



# Workforce Management Strategy

2025-2029



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CONTRIBUTIONS

Edward River Council extends its appreciation to each person who has contributed to the development and design of our Workforce Management Strategy 2025-2029.



## **Disclaimer**

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# INTRODUCTION





Edward River Council is committed to having the right people in the right roles to deliver for our community. This Workforce Management Strategy outlines our priorities over the next four years and supports the long-term planning of our workforce under the IP&R Framework.

**Our focus is on five key strategic priorities:**

1	Attract, develop, and retain a skilled and future-ready workforce	Find the right people and make Council a place where they want to stay and grow
2	Build a safe, diverse, and inclusive workplace culture	Build a culture where everyone feels included, respected, and motivated
3	Strengthen workplace culture through health, well-being, engagement, and work-life harmony	Support the physical and mental wellbeing of all staff, every day
4	Develop and empower employees through structured learning and leadership initiatives	Help everyone learn, grow, and be ready for what's next
5	Ensure robust policies, processes, and systems	Make sure our systems, processes, and support are strong and work well for everyone





**Aligned with our Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program, and Operational Plan, this strategy addresses:**

**An Ageing Workforce**

Creating a need to plan for knowledge transfer and manage the impact of future retirements

**Skills Gaps/Shortages**

The skills we need and the skills available in the workforce, affecting service delivery and innovation

**Succession Planning**

We risk losing critical knowledge and leadership capability when employees leave

**Opportunities to Create and Retain positions for local people**

Helps strengthen our community, reduce skills shortages, and boost regional economic growth

**Employee Well-being**

Maintaining a healthy, engaged, and productive workforce

**Workforce Diversity**

Enriches our organisation with broader perspectives, and stronger community connections



## Acronyms

Term	Definition
<b>CSP</b>	<b>Community Strategic Plan</b> This is the community's plan and identifies the long term (10 years) aspirations of the community.
<b>DP</b>	<b>Delivery Program</b> This Council's commitment to deliver against the community's aspirations over the term of the elected representatives. (4 years)
<b>OP</b>	<b>Operational Plan</b> This is Council's annual plan aligned to the Delivery Program and the annual budget is prepared in alignment with this plan.
<b>IP&amp;R</b>	<b>Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework</b> As defined within the Local Government Act 1993.
<b>WMS</b>	<b>Workforce Management Strategy</b> This is Council's commitment to building and supporting a capable, resilient workforce to deliver community outcomes over the term of the elected representatives (4 years).





## Council's Values

Edward River Council's, values (LEAD) are at the core of what we do.

Our values guide our expectations of:

- behaviour;
- leadership;
- how we go about our work;
- how we engage with the community and others;
- the decisions we make;
- and should be reflected in our everyday actions, regardless of position or tenure with Council



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Edward River community acknowledges the Wamba Wamba/Perrepa Perrepa peoples, who are the traditional custodians of the Edward River lands. We acknowledge their enduring connection to this land and pay our respects to their elders: past, present, and emerging.





## Organisational Structure



## Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

As part of our legislative responsibilities under the Local Government Act 1993, all councils are required to prepare a suite of documents that support the outcomes of the (IP&R) Framework.

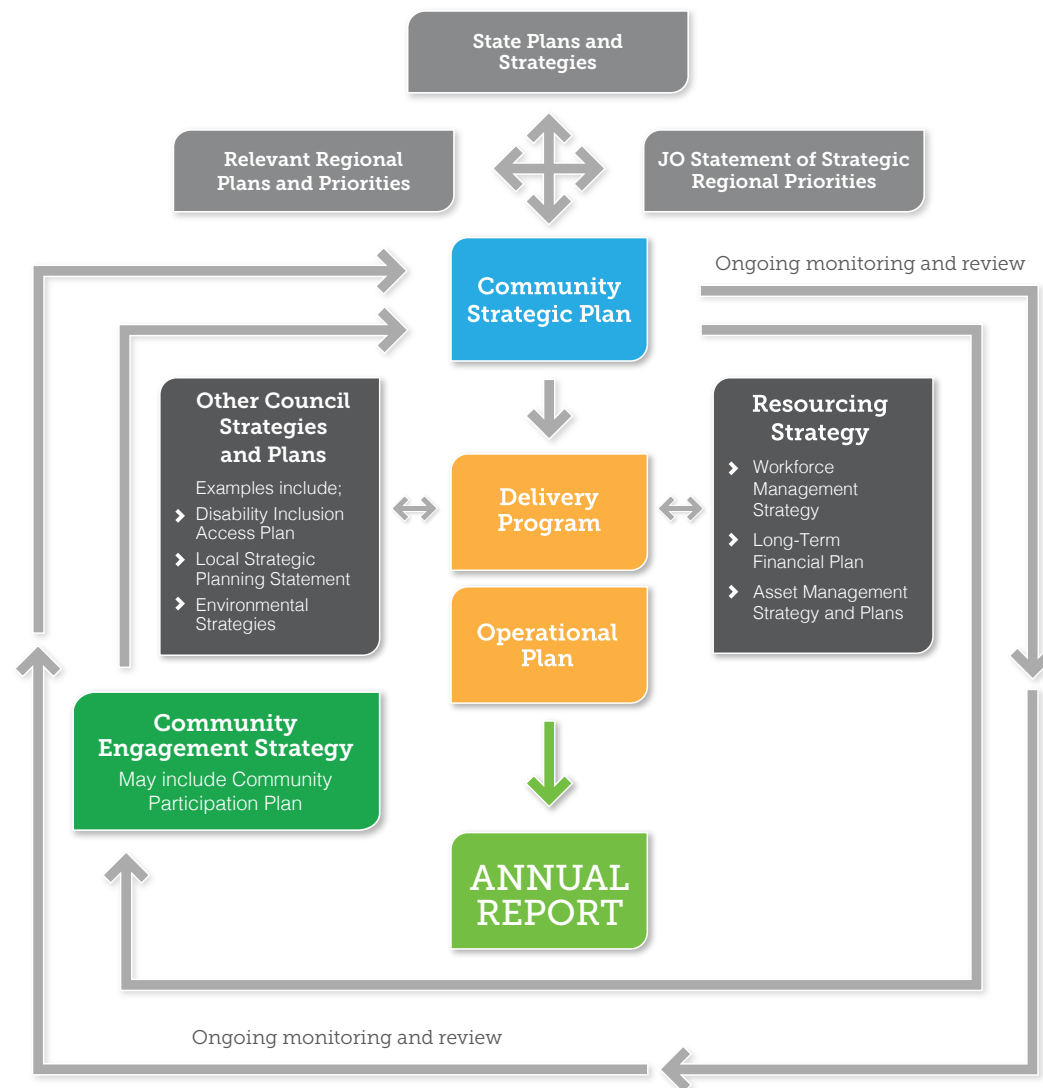
The Workforce Strategy forms part of the Resource Strategy which demonstrates how Council will deliver against their commitments of the Delivery Program.

The Workforce Strategy outlines how future staffing and skills requirements will be met, such as through recruitment, staff progression and development and succession planning.

### Embedding Workforce Planning in Council Culture

The strategy not only aligns with the IP&R Framework but also demonstrates how workforce planning contributes directly to local outcomes. This strategy will be embedded through annual workforce planning actions, aligned with operational planning cycles. Progress will be reviewed annually, with updates reported to EMT, leadership and integrated into Council's reporting framework. Regular monitoring will ensure our workforce initiatives remain responsive, measurable against our action plan, DP, and OP, and aligned with the needs of both our employees and community.

The framework is shown in the diagram below.





# WHERE WE ARE NOW

In accordance with legislative requirements, Edward River Council has undertaken an early review of the Workforce Management Strategy following the election of a new Council. Over the past two years, Edward River Council has made significant progress in aligning our workforce with strategic priorities. The 2023–2025 implementation phase has delivered the following key achievements.

## Organisational Design

- **Organisational Restructure** - A successful restructure ensured our workforce structure supported service delivery priorities, improving clarity, accountability, and operational effectiveness.
- **Impact:** Enabled quicker decision-making, reduced duplication, and improved service delivery to the community.
- **Workforce Planning and Position Reviews** - Priority roles were identified, and position descriptions were rewritten with a strong focus on accountability and alignment with Council's strategic direction.
- **Impact:** Ensured our workforce is fit for purpose and aligned with long-term organisational needs.
- **Recruitment for Priority Roles** - We actively recruited for key roles, though not all positions were successfully filled, highlighting continued challenges in attraction and competitiveness in regional recruitment.
- **Impact:** Reinforced the need for targeted workforce strategies to address ongoing regional recruitment challenges.

## Capability & Culture

- **People and Culture Framework** - A comprehensive framework was developed, focusing on workforce attraction, retention, and development to future-proof our organisation.
- **Impact:** Strengthened our ability to attract and keep great people, reducing turnover and building capability.
- **Induction and Onboarding** - A revised program, including a two-day onsite induction and online pre-start modules via our new e-learning platform, Elmo, was implemented to ensure consistency and engagement from day one.
- **Impact:** Improved new starter experience and engagement, with faster integration into the workplace.
- **Consultative Committee** - A revised Consultative Committee was introduced, and all members were trained in their responsibilities and the consultative process, promoting a more constructive and collaborative workplace culture.
- **Impact:** Strengthened communication and trust between employees and management, supporting better decision-making.

## Systems and Policy

- **Accountability Framework** - A Council-wide framework was introduced, clearly defining roles and expectations, and strengthening performance and responsibility across all levels.
- **Impact:** Created a shared understanding of responsibilities, leading to more consistent outcomes and increased staff confidence.
- **Policy and Procedure Development** - A suite of new and updated People and Culture policies and procedures was introduced and embedded into everyday operations.
- **Impact:** Enhanced clarity and compliance, ensuring staff understand expectations and processes.
- **Salary System Review** - We reviewed our salary system and developed a new policy to improve equity, transparency, and alignment with workforce priorities.
- **Impact:** Increased employee trust and fairness in pay, helping to support retention and motivation.

## Leadership Development

- **Leadership and Recruitment Training** - People leaders were trained in best practice recruitment, performance management, and procedural compliance to lift capability and consistency across the organisation.
- **Impact:** Improved quality of hiring decisions and management practices, reducing risk and increasing team performance.
- **Leadership Development** - A successful leadership program has been delivered annually for directors, managers, supervisors, and emerging leaders to strengthen our leadership pipeline.
- **Impact:** Built internal leadership capability, succession readiness, and stronger workplace culture.
- **Performance and Development Program** - A new process and documentation were created to align with the Integrated Planning & Reporting (IP&R) framework. Leaders were trained in conducting meaningful reviews, supported by a professional development tool to capture outcomes.
- **Impact:** Empowered employees to grow and contribute to strategic goals, with clearer development pathways.

These initiatives demonstrate our commitment to building a capable, accountable, and future-ready workforce and laid the foundation for the five strategies outlined in the new Workforce Management Strategy.



# WORKFORCE SNAPSHOT

Understanding our workforce composition helps us to identify capability gaps, succession needs, and diversity opportunities aligned to future service delivery.

## Workforce profile

As at April 2025  
Council's workforce  
comprised:

137  
employees  
(125 FTE)



Full-time  
88%

Part-time  
4%

Casual  
8%

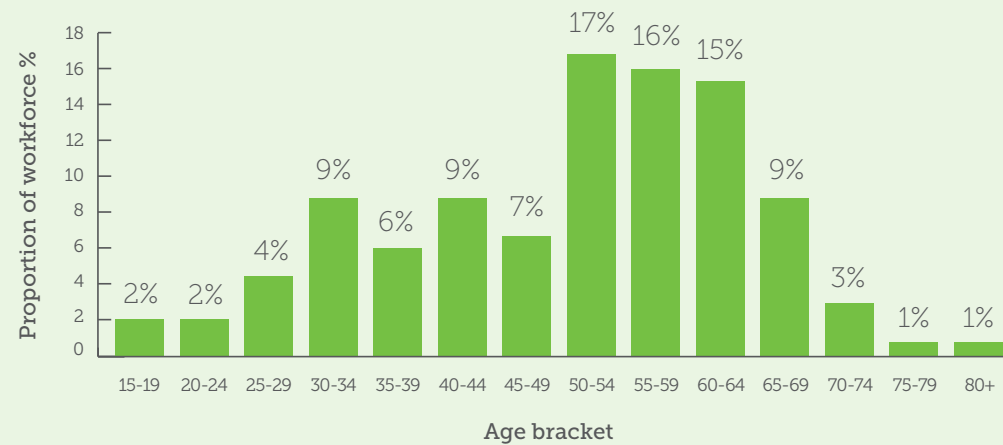
36%  
female  
employees  
(42%  
female  
leaders)

1%  
employees  
who identify  
as Aboriginal  
& Torres Strait  
Islander

3%  
employees  
who live  
with a  
disability

93%  
employees  
live in  
LGA

## Age profile



## Additional workforce data



24% employees have  
more than 10 weeks annual leave

78% employees with excessive  
leave work in the Infrastructure Directorate



91% employees completed  
mandatory training



27%  
employees have  
accrued LSL



79%  
employees with LSL work in  
the Infrastructure Directorate



17%  
turnover rate in the  
2023/2024 financial year

24%  
left within  
first year



## Workforce Challenges and Opportunities

Edward River Council is committed to building a resilient, high-performing workforce that meets the needs of our community. We face several challenges, including limited local housing, population decline, and competition from metropolitan areas, which impact our ability to attract and retain talent.

Internally, an ageing workforce, and the need for stronger succession planning and leadership development present ongoing pressures. Balancing flexible work with service delivery and strengthening workplace culture are key priorities.

Addressing these issues is vital to sustaining a capable workforce and ensuring continued delivery of quality services to our community.

To prioritise and respond effectively, the following matrix outlines key challenges, their potential impact, and how they align with our five new workforce strategies:





## Workforce Challenge Response Matrix

Challenge	Impact	Linked Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Edward River Council faces ongoing challenges in attracting and retaining employees with the critical skills in Project Management, Work Health &amp; Safety, Risk, Governance and operations roles.</li> </ul>	Difficulty filling key roles, increased turnover, and reliance on temporary staff and external consultants, resulting in higher operational costs and impacting the organisation's capacity to deliver services consistently. This also affects workforce stability, knowledge retention, and culture.	Attract and retain a diverse and capable workforce
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of workforce diversity (including underrepresentation of First Nations, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, people with disability, and gender imbalance in leadership).</li> </ul>	Limits Council's ability to reflect and serve the community effectively. Reduces innovation, employee engagement, and connection with diverse community needs.	Build a safe, diverse, and inclusive workplace culture
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>62% of our workforce is aged 50 years or over, with 45% of the workforce within the notional age of retirement within the next 4 years</li> </ul>	Loss of corporate knowledge, succession gaps, training demands	Invest in training and development for the future
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leadership development and workforce planning</li> </ul>	Limited career pathways, lack of internal mobility	Invest in training and development for the future
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Balancing flexibility with service delivery</li> </ul>	Challenges meeting operational needs, employee dissatisfaction	Strengthen staff health and well-being
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy compliance and legislative updates</li> </ul>	Risk of non-compliance, poor communication, inconsistent practice	Build strong foundations

The creation of this matrix has helped identify where further focus is required to achieve intent of defined strategies. By focusing on internal development, well-being, and compliance, we're planning for the workforce we need - not just today, but into the future.



## Workforce Strategies

Edward River Council's future workforce success will be guided by clear actions aligned to our five key strategies. These strategies provide the foundation to build a workforce that is resilient, engaged, and equipped to meet the needs of our organisation and community.



## Workforce Strategy Matrix

Strategy	Key Actions	How We'll Measure Success
<b>1. Attract, develop, and retain a skilled and future-ready workforce</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan Ahead: Identify future workforce needs</li> <li>Grow Our Own Talent</li> <li>Retain Good Staff</li> <li>Promote Council as an employer of choice</li> <li>Reduce reliance on external consultants by building internal capability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3% or more vacant roles filled internally</li> <li>Staff turnover &lt; 10% year-on-year</li> <li>80% positive employee satisfaction survey</li> </ul>
<b>2. Build a safe, diverse, and inclusive workplace culture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foster Inclusion</li> <li>Strengthen Policies for fairness and equity</li> <li>Encourage Participation in culture shaping</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>85% or higher positive sense of inclusion</li> <li>Minimum 2 diversity and inclusion initiatives annually</li> <li>0 incidents of discrimination or harassment</li> </ul>
<b>3. Strengthen workplace culture through health, well-being, engagement, and work-life harmony</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote Health Initiatives</li> <li>Support Flexibility</li> <li>Recognise Contributions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>60% or higher participation in well-being programs</li> <li>80% positive staff satisfaction with work-life harmony</li> <li>Minimum of 2 formal recognition events per year</li> </ul>
<b>4. Develop and empower employees through structured learning and leadership initiatives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support Structured Learning</li> <li>Develop Mentorship program</li> <li>Invest in Leadership Development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>90% or higher participation in training/development</li> <li>3% or more leadership roles filled internally</li> </ul>
<b>5. Ensure robust policies, processes, and systems for compliance and efficiency</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain Compliance</li> <li>Drive Operational Efficiency</li> <li>Promote Ethical Standards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>80% policies reviewed/updated within timeframes</li> <li>90% or higher staff completion of compliance/ethics training</li> </ul>

Together, these strategies will shape how we build and support our workforce over the next four years. They will help Edward River Council have the right people, in the right jobs, at the right time. Everything we do will align with our CSP, DP, OP. This way, we stay on track to create a strong, skilled, and resilient workforce that can meet the needs of our growing community and support its well-being.



Strategy 1: Attract, develop, and retain a skilled and future-ready workforce to ensure long-term organisational success and high-quality service delivery





### Strategy 1:

In a constantly changing world, the strength of our Council lies in the capabilities and diversity of our workforce. Our commitment to attracting, developing, and retaining a skilled and future-ready team is essential for, improving service delivery, and addressing the evolving needs of our community. By embracing diverse perspectives, experiences, and backgrounds, we cultivate an inclusive environment that encourages creativity, collaboration, and better decision-making.

### Year 1 focus:

We will prioritise strengthening our recruitment processes, developing tailored onboarding programs, and ensuring clear career progression pathways for all employees. We will also review our recruitment strategy to align with community demographics and attract diverse talent. Additionally, we will begin reducing reliance on external consultants by investing in building internal capability and strengthening succession planning.

A workforce that reflects the community we serve enhances our ability to adapt and thrive in a rapidly changing landscape. Through targeted recruitment strategies, professional development opportunities, and supportive workplace policies, we ensure that we attract top talent and provide an environment where every employee is empowered to succeed.

Reducing dependence on consultants will help to retain knowledge in-house, promote continuity, and lower long-term costs.

By prioritising the development and retention of a skilled and diverse workforce, we strengthen our Council's capacity to meet future challenges, ensuring high-quality services and a resilient, inclusive future for all.

### Outcomes:

- At least 3% of vacant positions are filled through internal appointments by 2026, demonstrating effective career development and succession planning.
- Establish at least 1 partnerships with local schools/TAFEs by June 2028 to create direct pathways into Council roles, ensuring a steady pipeline of talent.
- Reduce voluntary turnover rate to below 5% per annum by 2027 by improving employee satisfaction and engagement.
- Reduce consultant expenditure by 20% by 2027 through internal capability development and strategic workforce planning.

By attracting, developing, and retaining a skilled workforce, we position our Council for long-term success, driving innovation and high-quality service delivery that reflects the needs of the community.

Strategy 2: Build a safe, diverse, and inclusive workplace culture where all employees feel valued and supported





## Strategy 2:

A safe, diverse, and inclusive workplace is key to our success and employee well-being. When employees feel respected and connected, they're more motivated, leading to better service delivery and greater community trust. To strengthen our workplace culture, we'll define diversity at Edward River Council to include cultural, age, gender, First Nations, and disability representation, with a goal to increase First Nations employment to 3% by 2029.

## Year 1 focus:

We will launch a comprehensive diversity training program for all employees and review workplace policies to ensure inclusivity across all functions. Additionally, we will focus on integrating mental health and WHS principles into the workplace culture through clear communication, training, and regular feedback loops.

We will also ensure compliance with Work Health and Safety (WHS) and mental health obligations, focusing on both physical and psychological safety. This includes integrating these principles into our culture and supporting employee well-being through professional development and work-life balance initiatives.

To enhance inclusion, we'll implement flexible workplace adjustments, cultural leave policies, and ensure all new employees complete diversity and inclusion training within their first six weeks. These steps will ensure that every employee feels valued and supported.

By embedding these practices, we will foster a resilient, inclusive workforce, better equipped to serve our community and meet future challenges.

## Outcomes:

- Achieve 85% positive staff feedback on inclusion and workplace safety in annual surveys by 2027, ensuring we're meeting employee expectations.
- Review and update 90% of relevant workplace policies by December 2026 to ensure alignment with inclusivity goals.
- Increase workforce diversity representation by 3% by 2028 (e.g., Indigenous, CALD, people with disability), with a focus on First Nations employment and broader diversity initiatives.
- Track the completion rates of diversity and inclusion training for all new employees, ensuring full participation within the first six months.

By building a safe, diverse, and inclusive workplace, we create a culture of respect and support that drives employee engagement, satisfaction, and performance. This ensures that our workforce remains aligned with our commitment to serving the community and fostering long-term success.

Strategy 3: Strengthen workplace culture by prioritising employee health, well-being, engagement, and work-life harmony to support a thriving and productive workforce





### Strategy 3:

Prioritising employee health, well-being, engagement, and work-life harmony is key to fostering a thriving and productive workforce. A culture that supports physical, mental, and emotional well-being leads to higher job satisfaction, increased productivity, and stronger team collaboration. By implementing well-being initiatives such as mental health resources, flexible work arrangements, and wellness programs, we create an environment where employees feel valued, supported, and motivated.

To ensure the success of our initiatives, we will adopt a phased approach:

#### Year 1 focus:

Focus on expanding the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and increasing participation.

Investing in employee well-being reduces absenteeism, enhances retention, and boosts engagement, making our Council more resilient and effective in serving the community. We will also focus on improving communication and maintaining a balanced approach to work, so employees can contribute meaningfully while taking care of their health and personal commitments.

By embedding well-being and engagement into our workplace culture, we not only enhance individual and team performance but also strengthen our Council's long-term success. A nurtured, empowered workforce will be better equipped to meet the evolving needs of the community.

### Outcomes:

- 60% or more staff participation in well-being initiatives annually.
- Improve engagement scores by 10% in the next Employee Engagement Survey (baseline to be set in 2026).
- Implement at least 2 new life-stage transition support programs by June 2027.
- Track absenteeism trends as a proxy for well-being and measure success in reducing absenteeism.

By setting clear, phased deliverables and tracking key metrics, we will ensure that employee health, well-being, and work-life balance become deeply embedded in our workplace culture, positioning us as an employer of choice and enabling us to meet the needs of both our workforce and the community.



Strategy 4: Develop and empower employees through structured learning, mentorship, and leadership initiatives to build a resilient and future ready workforce





### **Strategy 4:**

Investing in structured learning, mentorship, and leadership development is essential for building a resilient and future-ready workforce. In an evolving environment, continuous learning equips employees with the skills, knowledge, and confidence to adapt to challenges and excel in their roles. By fostering a culture of professional growth, we empower staff to take on new responsibilities, drive innovation, and contribute meaningfully to our Council's success.

### **Year 1 focus:**

Improve the online learning system and launch a leadership intake program to support structured learning and leadership growth. We will align our learning and development activities to the ERC Leadership Framework, ensuring consistency, equity, and performance readiness across all levels.

Tailored training programs - from foundational skills to advanced leadership development - will enhance employee engagement, retention, and career progression. These programs will be accessible to all employees, regardless of role or location, ensuring equitable access to development opportunities. As employees expand their capabilities, they become better prepared to address complex issues, implement effective solutions, and deliver high-quality services to the community.

Strong mentorship and leadership initiatives will ensure that we develop future leaders from within, creating a sustainable talent pipeline. By prioritising learning and development, we strengthen our council's ability to respond to emerging trends and community needs, while fostering a motivated and capable workforce. This investment benefits both individual employees and the organisation, ensuring we remain adaptable, forward-thinking, and well-positioned for long-term success.

### **Outcomes:**

- 90% of employees participate in learning and development activities annually.
- Develop a formal mentorship program by December 2027.
- Fill 3% of leadership vacancies internally by 2028 through developed talent pipelines.
- Ensure all employees have access to development opportunities relevant to their career goals and service contributions.

By embedding structured learning, mentorship, and leadership initiatives into our workplace culture, we empower employees to grow within the organisation, ensuring our Council continues to thrive and respond to the needs of our community.

Strategy 5: Ensure robust policies, processes, and systems that uphold legislative compliance, ethical standards, and operational efficiency





### Strategy 5:

Establishing robust policies, processes, and systems is essential for ensuring legislative compliance, ethical standards, and operational efficiency within our council. A well-structured framework provides employees with clear guidelines, promotes accountability, and fosters a culture of integrity and transparency. By embedding strong governance practices, we enhance decision-making, mitigate risks, and maintain public trust.

### Year 1 focus:

We will begin by evaluating our payroll and HR systems to improve automation, reduce data entry, and support accurate reporting. This ensures our systems are aligned with legislative and operational needs. We will also work to streamline our recruitment processes to reduce the average processing time by 20% by 2027 through the implementation of more efficient systems.

Investing in efficient processes, comprehensive onboarding, and continuous policy improvement ensures that every staff member understands their responsibilities and operates within a clear and compliant framework. Targeted training and communication will ensure all staff understand their responsibilities and are confident in applying policies in their day-to-day work.

Streamlined systems not only drive productivity but also enable us to adapt to regulatory changes, respond effectively to community needs, and uphold service excellence. By prioritising compliance, ethical leadership, and operational efficiency, we create a resilient and future-ready organisation that delivers sustainable outcomes for both our workforce and the broader community.

### Outcomes:

- 80% of People & Culture policies reviewed and updated within two years.
- Achieve 90% employee completion rate for mandatory compliance training annually.
- Reduce average recruitment processing time by 10% by 2027 through streamlined systems.
- Reduce policy-related grievances by 3% by 2027.

By embedding clear policies and processes into our operations, and ensuring that they are understood and followed, we will uphold our Council's integrity and success, safeguarding our future and the trust of the community.

## Ensuring Our Success

The below matrix:

Element	Details
Responsibility for Monitoring	<p><b>People &amp; Culture Team:</b> Track and report workforce metrics, gather data, implement feedback mechanisms.</p> <p><b>Leadership Team:</b> Oversee strategic alignment, ensure accountability for outcomes.</p>
Timing of Reviews	<p><b>Biannual Reviews (Every 2 Years):</b> Focus on short-term goals (recruitment, retention, satisfaction); adjust strategy as needed.</p> <p><b>Comprehensive 4-Year Review:</b> Assess long-term success; evaluate sustainability, skill development, strategic alignment.</p>
Defining Success Over Time	<p><b>2-Year Mark:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment and retention goals achieved</li> <li>• Evidence of skill development and successful training</li> <li>• Positive employee satisfaction feedback</li> </ul> <p><b>4-Year Mark:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of leadership development, talent pipelines, succession planning</li> <li>• Improved workforce performance and alignment to corporate goals</li> <li>• Achievement of workforce sustainability targets</li> </ul>



# ACTION PLAN





CSP	Strategic Initiatives	Actions	Target Years				Responsibility	Measures
			25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29		
<b>Leadership 5.4.1</b>	<b>Attract, develop, and retain a skilled and future-ready workforce to ensure long-term organisational success and high-quality service delivery</b>	Execute the Workforce Management Strategy with a focus on recruiting and retaining key positions using contemporary best practices.	●	●	●	●	People & Culture	Complete 90% of scheduled recruitment activities, meeting target recruitment deadlines each year.
		Develop and implement a recruitment strategy that positions Edward River Council as an Employer of Choice. This will include creating targeted job advertisements and career progression pathways, with a focus on growing local talent.		●			People & Culture	Increase applications from local talent by 5%. Reduce time-to-hire for priority roles by 10%. Increase percentage of accepted job offers by 3%.
		Develop a new traineeship, apprenticeship, and graduate program by December 2027, aimed at providing pathways for entry-level talent.			●		People & Culture	Launch program with a minimum of 3 participants by December 2027. Track completion and conversion to ongoing employment.

CSP	Strategic Initiatives	Actions	Target Years				Responsibility	Measures
			25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29		
		Identify and develop diverse leadership candidates within the organisation, increasing internal leadership opportunities through targeted development programs.			●		Leadership	3% of leadership roles are filled internally by 2028.
		Review current consultant usage and develop an internal capability-building plan to reduce reliance on external providers.	●				People & Culture Leadership Executive Team	Reduce consultant expenditure by 20% by 2027.
		Establish an internal skills audit and capability map to identify key workforce gaps that can be addressed through upskilling or recruitment.		●			People & Culture	Complete workforce capability assessment by mid-2026.  Identify 2 priority skill gaps and develop internal training pathways.

CSP	Strategic Initiatives	Actions	Target Years				Responsibility	Measures
			25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29		
<b>Leadership 5.2.1</b>	<b>Build a safe, diverse, and inclusive workplace culture where all employees feel valued and supported</b>	Implement actions from the Disability Inclusion Action Plan, including mandatory awareness training for Councillors, employees, and volunteers each year.	●	●	●	●	Community & Economy People & Culture	Achieve 100% completion of training among Councillors, employees, and volunteers.
		Develop and promote any required culturally inclusive workplace policies by June 2026.		●			People & Culture	Achieve 90% of employees, Councillors, and volunteers trained on the new policies within 6 months.
		Implement a structured rehabilitation and return-to-work process for employees on workers' compensation, ensuring 100% of affected employees have a Return-to-Work Plan.	●				People & Culture	100% of workers' compensation cases have a documented Return-to-Work Plan within 3 days.  100% Employees are supported through difficult periods.



CSP	Strategic Initiatives	Actions	Target Years				Responsibility	Measures
			25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29		
		Increase First Nations participation within the workforce by 3% by 2029, focusing on recruitment and collaboration efforts with First Nations communities.				●	People & Culture	Increase First Nations employment by 3%.
		Review and update the Volunteer Framework to align with current organisational needs, ensuring greater diversity and inclusion.		●			People & Culture	Update the Volunteer Framework and implement it by Q2 2026. satisfaction survey shows 80% volunteer alignment with organisational values.
		Implement regular reviews and reporting mechanisms to assess and ensure inclusivity and equity in recruitment, training, and employee engagement practices.	●	●	●	●	People & Culture	90% of inclusive policies revised and implemented.

CSP	Strategic Initiatives	Actions	Target Years				Responsibility	Measures
			25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29		
<b>Communities 1.6.1</b>	<b>Strengthen workplace culture by prioritising employee health, well-being, engagement, and work-life balance to support a thriving and productive workforce</b>	Expand health and well-being initiative, promoting mental health resources.	●	●	●	●	People & Culture WHS	Increase participation in wellness programs by 5% annually.
		Revise and enhance the Mental Health and Well-being Workplace Action Plan, introducing at least two new activities every year.		●			People & Culture WHS	At least 2 activities delivered. Achieve 85% participation in mental health initiatives. Achieve 3% increase in the use of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).
		Conduct bi-annual employee engagement survey to assess workforce satisfaction, with results leading to targeted actions for improvement.	●		●		People & Culture Leadership	Achieve 75% participation rate and implement at least 2 key actions based on feedback.
		Strengthen communication and engagement strategies.				●	Leadership	2 new engagement or communication initiatives launched annually; 80% staff awareness of initiatives based on follow-up survey.

CSP	Strategic Initiatives	Actions	Target Years				Responsibility	Measures
			25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29		
		Enhance work-life balance initiatives, including new transition-to-retirement planning sessions and flexible working options by the end of 2025.	●				People & Culture	Achieve a 10% improvement in work-life balance satisfaction as measured by the annual engagement survey.
<b>Leadership 5.4.1</b>	<b>Develop and empower employees through structured learning, mentorship, and leadership initiatives to build a resilient and future ready workforce</b>	Continue an internal leadership capability program for emerging and existing leaders.	●	●	●	●	People & Culture Leadership	3% employees participating and progressing into leadership roles.
		Upgrade the online learning system (ELMO) to increase engagement with training and streamline employee learning experiences.	●	●			People & Culture	95% completion rate for mandatory training modules within set timeframes.
		Develop a structured mentorship program across all teams by December 2028.			●		People & Culture	Engage at least 3 mentor-mentee pairs in the program by the end of 2028.



CSP	Strategic Initiatives	Actions	Target Years				Responsibility	Measures
			25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29		
<b>Leadership 5.6.14</b>	<b>Ensure robust policies, processes, and systems that uphold legislative compliance, ethical standards, and operational efficiency</b>	Audit existing policies to identify gaps and prioritize their development or revision by the end of 2025.	●				Governance People & Culture	Review and update at least 80% of identified policies within 12 months.
		Identify and create key people policies and processes that support and guide the culture we aim to build at Council.		●			People & Culture	80% of identified priority people policies developed by Q3 2026; measured through policy completion tracker.  100% of policies/processes are delivered on schedule.
		Review all employment-related policies to ensure compliance with current laws and minimise legal risks.	●	●	●	●	People & Culture	Achieve a 0% increase in legal disputes related to employment practices.

CSP	Strategic Initiatives	Actions	Target Years				Responsibility	Measures
			25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29		
		Provide training to all employees to help them understand and follow the key workplace policies and expected behaviours.	•	•	•	•	People & Culture	>80% of employees complete the required training.  90% of supervisors report improved staff understanding of policy expectations through follow-up pulse checks.
		Develop and implement a structured onboarding and induction program that clearly communicates organisational values, expectations, and key policies, ensuring all employees are equipped to contribute effectively from day one.		•			People & Culture	>95% of new employees complete all induction modules within the first month.
		Develop a culture of continuous feedback, review and improvement to ensure optimal effectiveness and efficiency to support the delivery of Council.			•		People & Culture	Minimum of 5 employee improvement ideas submitted annually; 50% of feasible ideas implemented or trialled.  % of identified improvements that have been actioned.

CSP	Strategic Initiatives	Actions	Target Years				Responsibility	Measures
			25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29		
		Evaluate and refine payroll and HR systems to improve compliance and efficiency by implementing automation where applicable.	●			●	People & Culture	Achieve a 5% reduction in payroll processing time. 10% reduction in manual data entry tasks by Q1 2026. <1 day to resolve payroll-related employee queries.





EDWARD RIVER COUNCIL  
**WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**  
2025-2029

180 Cressy Street (PO Box 270)  
Deniliquin NSW 2710  
T 03 5898 3000  
[council@edwardriver.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@edwardriver.nsw.gov.au)  
[www.edwardriver.nsw.gov.au](http://www.edwardriver.nsw.gov.au)