Managing our greatest asset: Our people

Key to our success is an organisational culture that genuinely lives within all tiers of the organisation. Culture is the collection of values, attitudes and practices that characterise how our organisation operates and guides all employees toward a common organisational intent. Expectations are defined in our organisational charter and instilled in our employees through a clear, credible, comprehensive and consistent approach.

Turn to page 4 to view the complete organisational charter.
for our organisation.

Our community sets our purpose of everything we do. Improving our community lies at the heart of everything we do.

Our community services are led by the Chief Executive Officer, Stuart Randle. He was appointed Chief Executive Officer in May 2011. His extensive experience includes CEO positions at three local governments in Queensland and 10 years as Director of Engineering in three others.

Counsellor qualifications and memberships include:
- Arts & Culture
- Disaster & Emergency Management
- Community Well-being
- Fleet & Property
- Customer Relations
- Information Services
- Technology
- Environmental Health
- Animal Management

In addition to the strategic management of the organisation, the Office of the CEO responsibilities encompass:
- Council Meeting
- Management
- Governance functions
- Human Resources
- Workplace Health & Safety
- Business Improvement
- Economic Development
- Disaster & Emergency Management

The Chief Executive Officer ensures the smooth running of the organisation, overseeing all aspects of business management and ensuring the best possible outcomes for the community.

13 Managers
27 Coordinators
6564

19 Work Divisions set within 45 Teams, made up of 572 Officers.
Council employs 609 full time equivalent staff to serve and improve our community. Our approach to all that we do at Gladstone Regional Council is grounded in our core value of respect. We pride ourselves in showing respect for our community, for our environment and for each other. We believe that this approach is key to ensuring that our people start each working day with a sense of purpose and finish each working day with a sense of accomplishment.

Turn to page 4 to view Council’s organisational charter, which defines who we are and guides how we work.
Workforce Profile

Employee Tenure

Employee Age Profile

Working Hours Lost from Injury

Management Team Gender Distribution

Annual Employee Turnover

Employee Age Profile

See page 74 for the complete employee safety report.

Our Workforce

Employee Turnover (Number)

Employee Turnover (%)

Movement of Prior Year (%)

Legend

Target

Movement on prior year

+12% -16% +3% -3% +0.6%

2011/12 2012/13 2013/14 2014/15 2015/16

2011/12 2012/13 2013/14 2014/15 2015/16

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See page 74 for the complete employee safety report.

Management Team Gender Distribution

Legend

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Movement on prior year

+12% -16% +3% -3% +0.6%

2011/12 2012/13 2013/14 2014/15 2015/16

2011/12 2012/13 2013/14 2014/15 2015/16

2011/12 2012/13 2013/14 2014/15 2015/16
In 2015/16, we recognised the following years of service:

- 26 employees for 10 years of service
- 11 employees for 15 years of service
- Damien Dodd, Kevin Jeffery, Jo-Anne Schuler and Brian White, each for 20 years of service
- Michael Barbeler, Graham Buettel, Robyn McCarthy, Stacey McNelley, Neil Nicoll, Christine Secker, Rodney Storey and Jo Webb, each for 25 years of service
- Mercedes Heymer for 30 years of service
- Ray Andrews and Bill Rashleigh, each for 35 years of service
- Robbie Webb for 40 years of service

That represents a cumulative total of 870 years of service from those long-serving employees. In total, our entire employee body offers a cumulative total of 4909 years of service and experience to our organisation.

We recognise that the performance of our organisation is largely dependent on our employees to deliver quality services to our community. We celebrate all of our long-serving employees in recognition of their vital contribution to our success as an organisation, with ceremonies held for years of service ranging from 10 years to 40 years.

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AN EMPLOYER OF CHOICE

Recruitment statistics illustrate that Gladstone Regional Council is an organisation that people want to be a part of. In 2015/16 Council received 4,066 job applications, which represents an average of 37 applications per vacancy.

Our recruitment processes facilitate recruitment decision making that is unbiased, impartial and objective and respects and recognises cultural diversity within the organisation.

Transparent and merit-based recruitment practices are well supported by trained selection panel members who recognise that job seekers have the right to be considered for any jobs for which they are suitably qualified and skilled.

Council is recognised as an employer of choice providing long term employment stability within the Gladstone Region, providing excellent employment opportunities coupled with flexibility, highly regarded remuneration and superannuation, and training and development opportunities for its employees.

The employee turnover rate for 2015/16 was 14.4 per cent. The lowest rate was 0.6 per cent for the month of May 2016, and the highest rate 2.8 per cent in August 2015.

Council views employee turnover as having the potential to provide positive change for the organisation. Council will continue to benefit from new employees who bring with them new perspectives, knowledge, skills and different experiences to offer the organisation.

HUMAN RESOURCE INFORMATION SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS

The human resource information system (HRIS) forms the technological backbone of Council’s human resources administration and management. To that end, Council seeks to prioritise continuous improvement in its use and the best possible utilisation. Council’s HRIS of choice is Aurion.

In an effort to achieve efficiency gains, online web recruitment was launched in January 2015. The new system offers streamlined online automated application and selection processing.

Web recruitment has proven to be successful in eliminating double handling of information; dramatically decreasing the resources previously used such as the amount of printing and paper consumption and improved recruitment timeframes.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT IN HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Due to the ever-changing environment of human resource management it is essential that Council remains abreast of the laws governing the employment relationship between employer and employees.

With this in mind, Council improved the existing disciplinary action practices with the emphasis and focus on consistency in what we do, and how we do it and to further support any disciplinary decisions required. This process is supported by a new Internal Investigations Flow Chart, which offers a visual guideline as to the process.

In addition, a Disciplinary Outcome Risk Matrix was developed in order to guide the way forward in disciplinary matters.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Learning and development is a crucial part of ensuring the sustainability of our workforce and is a priority for the internal management of the organisation. Council recognises that developing a robust workforce facilitates the delivery of operational and corporate goals to our community.

Council also acknowledges that investing in personal and professional development of employees enhances employee morale, fosters a sense of employee loyalty and inspires employees to achieve their best. Additionally, strategic training planning has the potential to reduce organisational risks and improve the quality of organisational performance.

Council actively supports employees undertaking tertiary study, which will benefit the employee in their current role and will enrich their personal and professional development. Such a broad range of knowledge will undoubtedly serve the organisation well going forward.

Council placed emphasis on capturing mandatory, corporate and developmental training components and skills within the organisation. This, combined with the position description project (refer to page 73) will allow Council to undertake a gap analysis for each employee, team and directorate with regard to matching mandatory training requirements in accordance with position description requirements. The ultimate target is to achieve 100 per cent completion for mandatory training across the organisation.

Council introduced an e-learning platform, which has enabled many of the mandatory training requirements to be delivered via a self-service training platform.

In addition, a vast array of developmental training options were included on the platform. The platform allows 24/7 access to e-learning courses.

Overall, there were 2552 attendances recorded at training sessions across Council in 2015/16. This equates to 17 employees participating in training, each training day.
LOOKING AHEAD

With all position descriptions across Council up to date, Council will turn its focus on some key programs going forward. Initiatives will include the introduction of an in-house mentoring program; a talent development program as part of a succession planning approach; a Managers Support Club and further enhancement and development of the e-learning platform.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Council continues to advocate for equal employment opportunity (EEO) as an employer of choice and as a community leader. The Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policies were reviewed in support of legislative compliance and best practice for EEO.

Council abides by robust policies to assist employees to comply with the requirements of the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 and other relevant legislation and to promote equality of opportunity for all.

Council maintains a network of qualified EEO Support Officers. These 18 officers, located throughout the organisation, are available to assist employees in matters surrounding EEO and offer support and advice where required.

In 2015/16 Council introduced ‘New SUPERvisor’ training in addition to Selection Panel Training in order to further educate and provide an awareness of how supervisor and panel member roles and actions contribute to Council’s commitment to and support of EEO principles and legislation.

EMPLOYEE CODE OF CONDUCT

Council’s Code of Conduct Policy, underpinned by the Public Sector Ethics Act 1994, was revised in October 2015 and is built upon the four ethics principles and values identified as essential for good public administration:

- integrity and impartiality
- promoting the public good
- commitment to the system of government
- accountability and transparency.

The policy applies to our employees, volunteers and contractors.

Throughout 2015/16, 599 employees received training in the fundamental principles of the Code of Conduct policy with all new employees undergoing the training on their first day of employment as part of the corporate orientation.

LOOKING AHEAD

Going forward, Code of Conduct refresher training will be rolled out in 2017.

MOVING FORWARD WITH AWARD MODERNISATION

The Attorney-General and Minister for Justice placed a request that the Vice President of the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission undertake award modernisation.

Queensland was one of only two states that had not yet undergone award modernisation, a process which was also undertaken at the federal level by the former Labor government in 2008/09.

The decision that one award will apply in Queensland was truly a landmark decision for local government industrial relations resulting in the repeal of 18 Awards.

The modernisation process is not yet finalised and one award for Queensland Local Governments is not yet implemented. Gladstone Regional Council acknowledged in 2014 that a lot of work will be required and a strategy would need to be developed for the transition of Council’s current classification scale to the classification scale in the Modern Award.

THE POSITION DESCRIPTION PROJECT

As a direct result of the impending award modernisation of Qld Local Government, awards, Council embarked on a major Position Description Project in January 2015 with the objective to map every position in council’s structure against its governing award, ensuring positions are classified appropriately and that every position in Council had a current Position Description.

A major improvement to the position descriptions was the addition of mandatory training requirements for positions. The position description is the foundation document that feeds council’s mandatory training matrix and this inclusion in position descriptions will assist council to identify employee skills gap and used to develop an employee’s learning and development plan ensuring our employees are job ready and fully trained in their position at Council.

During the project, 661 positions were placed under review with a total of 500 position descriptions approved for future use by the organisation. Council now has position descriptions for multiple ‘like’ positions. This represents an efficiency gain in the form of reduced position description maintenance on multiple position descriptions and will ultimately reduce maintenance errors.

To support the integrity of the position description, a new corporate standard was approved and implemented in October 2015. The standard provides guidance and advice on the preparation and review of all position descriptions within the organisation.
Employee Safety

Delivering services to our community in the safest way possible remains a chief priority for Council. This philosophy is clearly reflected in the excellent safety results achieved throughout 2015/16.
Safety Highlights

- Reduction in workers compensation costs of 32 per cent
- Reduction in lost time workers compensation claims of 26 per cent
- Reduction in average days lost on workers compensation claims of 29 per cent
- Overall workplace incident reduction of seven per cent
- On-site physiotherapy utilisation rate > 95 per cent

Council achieved a 48 per cent reduction in the number of hours of work and the number of days and hours that were lost as a result of workplace injury when compared to the previous year.

Council has achieved a five-year reduction of 385 per cent and a nine-year reduction of 940 per cent.

Council achieved a 24 per cent reduction in the average days lost per approved claim when compared to the previous year.

Council has achieved a five-year reduction of 67 per cent and a nine-year reduction of 78 per cent.

Council achieved a reduction of 21 per cent of the cost of workers compensation when compared to the previous year.

Council has achieved a five-year reduction of 68 per cent.

Council achieved a reduction in the three most common mechanisms of injury: Sprains and strains reduced by 26 per cent, minor wounds reduced by 16 per cent and contusion and bruising by five per cent when compared to 2014/15.
Council’s safety vision is to embed a positive safety culture through proactive health and safety leadership teamed with a suite of user friendly practical tools accessible by all of our employees. Safety is not just a tag line for the organisation, it is ingrained in the approach to every task we undertake.

The results of this approach speak volumes: In 2015/16 there was a marked improvement in the safety performance of the organisation that was brought about by a series of strategic initiatives, with Council’s safety vision at the core.

Council’s biggest challenge in the area of employee safety was to continue the trend of reducing our lost days as a result of workplace injury and continue to reduce workers compensation claims.

Local Government Safety Software (LOGOSS) continued to be the vehicle to drive Council’s early intervention program by providing detailed statistical analysis. LOGOSS accommodates continuous improvement by way of enabling real-time trend analysis.

Analysing trends as they occur provides scope to develop and implement interventions almost instantaneously, which keeps our employees safer. Analysis of this data enables informed decision-making around early intervention programs that deliver improvements to employee well-being.

One of these early intervention initiatives entered its third year of success through the continued partnership with local organisation, KINNECT to provide free access to physiotherapy treatment for those employees suffering work or non-work related injuries or discomforts.

The program proved warranted with 100 per cent of the 500 sessions on offer having been utilised throughout 2015/16, compared to 98 per cent utilisation in 2014/15. Scheduled on-site physiotherapy services were also well-utilised by our employees.

These programs form some of the tools in Council’s early intervention program, and the results continue to prove promising.

Council’s annual average frequency rate for lost time injuries was lower than the average for all Council’s under the Local Government Workcare Scheme (that is, nine versus 10, respectively), the comparative average number of days lost per claim was lower, at nine days compared to 13 days in 2014/15.

This indicates that the early intervention program not only has a positive impact on the well-being of employees, but also continues to positively impact Council’s bottom line in reducing financial costs associated with safety.

The combination of system abilities, improved safety culture and processes to manage risk, incidents, return to work and safety management has directly contributed to the concrete, quantifiable benefits for Council and its employees.

In order to further embed and celebrate Council’s safety culture, Council will launch Health and Safety Awards to coincide with Safe Work Week in 2016. Award categories will include:

- Best solution to an identified work health and safety issue
- Best work health and safety practices within a specified theme
- Best individual contribution to work health and safety
- Most significant improvement to work health and safety performance
- Best demonstrated leadership in work health and safety

The awards are geared towards recognising individuals and teams for initiative, ingenuity and leadership in the field of safety in our continued effort to achieve our safety vision.
Council’s workers compensation costs have seen a steady downward trend over the previous five years, as depicted in the graph below. This is not only an excellent result for Council’s bottom line, but more importantly, it speaks to the safety of our workforce.

In 2010, Council recorded a significant increase in workers compensation costs. After analysis, it was found that this increase was primarily associated with musculoskeletal injuries. This was further evidenced in 2011 and compounded by a 10 per cent increase in musculoskeletal injuries and 47 per cent increase in workers compensation costs.

In 2012 Council placed a heavy emphasis on improving our workers compensation position. This required a complete shift in safety mindset, targeting employee engagement and a clinical focus on improving Council’s injury rate.

Council engaged the assistance of the local branch of occupational health service provider, KINNECT, in early 2013 to provide on-site physiotherapy services with the aim of reducing the increasing rate of musculoskeletal injuries and days lost following injury. In conjunction with this approach, a targeted training program in workplace ergonomics was undertaken to as part of an employee education strategy with a focus on correct methods of approaching high risk manual tasks.

At the completion of the third full year since the inception of council’s early intervention programs, council has achieved a reduction in its workers compensation bottom line of 71 per cent.