surveys and feedback as a result. The most noticeable demographic is the decline in the 65-84 year old age bracket. This could be attributed to higher mortality rates in Indigenous communities in this age bracket. Retirement or move outside of the Shire when not of working age is another factor that may influence these figures.

Shire staffing reflects balance across age groups, but, in future, a focus on pathways for younger staff, and different employment models may further focus on entry-level longer term career modelling and employment options that extend expertise sharing within our business.

Shire Staff Age Profile by Directorate



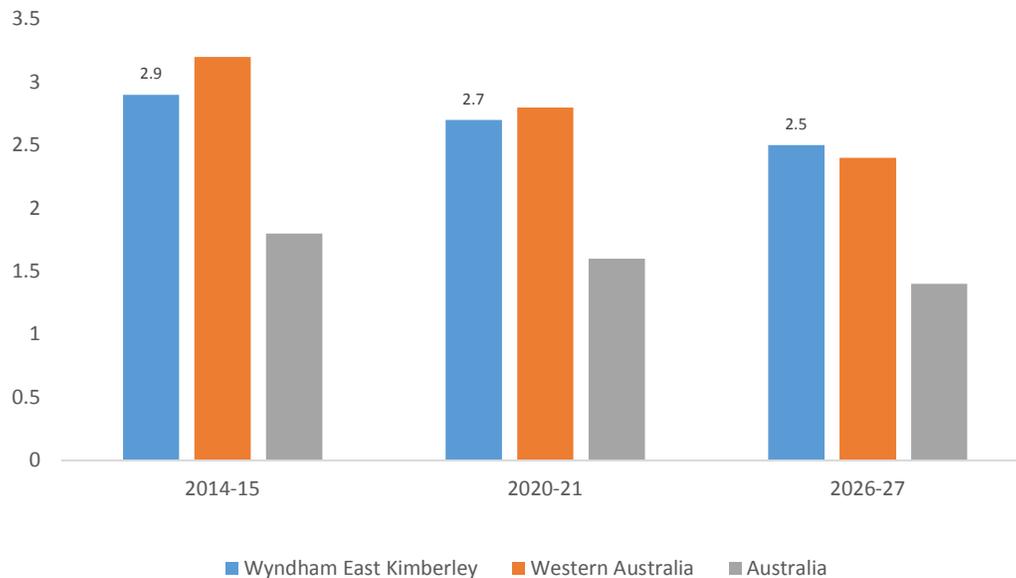
Population Growth

Our region reflects some of the highest rates of projected growth in Australia. As a result, regional and remote Australia will be under pressure for infrastructure and service priorities for its populations in the next ten years, and residents are likely to create a demand for these same services. With this also comes a focus on improvement in planning for our regional and remote communities which will engage an agenda of renewal against projected needs of the population.

The average annual growth rate for young people in the Shire (aged 0 to 19) is around 0.1 per cent. Those of working age (20 to 64) have a rate of about -0.1 per cent. Older people have a rate closer to 6.9 per cent. The average annual growth rate for this region is 0.2 per cent. This compares with a lowest change rate of -1.2 per cent and a high of 1.4 per cent. The number of births is significantly higher than deaths. Births are important component than net migration in that they are generally a better indicator of local increases. In relative terms, the potential average annual growth rates are low by both Western Australian and Australian standards².

² . Page 4, *Population Report No.7, Western Australia Tomorrow, Forecast Profile for the Derby-West Kimberley LGA*, Western Australian Planning Commission, 2012.

Population Growth Projections



Source: ABS Population Projections, 2012 (base) to 2027.

Although East Kimberley population growth is projected to continue to be higher than the rest of Australia from now until 2024, it is showing a similar rate of decline to the rest of Australia. The Kimberley, as a total region has 1.4 per cent projected population growth, as does the Broome region. Derby and Halls Creek have 2 and 2.1 per cent projected population growth respectively. Our Shire has a 2.3 per cent projected growth rate, indicating that within the region our Shire is the leading growth area.

Comparative AAGR by Kimberley LGA (2013)

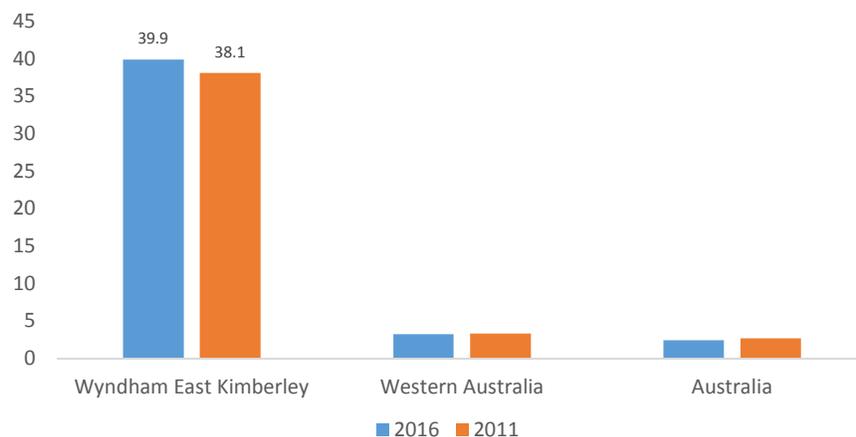
Local Government Authority	% Share	AAGR 2003-2013	Aboriginal Pop. (2011)
Kimberley	100%	1.90%	46%
Broome	43%	2.20%	35%
Derby-West Kimberley	25%	2.60%	55%
Halls Creek	10%	0.40%	82%
Wyndham-East Kimberley	22%	1.30%	41%

Source: ABS Catalogue 3218.0 - Regional Population Growth, Australia, 2012-13

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Around 85 per cent of the Kimberley Aboriginal population identify an area in the region as homeland or traditional country. This ties to the feeling of cultural and/or emotional connection to place and a sense of belonging. The Aboriginal population in the Shire is comparatively high to that in most other areas of Australia sitting generally around 38-40 per cent. Population comparisons within the Shire reflect 54 per cent of the Aboriginal population in 2011 was under 25, whereas non-Aboriginal persons compared at 27 per cent, or half that of the Aboriginal population. This identifies key opportunities in the Shire, these being the link between local employment, declining young workforce statistics and the investment regionally to improve the disparity between employment and career investment outcomes for local Aboriginals³.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People



Source: ABS publication *Estimates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, June 2011* (cat. no. 3238.0.55.001)

The 2036 Blueprint for the Kimberley identifies the following transformational agenda for our Aboriginal stakeholders:

Aboriginal advancement - a purposeful regional approach to ensuring that Aboriginal people have the capabilities, opportunities and incentives to reach their potential as an integral part of our region's development.⁴

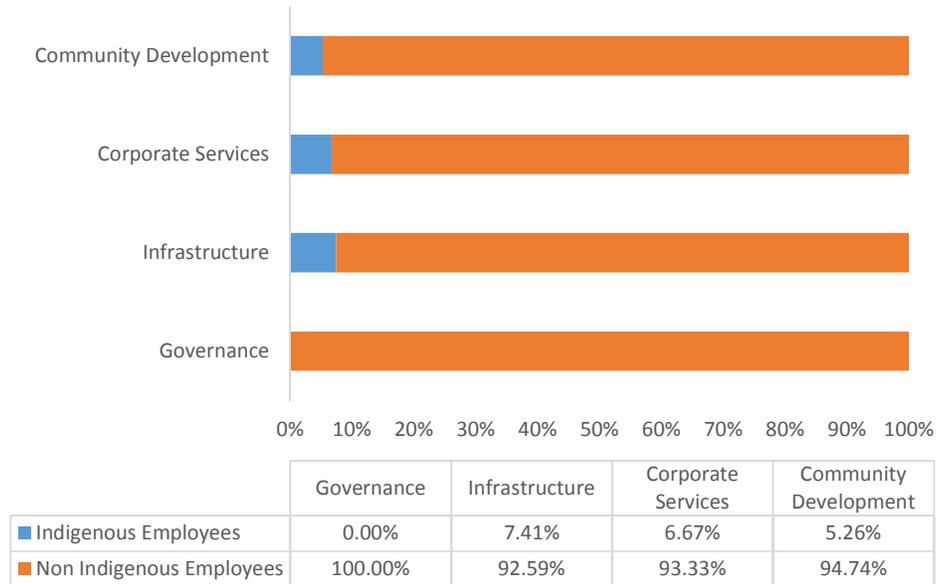
This highlights the need to invest in local employment opportunities for Aboriginal people available in the workforce and work with other agencies to grow the participation rates of Aboriginals in the Shire's workforce. Essential in the process is good planning, commitment and investment in engaging connected support networks. This could include ensuring welcoming places for our Aboriginal workforce and residents, planning for investment in Aboriginal entrants, and, contributing staff hours in planning to ensure good outcomes for the Shire and our Aboriginal workforce. The provision of supported places and employment programs such as CDEP have been impacted with changes in

³ P.11 Kimberley workforce development Plan 2014-2017.

⁴ 2036 and beyond a regional investment blueprint for the Kimberley, the Kimberley Development Commission, 2016.

funding and expectations. This offers the Shire an opportunity to provide stable employment and career opportunities for Indigenous employees. It may be worthwhile running programmes to encourage our local Aboriginal people into leadership roles, as there is a clear lack of senior and leadership roles represented by local Aboriginal people within the Shire.

Indigenous Employment at the Shire



Local government is exceeding CoAG targets and leading public and private sectors in engaging Indigenous employees. In 2011, less than 37 per cent of the Shires Indigenous population was participating in the workforce⁵. With total participation rates taken into account, this may indicate that between 13.9 and 14.8 per cent of the Aboriginal population may be working or available for work. Within the Shire, workforce participation rates do not reflect this, with a noticeably higher participation rate of non-Aboriginal persons. The recommendations from The Local Government Workforce and Indigenous Employment National Forum and Showcase in 2015 identify key challenges for engaging indigenous employees that the Shire can focus on in order to increase outcomes and engage more proactively. Challenges that continue to identify as barriers to Aboriginal employment include:

- Barriers to employment for Aboriginal entrants include literacy and numeracy, transport, sporadic schooling history, remote and community living conditions and family commitments and expectations.
- Costs to improve outcomes in Aboriginal employment in Shires are inhibitive. Funding and advocacy bodies are poorly aligned to support local government employment outcomes and fitting to the associated legislative frameworks and expectations on local government.
- Where joint contribution by agencies could go a long way to support outcomes, the differing agenda and KPI structures do not work well together to prioritise employment outcomes. For example, the federally funded Apprentice Support Australia, which does good work to connect

⁵ ABS 2013, Estimates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, June 2011, cat. no. 3238.0.55.001.

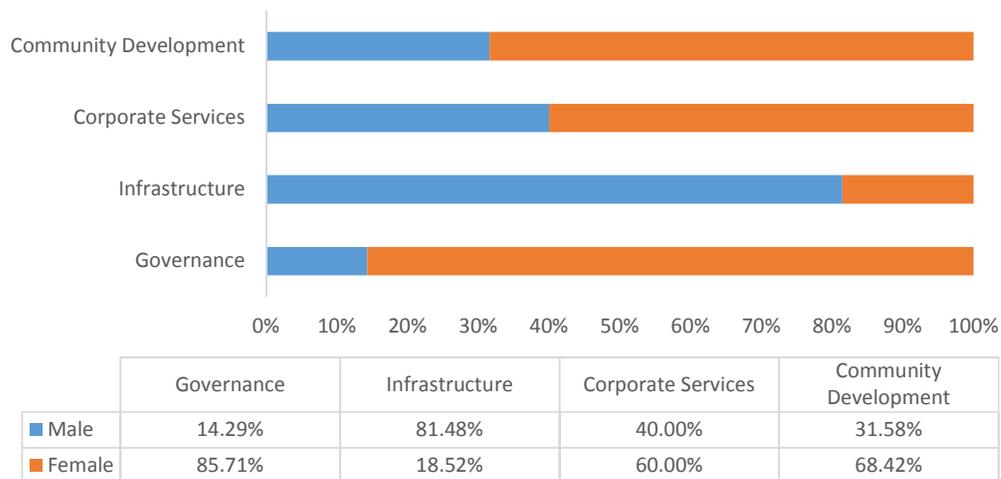
employees and employers, works on points incentives basis for staff around contact with employers, not a long-term, outcome driven basis for individuals supported. Changing the agenda for all involved, or a commitment to long-term outcomes needs to be prioritised.

- The required workload to ensure the success of Aboriginal and young staff in positions often creates high pressure on the staff managing the process, and as local government is generally lean in the Kimberley, the capacity to undertake time intensive programs of this nature is limited. Pastoral care is not an expert area of most Shire staff and this, training capability, and other necessary supports is an area that would be critical to ensuring Aboriginal employment programs were successful and sustainable.

Gender

The gender balance in the Shire is clearly associated with work type, where engineering focussed and physical work is necessary, that work type is generally attracting males, while desk related work is identifying female prevalent positions. Males make up 45 per cent of the workforce and females 55 per cent. This aligns by one per cent to local government averages. Gender balanced teams demonstrate improvements in client retention, customer satisfaction, improve consistent business growth, and, are more likely to show profit.⁶ There is a trend toward local government senior leadership to have a higher proportion of males over 50 represented. Although women in local government are more highly educated than their male peers, they are consistently underrepresented in senior leadership roles, with only 11 per cent holding CEO or general manager positions.⁷ This trend is reflected in current Shire structures.

Gender Balance by Directorate



Investing to balance gender equity in our directorates, particularly in Infrastructure department could improve workforce and economic outcomes for our business⁸.

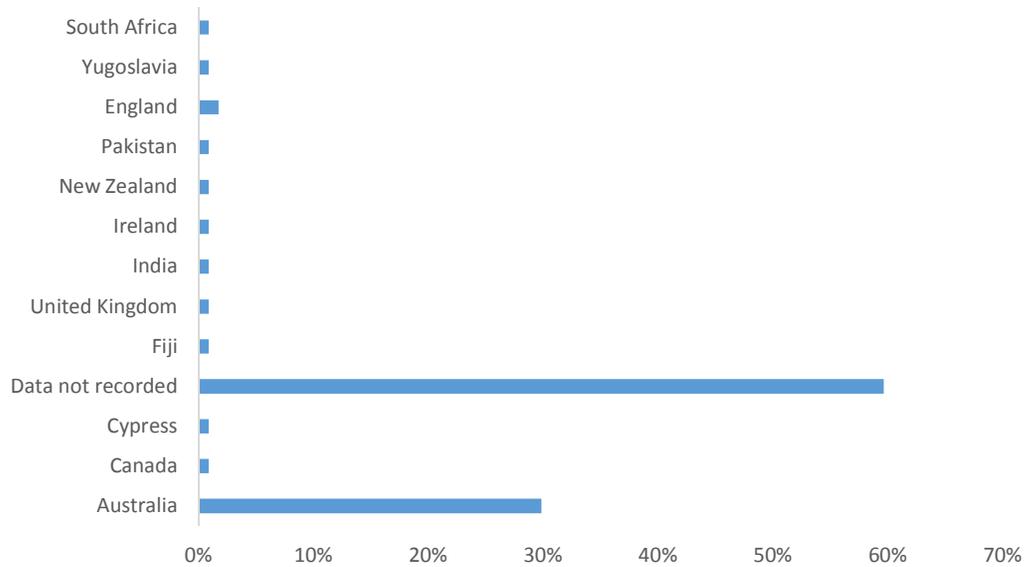
⁶ HBR, why gender balance can't wait, M Landel, March 2016

⁷ Profile-of-the-Local-Government-Workforce, Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government, 2014

⁸ Profile-of-the-Local-Government-Workforce, Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government, 2014

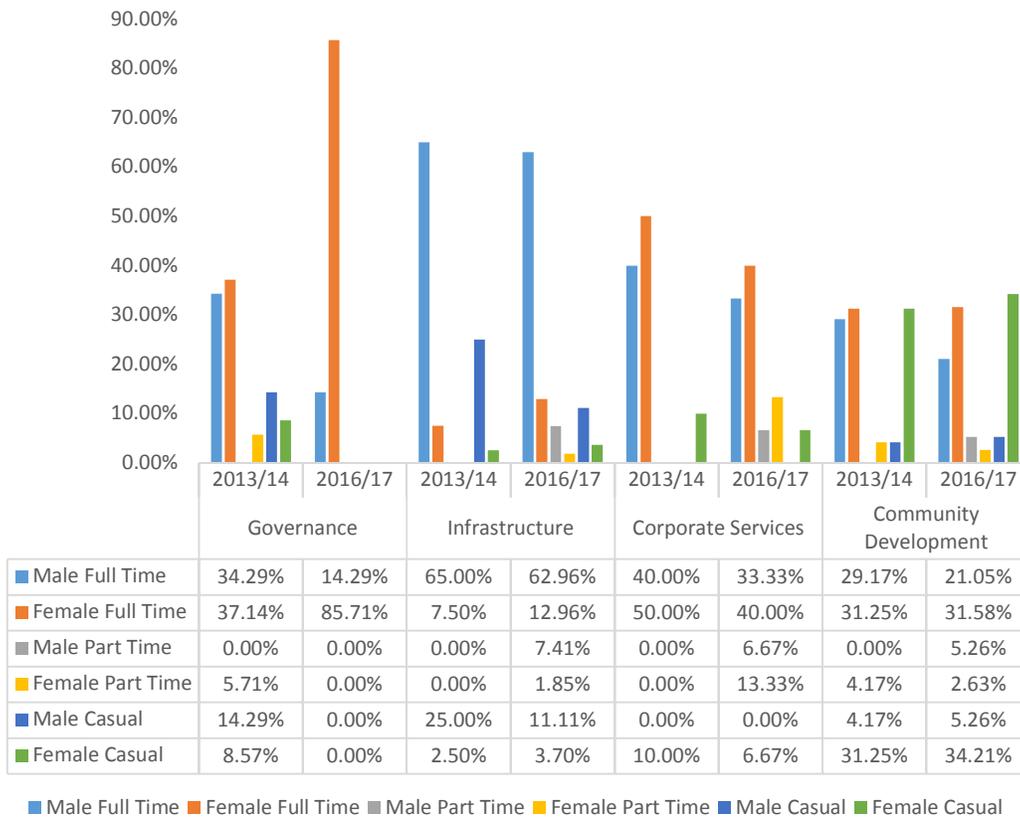
Diversity and Inclusion

Diversity of our Workforce by Nationality



The Shire supports a diverse workplace where staff are valued and recognised for their unique qualities, ideas and perspectives and encouraged to reach their potential. Shire agenda supports diversity through flexible working hours, training and education support and opportunities, promoting and participating in events that support diversity, and, an investment in having an equitable, safe and supportive work environment.

Work Profile Percentages



The Shire generally has full-time roles as is evident above. The casual workforce is prevalent in the area of our gym and pool facility and community related services, and part-time staff are mainly those with responsibilities outside the workplace. There is a clear male centric staffing profile in the Infrastructure Services portfolio. This indicates that working to attract females may positively influence outcomes in that area, although, the physical nature of some roles may not attract female applicants. As our workplace continues to diversify, it is likely that the flexibility and profile of employment will also diversify to meet business and staff needs and improve employment periods.

Employment Influencers

The Employment Market

Skills shortages in local government are similar in those identified in other sectors, and this creates competition. Staff in local government do move within the sector, with over 200,000 local government employees in Australia, there is clear opportunity to attract staff from this talent pool. The connectedness of local government employees offers an opportunity to informally promote working with a particular local government as a workplace, but can also pose risks if a LGA is known to be poorly managed.

Where the Shire identifies skills shortages, so do other business and local government in the region. The approach that may best fit the Shire in this market is to promote as an employer of choice, offering flexible working conditions, career development and civic and community life. Flexibility and career development opportunities do contribute a more diverse workforce and this fits well to those communities the Shire supports.

In offering employment, cost of living needs to be taken into account in our Shire, as it is not equivalent to less regional and remote areas. The Kimberley has an employment rate of 94.6 per cent, indicating employment may be available for those in the market. To be competitive for talent, businesses in the Kimberley do use financial and benefit incentives to attract and retain staff. This may not necessarily make staff stay for longer periods. Internal and external statistics indicate salary and benefits are only partially working to attract our staff and have little influence in retaining them. In recruiting, the Shire offers above average wages and benefits as opposed to urban local governments who have a glut of qualified applicants already in the area and accommodated, and, much higher competition for roles. This affects business capacity to increase staffing in the longer-term, when it is apparent responsive staffing contributions, tailored to community need would improve community outcomes. It is important to ensure that the Shire applies the correct benefits and salaries to positions and ensures that the business and staff achieve productive outcomes without contributing to over pricing positions generally in the region.

The Western Australian population has a lag to the median age, which identifies less young working age residents, and therefore more comparative value in a younger workforce. This trend improves the opportunities in the Shire to employ skilled older workers and to value and grow younger and potentially less available locals. In reality the intent of surveyed metropolitan based Western Australians close to retirement and considering relocation indicated only 8 per cent were considering the Kimberley, and most of them were looking at the South West.

The profile of the organisation needs to be responsive and flexible for our community in workforce planning. Consideration of the mode of delivery also influences our workforce. Where services are internal or externally delivered through contracts, there needs to be robust analysis of the spectra of benefit, including local employment, on those decisions. Related to this is the need to record data on the financial and employment benefits of contracted services to our region and focus on local outcomes in our contract arrangements.

Socio Economic Index's for Areas (SEIFA)

The Shire sits within a SEIFA area of disadvantage. This indicates that the area requires higher levels of funding and services, support for new business opportunity and a clear relationship between socio economic disadvantage and health and education outcomes due to locality and fabric of the region.

Cost of Living

The mean taxable income of the Kimberley was \$57,673 in 2012/13. The ten-year average annual growth rate for the Region was 3.9 per cent; this is slightly below the Regional Western Australia average of 4.3 per cent⁹. The Regional Price Index (RPI) 2015 identified that prices overall rose to be an average of 15.4 per cent higher than Perth. Along with this real household net worth in remote Australia has been falling and this may indicate less resources in our region to consume goods, improve wellbeing and living standards and reduce financial stress¹⁰.

While the RPI rose in 2015, so did the real median weekly household income for the Kimberley which has been rising, and, on average sits around \$200-250 per week higher than the average Australian weekly income. Another demographic in our region relates to inequity in household incomes, or the difference between middle and low-income household income, which is higher than most other areas in Australia but is showing a reduction between income levels¹¹, a positive improvement, which indicates a more equitable spread of the economic benefits of our region as a trend. This may have a relationship to upward trend of disposable income in the non-urban areas of Western Australia¹² of \$38-45 per week.

The Shire supports staff in relation to the cost of living by offering benefits including housing, electricity supplements, water supplements, district allowances, CPI adjustments and salary sacrificing arrangements. The Shire also supports staff by continuing to review other shires with similar profiles and within the region against our remuneration and benefits data, ensuring we fit within similar banding in Awards to positions as those shires, and applying the learnings from the annual local government remuneration review.

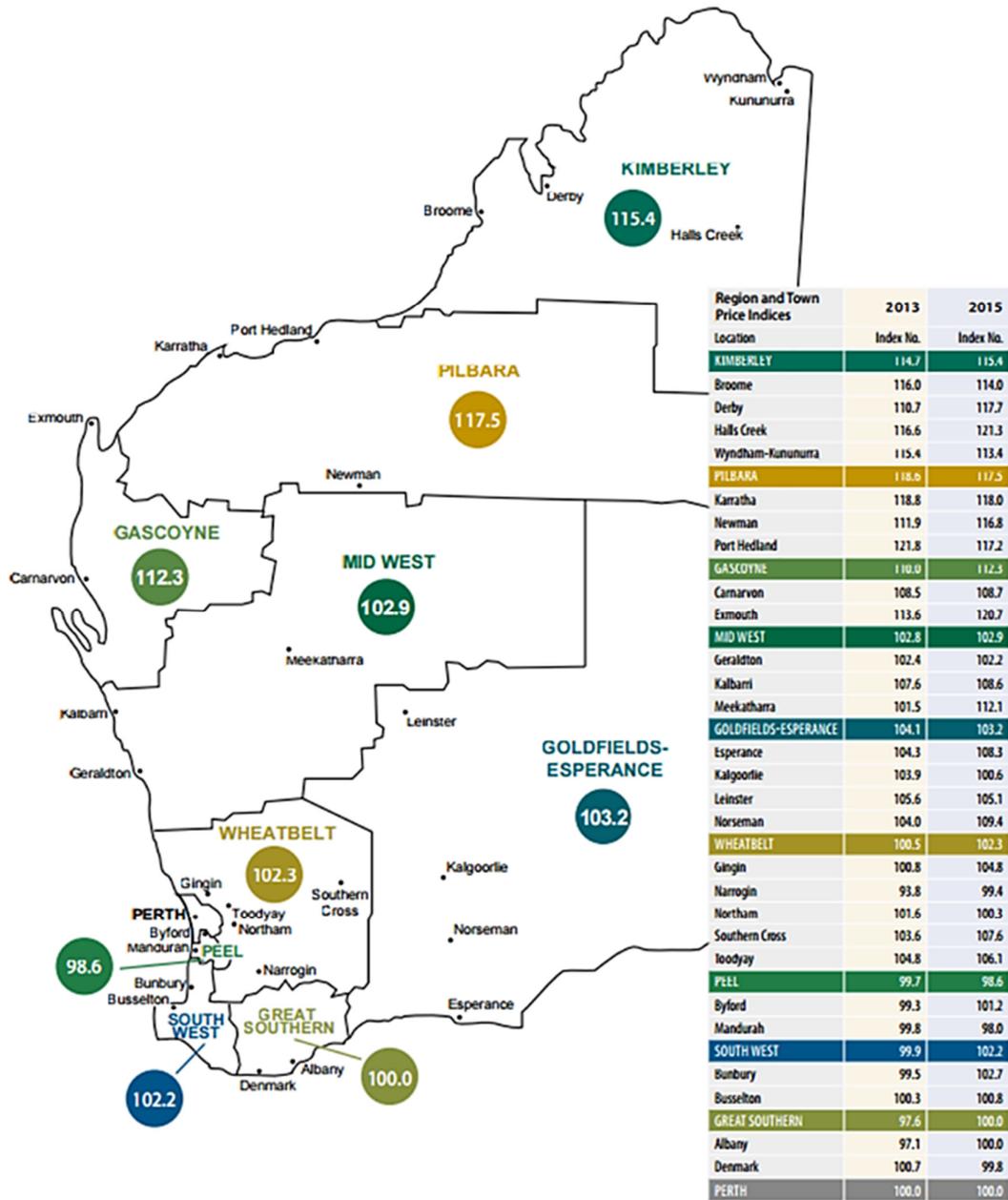
⁹ ABS 2011 Census of Population and Housing, Australian Taxation Office and Department of Regional Development (2010-11)

¹⁰ ABS cat. No. 65230 Household income and income distribution 2013-2014

¹¹ ABS 2011 Census of Population and Housing

¹² ABS survey of income and housing 2007-2008 to 2013-2014.

WA Regional Price Index 2015

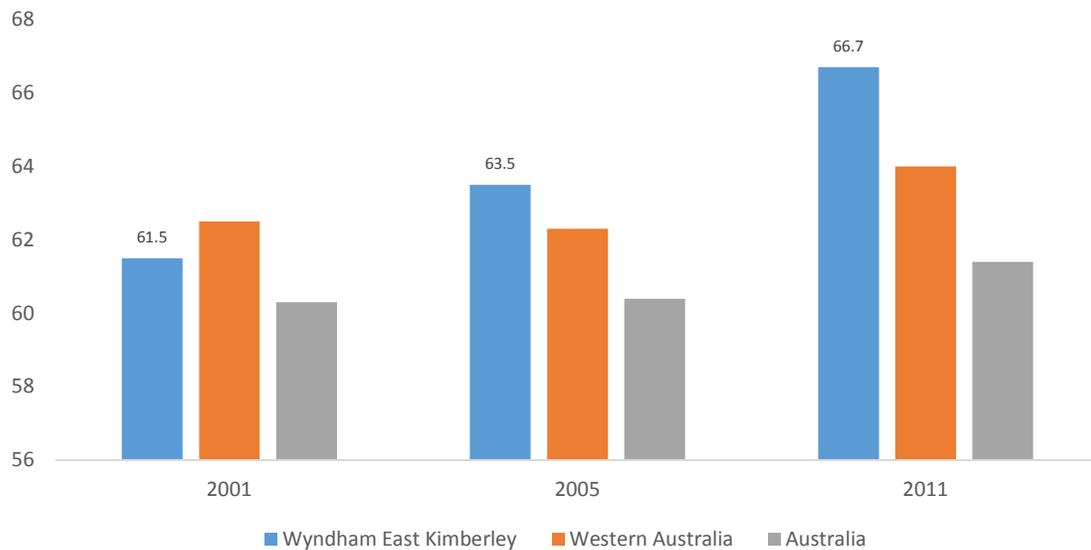


Source: Department of Regional Development, Regional Price Index 2015.

Labour Force Participation

The Shire has an above average labour force participation rate in trend, indicating long term steady increase, but unemployment rates average higher at around 10.6 per cent (2015) showing an increase of 3.9 per cent over the previous five years, and sit around double that of the rest of the state generally. Halls Creek (35.8%) and Derby (25.5%) have significantly higher unemployment rates and Broome's rate is lower at 9 per cent.

Labour Force Participation Comparisons



Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing 2011

Unemployment and Duration of Unemployment

East Kimberley unemployment rates average double that in the state. From 2015-2017 these rates have sat at an average of 8-13 per cent. Unemployment in our Shire is influenced by the availability of a productive economy that provides jobs, training options, social issues and diversity in type and area of available jobs. In 2015 the average time for a person out of work to regain employment in the Kimberley was 48 weeks, an increase of 18 weeks to previous periods. This indicates a clear issue with long-term unemployment and a need to focus on reducing this time to avoid entrenched disadvantage. Another period that unemployment is prevalent is in the age group leaving school, with few skills and limited pathways. The Shire can work with agencies to endeavour to support pathways into employment post school and alignment with training for young employees. It can also work with agencies that support transitioning and training of individuals toward gainful employment.

Internal and External Migration

Approximately 11 per cent of the total population in the Shire has moved from elsewhere in Western Australia each year. This compares to 14 per cent for the Kimberley region. Interstate migrants add another 6 per cent, compared to an 8 per cent total figure for the Kimberley. In households in the Kimberley, 21 per cent speak languages other than English, and an average 6 per cent are migrants.

These figures may be partially due to uptake of employment within the Shire. Engagement of a workforce external to the Shire acts to encourage economic stimulation, grow skills and provide both shorter and longer-term employment benefit, developing a sustainable and diverse local labour market over the longer term¹³. The experience with society and employment in the Shire will influence the length of employment possibly more than salary, and, engaging new entrants to our workforce is critical to increasing our sustainability.

Health and Health Services

Kununurra is a hub for health services and has a large multi service regional hospital. This offers high quality health options and employment opportunities within the Shire. As a regional health supplier the community benefits from those relocating to work at the hospital with families. The same is clear with those relocating to undertake government or law enforcement roles, and the community benefits from the investment of local and new residents due to these industries and employment options. Issues faced in health in regional and remote areas include issues such as higher rates of obesity, psychological distress and smoking. Positively, the regional and remote populations of Australia experience better natural benefits in air quality and environment. The Shire works with our communities in many areas to improve the wellbeing and health options of residents. It is important at the Shire that employees are fit and healthy and this is encouraged by actively applying fit for work principles, offering flu vaccinations, gym membership subsidies, education on health when applicable and Employee Assistance programs.

Tourism and Industry

As a large regional centre, Kununurra, with services and amenities, supports the tourism industry, key to economic development and employment in the Shire. The majority of tourists are domestic, and offering an attractive experience can lead to future investment by tourists as locals. Tourists are able to access health services and this particularly supports the self-sufficient travelers and grey nomads prevalent in the Kimberley.

Western Australia outback consolidated region had the only negative new business entry rate in Western Australia in the period 2014-2015¹⁴. In our region, there is a similar trend to that of the Kimberley with concentrations of employment in regional centers. In order of employment figures these



¹³ Page 4, Population Report No.7, Western Australia Tomorrow, Forecast Profile for the Derby-West Kimberley LGA, Western Australian Planning Commission, 2012.

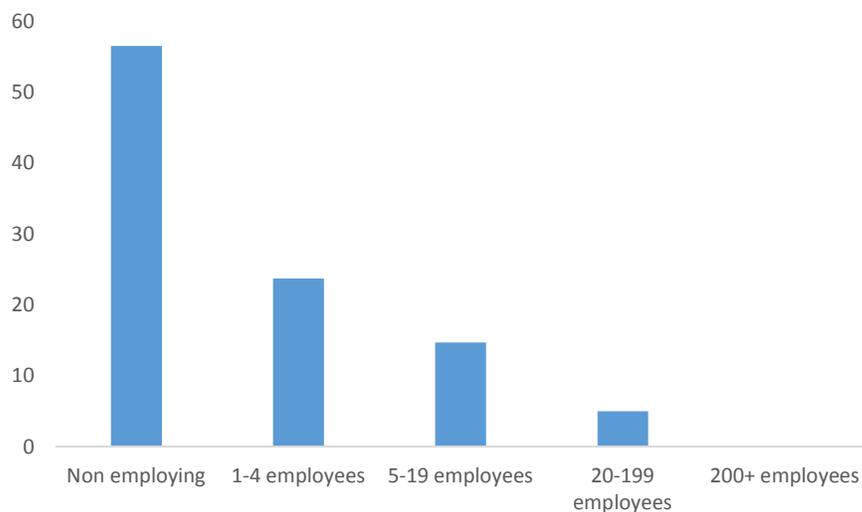
¹⁴ ABS cat. No. 8165.0 Counts of Australian businesses including entries and exits Jun 2011 to June 2015

employment areas are; health care and social assistance, education and training, public administration, accommodation and food services, transport, agriculture, administrative and other services. Areas in the 2006-2011 census data for the Kimberley that reflected reduced employment by industry were health care and social assistance, manufacturing, and most notably for the Shire operations, public administration and safety. The Structural Change index for regional and remote communities in Australia generally is higher than average and in the Kimberley higher than other areas in Western Australia excepting the Pilbara. This identifies that the Kimberley region could be experiencing pronounced phases of industry transition that affects economic outcomes and the speed by which employment and industry outcomes improve.¹⁵

Most employers in the Kimberley are sole proprietors without employees and there are few business models as large as the Shire with 20-199 employees. There is limited opportunity to engage as an employee in our region in organisations with the breadth of business areas that the Shire has to offer and this identifies clearly as an area for our business to grow pathways for the community. Aligning with this, the 2036 Blueprint for the Kimberley identifies engaged relationships within our areas of business as a key transformer for our region:

Enhancing the capability services sector - constructively engage with governments and key service delivery agencies (health, education, housing and workforce development) to ensure they are strong enablers, not barriers, for our regions success.¹⁶

Business Size in the Kimberley by Employees



Source: ABS cat. No. 8165.0 Counts of Australian businesses including entries and exits Jun 2011 to June 2015

In the Shire, the *Regional Centers Development Plan* is a key development that will influence employment, Aboriginal engagement, private investment, international markets and improved agricultural production and infrastructure in the Shire. With a reduction in new business entry in our region in the period of 2014-2015 the potential investment of aquaculture and agriculture related

¹⁵ ABS cat.no. 2073.0 2006/2011 Census of population and housing

¹⁶ 2036 and beyond a regional investment blueprint for the Kimberley, the Kimberley Development Commission, 2017

industry may support a more buoyant employment market in the next five years. Preparing our workforce and operations to engineer this will be important to responsiveness to new associations.

The Shire will continue to actively assist staff to be prepared and engaged with industry related outcomes by seeking associations, knowledge sharing and education that can benefit outcomes to the region. This can be incorporated into professional development activity that is tailored to the needs of the community.

Education and Childcare

The availability of quality education, education choice and childcare is a key factor in engaging and retaining a committed workforce in the Shire. Having a qualification or skill enables workforce entry and improves individual capacity to earn a higher income and improve their standard of living. Rural Western Australia has some of the lowest growth rates in Certificate III qualifications and above for the period 2001-2011 as compared to the rest of Australia. For the Kimberley, this rate was 9.9 per cent, slightly higher than most of remote Western Australia or remote Northern Territory.

The younger workforce (15-24 year olds) in the Kimberley has increasing rates of uptake in employment and education. This sector of our community commonly has periods of unemployment between school and employment, and are at risk of long-term unemployment if opportunities are not available. As a consequence social, economic and future employment opportunities can be negatively influenced for these individuals. Tied to the regions trending shortage of young persons is the associated necessity to develop a replacement workforce. There is a clear need for the Shire to look at various avenues for entry into our workforce for this age group.

The availability of pre-school, primary, secondary and tertiary education choices is limited, but all are available in the area. Finding childcare for new starters is often a case of waitlisting in pre-school and although places are found a period of waiting may impact the new to the region staff if they have parenting responsibilities. Flexibility in arrangements for these periods are available and can support initial engagement in the workplace. This ties to the need to provide multiple career paths and choices, often only possible in larger regional areas like Kununurra or Wyndham to local and non-local employees investing in the Shire. The Shires Strategic Community Plan will cater for increased childcare and in line with this the shire is working to increase child care options in Kununurra and Wyndham.

Lifestyle, Socialisation and Recreation

The attractiveness of the Shire in regard to environment, lifestyle and recreation is often the key reason given as a value in employee and community surveys and in responses from new residents. This value is influential to the wellbeing of employees and leveraging opportunity to support a work life balance that improves outcomes at work and increases advocacy in the value of the Shire.

Shire attractions include Lake Argyle, Five Rivers Lookout (the Bastion), Carboyd Ranges, Celebrity Tree Park, Cockburn Ranges, The Grotto, Drysdale River National Park, Emma Gorge, Gibb River Road, Ivanhoe Crossing, Kelly's Knob, Kununurra Diversion Dam/Lake Kununurra, Lily Lagoons, Mirima National Park, Mitchell River National Park, Ord River Irrigation Area, Ord River, Parry's Lagoon Nature Reserve, Pentecost River, Ragged Range, Wyndham Community Fishing Jetty and Zebedee Springs.

Significant events in the Shire include the Ord Valley Muster, Lake Argyle Swim, Kununurra Agricultural Show, Kimberley Writers Festival, Kununurra Rodeo, Kununurra and Wyndham Races, Stars on the Bastion, and Dam-to-Dam Dingy Dash.

The cost of infrastructure renewal is a challenge in our communities and the expectation of community of the standard, number, and type of facilities will continue to increase. The need to develop more passive and active open spaces will also increase¹⁷. For the Shire this will continue to be a priority ensuring quality social infrastructure and recreational spaces that benefit resident and visitor experience. Currently in development are the Recreation Space Plan, Trails Master Plan and a new Leisure and Aquatic Centre. The 2036 Blueprint for the Kimberly supports this as a transformational agenda:

***Developing our regional centres** - developing vibrant and viable regional centres as a key to supporting population growth and enhancing the Kimberley lifestyle.¹⁸*

Commuting time between work and home is an influencer on stress and wellbeing levels and general life satisfaction. In regional and remote Western Australia, the average commute is between nine and 19 minutes, as compared to an average of 30 minutes in Perth. This contributes greatly to the capacity



¹⁷ Department of Planning WA, Kimberley Regional and Infrastructure Framework Part B.

¹⁸ 2036 and beyond a regional investment blueprint for the Kimberley, the Kimberley Development Commission

for work life balance and the ability to engage in work, social and family activities more quickly after work.

Physical activity is key to overall good health and wellbeing. It also supports socialisation in our communities. Regional and remote Australia report the lowest levels of physical activity in Australia, with remote Australia having the lowest levels of physical activity. These measures have indicated a continued decrease in physical activity over time within regional and remote areas. The Shire supports staff to join the Shire run gym and pool facilities in Wyndham and Kununurra. This will continue to be a well-used and beneficial support offered to the workforce and agenda that increases employee uptake of health, social and wellbeing activity will be part of the Shire's workforce planning.

Sport and recreation are key community priorities in the Shire. Opportunities for all age groups are actively sought out and promoted, although remote communities do not always gain momentum due to transport, available support services and staff and cost. There is an obvious investment in recreational fishing and remote and regional four wheel driving and camping by the local communities in the Shire. There is noticeable cross border relationships between sporting and recreational groups. Along with this recreational facilities in the centres of Kununurra and Wyndham are improving with funding. The population from different cultural and non-local backgrounds also brings in renewal and supports recreational and social activities within the Shire.

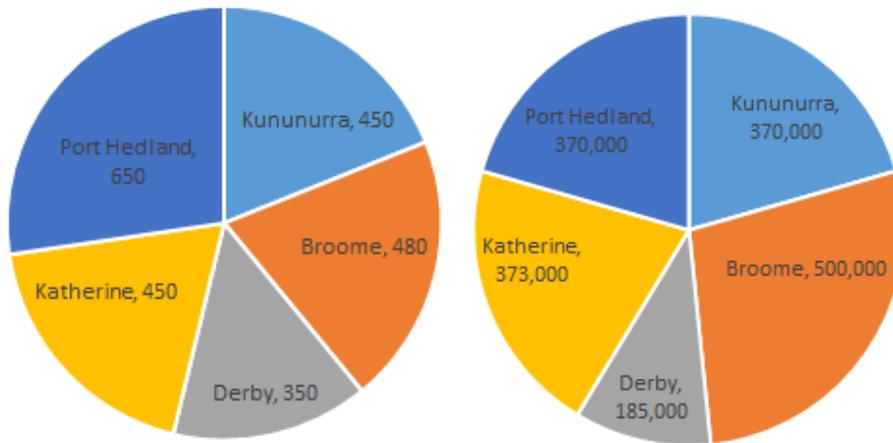
Social activities and interest groups are high relative to population in the Kununurra region, but are limited by population, location and facilities in other areas of the Shire. Support for community organisations is part of Shire funded programming and can go some way to ensuring funding is available to support participation and sustainability of social and recreational groups in the Shire. The Shire continues to prioritise staff engaging in external voluntary activities and community events in various ways and as an organisation in programs externally facing.

Continuing to provide a workforce focussed on supporting provision of quality infrastructure, services, advocacy provision, youth, and social and community activities that is flexible and able to meet the needs of the community remains a challenge. Often the roles in more remote areas that support these activities are limited in financial support which results in employees working part time or in isolation. Recreational roles, due to the nature of timing for activities can also be limited to casual or part time work options. Ways to improve workforce interactivity, sharing of workloads and hours of work, where appropriate, to meet sustainable levels where this is impacting continuity and sustainability are a focus in future workforce planning within the Shire. Collaboration between agencies and business related to these areas of activity could also act to improve outcomes for employees facing these challenges.

Housing

Property prices in the Kimberley have fallen over the past five years, but prices generally remain high for real property value due to competition or unwillingness to sell at lower prices, resulting in properties in regional centers remaining unsold for longer periods. Unlike the Kimberley trend, reasonable housing under \$300,000 is available in Kununurra, and there is no shortage of houses to purchase or rent.

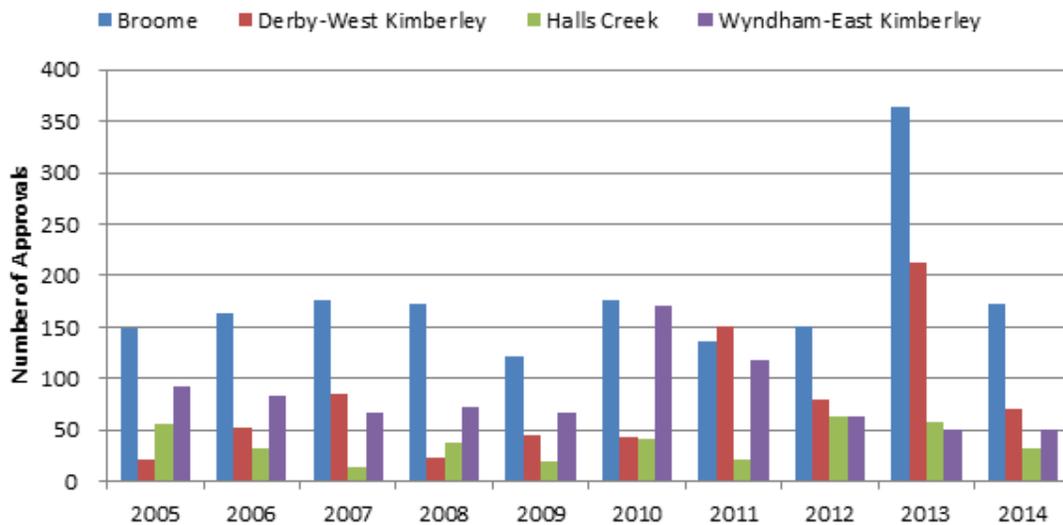
Rental and House Price Comparisons



Source: REIWA property market report WA, June 2017.

Kununurra, Derby, Halls Creek, Port Hedland and Katherine have low demand housing markets, Broome has an average housing market. Where Derby and Halls Creek have limited rentals and houses for sale, both Broome and Kununurra have a reasonable proportion of mixed type properties for rent and sale in townships, but proportionally less land release or dwelling approvals per capita. Kununurra is not currently subject to the competition for housing that is experienced in Broome, Derby and Halls Creek but Wyndham does have housing rental pressures. In all of these locations, the availability of rural land is limited, and often sold at premium due to this, reducing lifestyle choices for residents.¹⁹

Residential Dwelling Approvals



Source: Department of Regional Development and the Australian Bureau of Statistics 2015

Ways to ensure household formation, enjoyment and potential economic gain for families in relation to the rural aspects of living in the Shire are enhanced by the surrounding natural environment and the available green spaces and recreational facilities within townships. Increased availability of a breadth

¹⁹ Landcorp's Expert Position Paper - Townsite Land Supply and Challenges for the Future

of land zoning may improve investment by future employees and grow sustainable outcomes for the Shire. Tied to this are the key elements set out by the Western Australian Planning Commission on livable neighborhoods²⁰, which, when approached in regard to retaining and gaining the Shire’s workforce, will significantly improve outcomes for a sustainable and invested workforce. Elements in this agenda include; a sense of community, local identity and place in design; development density and choice; diversity in housing; location and distribution of necessary infrastructure; employment locations, self-containment and availability; increased safety through community and infrastructure surveillance, facilities for education, health and social engagement; business outlets; cultural and recreational opportunities, and maximizing opportunities for residents.

Comparative Rent and Purchase Prices

Location	Median Rent	Median Purchase
Kununurra	450	370,000
Broome	480	500,000
Derby	350	185,00
Katherine	450	373,000
Port Hedland	650	370,000

Source: Real Estate Institute of WA (REIWA) Median Weekly Rental Rate by WA Town – December Quarter 2013

Technology

The Kimberley and Gascoyne regions of Western Australia continue to have similar household internet connectivity to that of regional and remote Northern Territory with the lowest levels of access in Australia²¹. Improvements in communications, technology and associated internet capabilities will increase the capacity of the Shire in the workplace and for community and employees. Where relocation may have previously reduced the capacity to engage with family, due to restrictive price or network coverage or speed, the Shire has seen improvements and in larger centres, and in regional areas, the capacity to access communication channels will remain a priority. Technology has also improved supply chains and the availability of online products offering the same breadth of choice as metropolitan counterparts, if not at the same speed as those living in cities. Critical to opportunities for residents, and in demand in the region, is online education streams, which have reduced barriers to education and training significantly since introduction. This can only improve with the rollout of the National Broadband Network in the region over the 2017-2018 period. Technology in the form of video conferencing and communication has improved collaboration within the Shire and has significantly reduced travel costs and time to attend meetings. The requirement for our staff to remain computer literate and grow expertise in software application will only increase as the use of technology for work purposes increases.

²⁰ Livable Neighborhoods operational policy, Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC) 2015

²¹ ABS Census of Population and Housing, cat. No. 2073.0, 2006

Transport

The Shire benefits from having a regional airport in Kununurra, linking to Broome and Perth to the south and Darwin to the North. This ensures relatively fast connections across Australia and the airport is set to expand both services and infrastructure in the future. Public transport in townships is limited to either long distance bus services or personal use vehicles. Thirteen per cent of households in the Kimberly do not have personal transport²².

Transport is key to residential and employee enjoyment of many of these rural and environmental experiences and there are limited transport options. This identifies a need for residents to have access to private transportation and may limit the experience of those unable to afford personal transport, new Australians who are yet to gain a license, and those under the driving age.



Transport to and from work for those without personal transport options is also a challenge in the Shire, even when residents are within town precincts due to the spread of townships in general in the Shire, particularly in Kununurra. In the Kimberley only 3 per cent of the population use public transport to

commute to work, 59 per cent use private transport, 29 percent use walking or bicycle and 6 per cent work from home, with other transport making up the total²³.

Staff relocating to work with the Shire do face periods of time without transport on occasion, a review of how overcoming this, either by arrangements with rental companies, carpooling or other methodology could reduce the issues staff have getting to work regularly, or for initial engagement as an employee.

²² ABS Census of Population and Housing, cat. No. 2065.0, 2006

²³ ABS Census of Population and Housing, cat. No. 2065.0, 2006

Workforce Plan 2017-2027



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