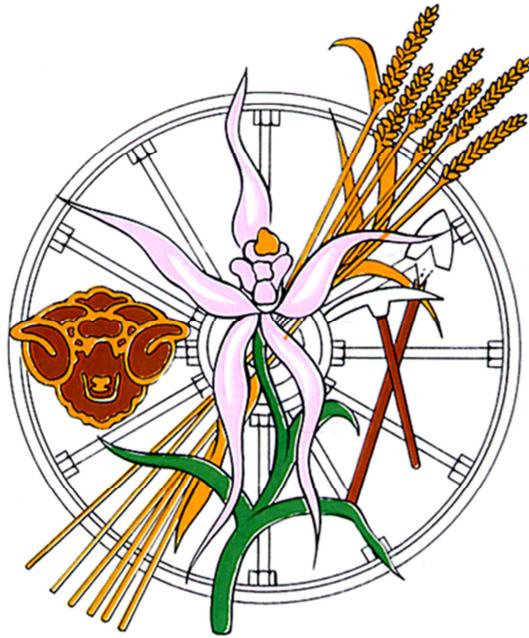


# SHIRE OF WESTONIA



## WORKFORCE PLAN



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Located in the Eastern Wheatbelt region of WA, the Shire of Westonia is located 316km east of Perth and 52km east of Merredin in the heart of broad acre wheat and sheep farming and gold mining country.

The Shire is a relatively small local government agency, with a staffing component of around 20 in total (including outside staff, contractors and consultants), and an organisational structure which is similar to other local government organisations of a similar size.

We are a multi-faceted organisation, with a significant number of functions and operations. Accordingly, we require a diverse workforce that is capable of delivering positive outcomes for the organisation and to help us grow the local government area.

We are however faced with many challenges; these include potential skills shortages in specific occupations, a significant proportion of our existing workforce nearing retirement and recruiting the next generation of skilled specialist staff.

This Workforce Plan for has been developed in accordance with the Western Australian Government's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework requirements.

From both the internal and external research and analysis undertaken in the preparation of this Workforce Plan, the Shire of Westonia is faced with a number of key challenges for the future including:

- Ageing and multigenerational workforce
- Skill shortages in key areas (Multi skilled workforce)
- Attraction and retention of quality personnel
- Maintaining a skilled, trained and flexible workforce
- Knowledge succession / transfer
- Becoming an employer of choice
- Increased community expectations in services and delivery

The Plan aims to support the Shire of Westonia in achieving the skilled, motivated, flexible and diverse workforce it needs to deliver value for money services that make a difference to our local community.

Getting the right people into the right jobs is paramount and requires a commitment to attract, develop, retain and recognise talented and motivated employees who are aligned with our Vision and Values.

Our employees are our greatest asset. Motivated and committed employees will reinforce Council's vision "to enjoy a vibrant community lifestyle".

The 2013- 2018 Workforce Plan is designed to continually respond to future challenges and will be adjusted accordingly to meet the changing challenges ahead.

A big thankyou must be extended to staff who contributed to the data and presentation of the plan.

Jamie Criddle  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

Louis Geier  
**PRESIDENT**

# 1.0 BACKGROUND

This Workforce Plan for has been developed in response to the Western Australian Government's Department of Local Government's commitment to an Integrated Planning Framework, which includes the development of a number of Plans, as shown in the diagram below. The two primary documents are the Strategic Community Plan and the Corporate Business Plan, but they cannot be completed without the development of a number of other plans and one of those is a Workforce Plan.

It is an expectation of the Department of Local Government that the Strategic Community Plan is developed in consultation with the local Council's residents and ratepayers. This process has been performed 'in-house' due to the State Government requesting the Shire of Westonia return all strategic planning funds once the proposed merger with the Shire of Yilgarn did not eventuate. For the purpose of this Plan workforce planning is defined as "a continuous process of shaping the workforce to ensure that it is capable of delivering organisational objectives now and in the future."

## Elements of the Integrated Planning Framework



This Workforce Plan has been extensively researched and developed by Senior Staff over a period of twelve months.

Many of those concerns that were raised during the process have been shown as an action within the Workforce Plan Action Table.

That withstanding, it needs to be noted that during the past twelve months the Shire has been subject to a range of activities that have all had an impact on shaping the actions that are contained within this Plan and some of the more significant changes are those that are listed below.

- Proposed merger with the Shire of Yilgarn 2008 – 2012
- Westonia electors poll over proposed amalgamation – April 2012 (82% NO to Amalgamation from 77% turnout)
- Resignation of Joint Westonia/Yilgarn CEO in May 2012
- Department of Local Government requesting Westonia Shire's Integrated Planning funds be returned due to non-amalgamation
- Appointment of permanent CEO in August 2012
- Resignation of Works Supervisor in August 2012
- Release of the Robson report on Council amalgamations
- Appointment of Works Supervisor in May 2013

The Government's announcement on amalgamations has also had an impact on the construction of this Plan, for until such time as the Government finalises, or legislates it amalgamation model, the Shire can only proceed on the basis of Business as Usual.

This plan forms part of the Shire of Westonia's Integrated Planning Framework and is expected to be adopted prior to the 30 June 2013 deadline.

## 2.0 INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 OUR SHIRE

Westonia is a small country town in the Wheatbelt of Western Australia, with a unique mix of broad acre wheat and sheep farming and mining industries within the Shire. The town is situated 316km east of Perth, and 52km east of Merredin the Shire of Westonia is renowned for its stunning natural woodlands, breathtaking granite rocks, beautiful wildflowers and vast open skies. The shire population consists of approximately 300 people spread across an area of 3,268 square kilometres and includes the towns of Walgoolan, Carrabin, Warralakin and the main centre Westonia.

The Westonia community offers all the benefits of country living, and the town provides for a variety of sporting and recreational interests.

#### **Recreation Facilities**

Westonia boasts comprehensive sporting facilities and has numerous recreational areas including picnic spots, parks and gardens.

##### **Wanderers Stadium & Bowling Green**

Wanderers Stadium and bowling green was completed in late 2008. The bowling green utilises state of the art artificial sports turf. The Sports Stadium boasts a fully air conditioned function room, a barbecue area, shaded deck and fully equipped bar. This community facility is utilised by Westonia's tennis and bowls clubs, as well as other community groups.



##### **Tennis Courts**

The Westonia Tennis Club has 4 supergrass tennis courts with quality lights for evening games. Tennis season generally runs from October to March. The courts are available for hire and are located in Diorite Street near the playground and swimming pool.

##### **Recreation Complex and Oval**

Located near the centre of town the Westonia Recreation Complex has a grassed oval and artificial cricket pitch, function hall with kitchen facilities and meeting room all available for hire.



##### **Playground**

Recently upgraded, the children's playground is a pleasant place to stop and let the kids have a run around. The playground has a grassed area under shady trees, play equipment and well serviced public conveniences. Located on the corner of Diorite and Cement Streets Westonia.



## Swimming Pool



Open November to March. The pool has a 25m eight lane pool and wading pool for younger children. A kiosk and barbecue facilities are available. Located in Diorite Street, Westonia.

## Gymnasium

The Recreation complex also houses a state of the art gymnasium with enough commercial grade equipment to satisfy any prospective body builder or fitness junkie.

## Golf Course

The Westonia Golf Course is a short 5 minute drive east of the town on Della Bosca Road. The course has 18 holes with sand greens. Members of the public are welcome to play, green fees are \$5.00. Golf season is April to October.

## Education

### Westonia Primary School

Westonia Primary School caters for 4 year olds, Pre-Primary to Year 7. For further information contact the school (08) 9046 7051.

### Merredin Senior High School

A bus travels daily to Merredin Senior High School which provides secondary education for Year 8 to year 12. For further information contact the school (08) 9041 0900.

## TAFE

TAFE courses can be arranged through the Westonia Community Resource Centre and the CY O'Connor TAFE in Northam.

Pre and Primary Schooling is available at Westonia with secondary Schooling to year 12 at the Merredin College.

### Community Resource Centre

Open Monday to Friday, 9.00am to 5.00pm

Situated in the old shire building opposite the Westonia Tavern, the Community Resource Centre provides a range of facilities including internet access, lifestyle courses, occupational training and secretarial services. For further information contact the Westonia Community Resource Centre on (08) 9046 7077.

## Other Facilities

### Public Halls

The Shire of Westonia has two historic halls available for hire in Warralakin and Westonia.



### **Airstrip**

Westonia has an unsealed airstrip located near to town which is regularly used by the visiting Royal Flying Doctor Service and is available for public use. For information about the airstrip contact the Shire Office on (08) 9046 7063.

### **Sporting Clubs**

Wessy Wanderers Bowling Club  
Westonia Golf Club  
Westonia Tennis Club  
Burracoppin Football Club  
Burracoppin Hockey Club

For further information about local sporting clubs please contact the Shire Office on 9046 7063.

### **Medical Services**

#### **Royal Flying Doctor Service**

Westonia is serviced by the visiting Royal Flying Doctor Service on a six weekly cycle.

#### **Hospitals**

District hospitals are located in Merredin and Southern Cross with GP services also located in these towns. There is also a Dentist located in Merredin and Bruce Rock.

### **Places to Visit**



#### **Westonia Historic Town site**

Westonia has a unique charm, nestled amongst 4,000ha of salmon gum, morrell and gimlet woodland interspersed with granite outcrops and remnants of the town's gold mining past.

The town has been preserved to reflect its days as a booming gold mining town, old buildings have been restored and new buildings constructed in a style that represents the past.

#### **Wolfram Street Facades**

The bright red doors on Westonia's Fire Station are part of the town's plan to step back in time. The colourful exteriors of the Façade Shop Front Project aim to recreate the look of the main street during the 1900's mining boom.

Down the street, the facades of the town's original bank, café and green grocer store have been recreated. The doors on these facades are real and open to the library and Shire Offices.

#### **Westonia Caravan Park**

The caravan park is neat and tidy with grassed area for campers and powered sites for vans. The ablutions are clean and well serviced. Barbeque facilities are also available.



### **Westonia Nature Heritage Trail**

Just outside the entrance to the caravan park you will find the start of the Westonia Nature Heritage Trail. This 4km walk trail will take you through the Westonia Common woodland and back to town past historic points of interest. Keep an eye out for wildflowers in season.

### **Elachbutting Rock**



Elachbutting Rock is a spectacular natural rock formation with similar features to Wave Rock. The rock has a number of large cavern areas and is surrounded by natural bushland. Elachbutting has a reputation for being bigger, better and more pristine than any Wheatbelt granite rock formation that you may have seen before.

The name Elachbutting is thought to mean “that large thing standing” which is quite feasible as the large granite rock formation is a prominent landmark standing out from the

surrounding countryside. The rock is around 100km north of Westonia and is easily accessed via well maintained gravel roads. There are no facilities at Elachbutting so visitors are encouraged to take all they need for a day trip and then take all they took home with them again.

### **Yanneymoon Reserve**

Located on the corner of Elachbutting and Echo Valley Roads 75kms north of Westonia, Yanneymoon is a 513ha reserve comprising granite rock formations and bushland. The abundant, ornate dragon lizard (*Ctenophorus Ornatus*) is an entertaining feature of the

### **Baladjie Rock**

A popular picnic spot for locals and visitors, Baladjie Rock is located on the Koorda-Bullfinch Road 42kms north east of Westonia.

The extensive granite outcrops are situated in an attractive woodland adjacent to Baladjie Lake. A climb up the main rock provides a spectacular view of the nearby lake system and surrounding landscape.

### **Sandford Rocks**

Sandford Rocks Nature Reserve is situated 10km north east of Westonia along the Boodarockin road. It protects 806ha of granite outcrop, pools, wildflowers, scrub and woodland. It has many diverse species of flora and fauna.

The Sandford Rocks Discovery Trail guide booklet is available from the Shire Office.



### **Chidarcooping Reserve**

A CALM nature reserve, Chidarcooping is 5,262ha of bushland abundant with unique flora and fauna. The reserve is located 50km north of the Westonia Town site. Further information is available from CALM Merredin (08) 9041 2488.

### **Edna May Gold Mine**

In 1911, Edmund John Annear a prospector applied for the first mining lease at a strike 1km north of the Westonia Townsite. He quickly established a mine at the claim which he named the Edna May after his aunt.

The Edna May mine produced 171,000 ounces of gold but by 1922 the mine was forced to close due to problems with underground water and the exhaustion of the high grade ore supply.

In 1935 mining resumed with around 355,000 ounces produced before the mine closed in 1947.

Water was again a problem as well as labour supply shortages created by the war.

New mining techniques saw the Edna May reopened as an open pit operation by ACM Gold in 1985.

The mine produced 274,000 ounces at an average grade of 1.97 grams of gold per tonne of ore.

Underground water and low ore quality were again factors resulting in the closure of the mine in 1991.

Catalpa Resources Ltd (previously known as Westonia Mines Ltd) then took over ownership of the Edna May. After completing extensive drilling at the site, the company purchased a process plant from the Big Bell mine near Cue in Western Australia's north and transported it to the Edna May site in 2007. Catalpa Resources then commenced the process of re-building the Edna May mine and processing plant. This process is now complete and Catalpa have already poured the first gold from the Edna May. This signals the Edna May's movement into full mining production for the fourth time. Since purchased from Evolution Mining the company are forecasting an effective mine life on the Edna May exceeding nine years.

More information is available from Evolution Mining's website at

[www.evolutionmining.com.au/projectsEdnaMay.html](http://www.evolutionmining.com.au/projectsEdnaMay.html)



***The Edna May Gold Mine – prior to its re-opening by Evolution Mining***

## 3.0 PLANNING OBJECTIVES

### 3.1 WORKFORCE PLANNING OBJECTIVES

Workforce planning is a critical strategic activity intended to ensure there are sufficient numbers of appropriately trained employees to carry out the organisation's purpose. That is, the right people are in the right place at the right time to build a strong, interconnected and sustainable organisation.

It provides managers with a framework for making staffing decisions based on the Council's capacity, values, management plan, budgetary and other available resources.

The Shire of Westonia Workforce Plan is a strategic approach to address current and anticipated shortages in the Australian labour market. Due to the diverse range of services delivered and the specialised roles within local government, these shortages will have a significant impact on our industry and our ability to respond to community needs and interests. Council aims to be an employer of choice for existing and potential candidates across the generational ranges.

Council's workforce strategy is a continuous process designed to shape our workforce and to ensure that it has the capacity to deliver our objectives into the future. The strategy includes consideration of the following local and national employment trends:

- Shrinking future workforce;
- Ageing workforce;
- Skills shortage;
- Lack of service amenities, tourism attractions and retail facility in the town which also contribute to the lack of labour migration flow to the district;
- The Shire's apparent lack of effective formalised links with the main providers of education and training in the town, being Merredin College and the Westonia Community Resource Centre;
- Inadequate levels of investment in housing development, reinforced by mining companies offering temporary camp accommodation, and bus services to nearby centres, which discourages mine workers from settling in the town, and subsequent negative impacts on population growth and community development;

The strategy extends current human resource procedures and should be read in conjunction with these and other conditions outlined in the Award and various council agreements. It is a recognised initiative within Council's overall management plan and forms part of the resourcing strategy under the integrated planning requirements.

The workforce strategy also assesses the skill mix sought to equip the organisation to be in a position to focus on the aspirations of the community identified in the Corporate Business Plan and the Community Strategy Plan.

# 4.0 CURRENT ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

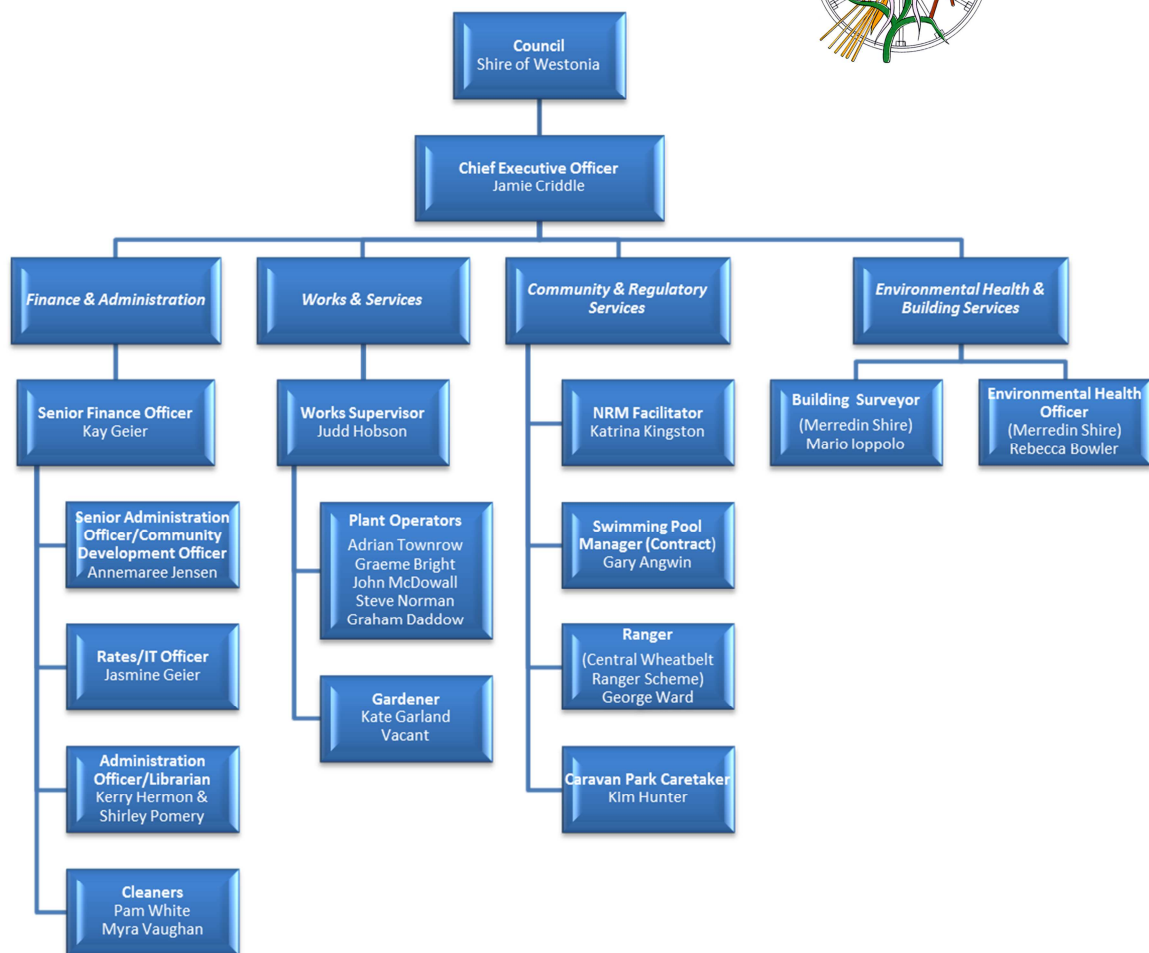
The structure of the organisation comprises of four directorates, reporting through the Office of the Chief Executive Officer. Each directorate containing a portfolio of related services.

A review of the shire’s organisational structure was undertaken in 2006 to align roles with changing focus areas.

Positions have been examined to identify gaps in service delivery and functions and roles modified accordingly to support future service delivery.



## Shire of Westonia Organisational Structure



Last review May 2006

## 5.0 ISSUES & TRENDS

### *Shrinking Future Workforce*

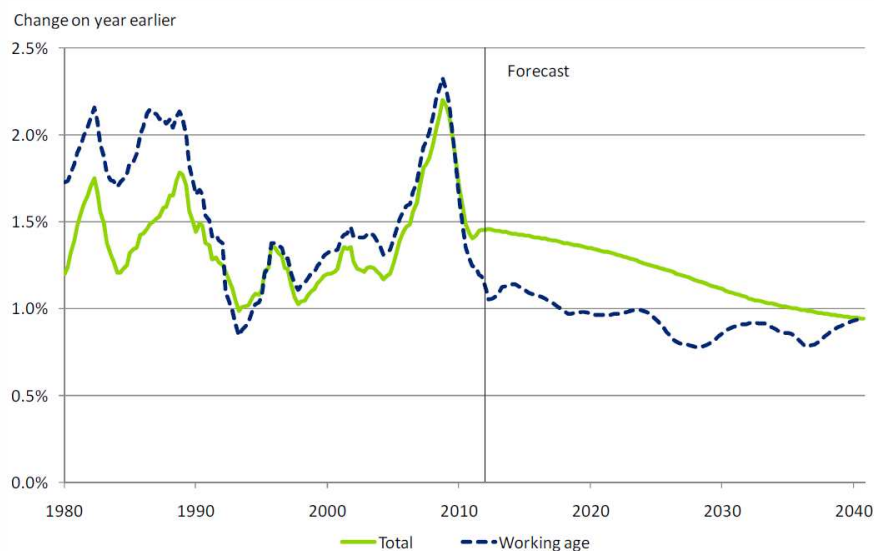
Access Economics forecasts that the working age population will grow by just 125,000 for the entire decade of the 2020's compared with 170,000 people a year currently. That means for every 10 candidates we see now, we will see only one in 2020.

Generation X women are not having as many children. 20% will have no children and a further 25% will only have one child. When combined with baby boomers exiting the workforce in increasing numbers, Australia's workforce is on a downward trend.

Put simply, the challenge is no longer about hiring bright young graduates, it is more about attracting and retaining appropriately trained people to deliver our core services.

The growth in population of working age is shown in the following graph

Chart ii: Population forecasts



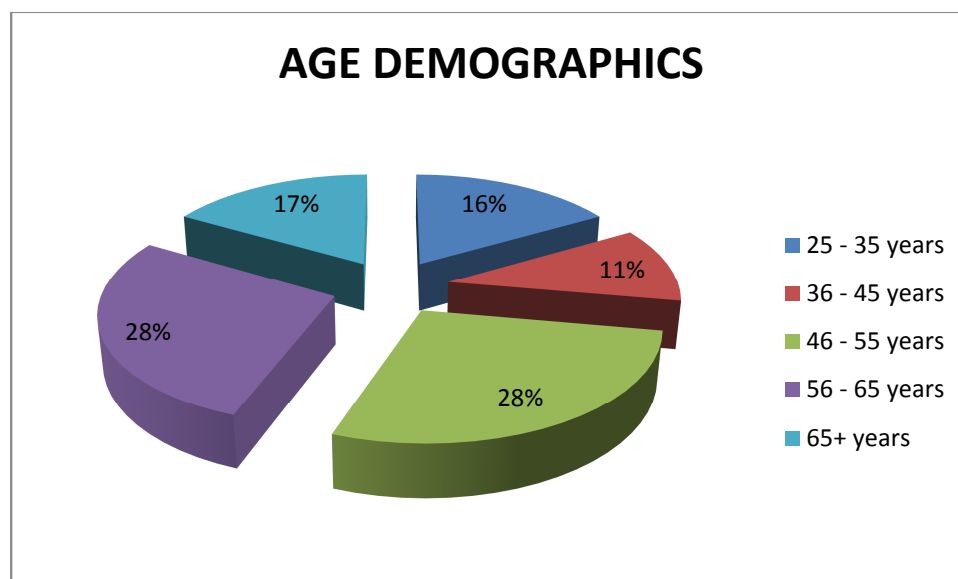
### *Ageing Workforce*

The ageing population means that Australia will face increasing difficulties in maintaining the size of the labour force, directly impacting on the potential pool of employees available to local government. The range of occupations that exist in local government require a variety of skills and experience which places the industry in a vulnerable position as their skills will be difficult to replace.

Skills shortages are already being experienced in a number of areas such as engineering, town planning, accounting, environmental health and plant operation.

Our rural location brings its own difficulties in successfully attracting new staff away from major regional and metropolitan organisations. The significant salary packaging benefits and rewards these organisations offer result in their rural counterparts struggling to compete in the open market.

The recent change in legislation that extends the pensionable retirement age to 67 in 2023 will have national impacts but it is not considered that it will significantly change retirement patterns for the Shire of Westonia employees.



Survey responses revealed an ageing workforce at the Shire, with 73% of the workforce aged 46 and over. This suggests that the Shire may face even more significant workforce shortages in the future considering that many of its older employees may reach retirement age at around the same time.

A number of areas will need to consider succession planning in the short to medium term and these include administration, finance, library plant operation.

Council aims to become an employer of choice whilst retaining the skills and extensive experience of its older workers.

### **Skills Shortage**

There has been ongoing discussion for a number of years on the national skills shortage and the impact that it is having on the broad range of industries.

Government Skills Australia Environmental Scan February 2008 reports:

“Rapid development of new technologies, globalisation, and the rise of the knowledge economy and the relative reduction in economic importance of many traditional industries has resulted in local government having to deal with critical workforce skill shortages.

As local government’s workforce is substantially made up of workers over 45 years of age, it faces a significant challenge in filling the employment gaps as older employees retire and leave the workforce. In particular, local government will feel the impact of the reduction in Australia’s labour force as a substantial proportion of its workforce sits within the five occupations with the highest projected workforce reductions.

These five occupations encompass key local government workforce areas, including planners, tradespeople, environmental health officers, engineers, and building surveyors/ inspectors.



The increase in demand for local government services is borne out in expected growth in employment in local government. However, the ability to meet this estimated growth is dependant upon the capacity of local government to find appropriately skilled staff at the same time that it is confronted with a current and looming skills shortage.”

### ***The Emergence of Mining***

Clearly, the presence of large-scale mining operations in the district has a significant impact upon the characteristics of the local labour market, but history shows us that large scale agriculture practices still dominate the employment market in relative terms.

However, it is interesting to note that although the mining operations are often credited with being the cause of ongoing growth in Westonia, observations suggests that little new employment is actually likely to be created from the mining operations in the future. Therefore, exactly how mining operations will contribute to ongoing growth in the Westonia district is not particularly clear, since there is no possibility of further expansion of the mining workforce in any great numbers (even turnover is stipulated as low).

The transience of the mining workforce also has implications for demand for services, with most of the business and consumer expenditure of this workforce being displaced to surrounding rural centres: Merredin and Southern Cross.

There are also some potentially negative social effects from having a mobile and transient mining population in the district which can bring about a number of social issues.

### ***Housing***

A primary barrier to growing the Shire workforce—and indeed growing the population of Westonia in general—is a lack of available affordable housing.

Without the availability of attractive and affordable housing options, there is simply no way to achieve the predicted and desired population growth, whether this growth comes from mine employees who are attracted to take up residence in the local community, or from other sources of migration (i.e. tree-changers seeking a rural lifestyle, semi-retired, or those attracted to the lifestyle Westonia offers for bringing up young children, etc).

Indeed, the provision of affordable staff housing and attracting new staff to the area is one of the key activities listed in the Shire’s *Plan for the Future*.

This is a clear obstacle both to the town’s growth, and the growth and development of the Shire workforce.

From both the perspective of the town’s future development and the Shire’s own workforce priorities, housing is therefore paramount, and a necessary part of the Shire’s workforce development plan must be a focus on growing and enhancing the available housing options (including the provision of staff and resources to enable this).

## **Services and Amenity**

Also noted throughout the available documents is the limitation in available services, retail outlets and lifestyle amenities in the town of Westonia, and this constitutes a major barrier to migration, investment and population growth, and hence to the buoyancy of the labour market in the area.

Growing the service economy of the town is essential to increasing the flow of labour and capital through the town—particularly with the growth of a market in local ‘boutique’ tourism and associated retail—thereby increasing the supply of available labour in the town along with attraction and recruitment opportunities for the Shire.

It is also suggested that the dearth of services available in the town is partly due to the high mobility of the mining workforce, and the tendency of many of the servicing activities surrounding this industry to be captured by surrounding business centres such as Merredin and Southern Cross:

Other possible strategies to encourage business investment include the idea of providing incentives for start-up retail businesses in the form of rent-free or rate free periods for establishment phase, similarly done with the ‘*Tammin Steel*’ venture .

Although technically forming part of the town’s broader economic development strategy, applying additional Shire resources to the development of a robust services sector in the town is likely to have positive workforce development spinoffs in terms of the Shire’s capacity to attract, recruit and retain sufficient numbers of suitable employees.

## **Education and Training**

Another key issue raised frequently throughout the available literature, that also has clear workforce development implications, is the reported lack of strong educational pathways in the town from K-12, and then on to post-secondary training or employment. This obviously has a clear impact upon available workforce supply, with a major ‘pipeline’ of fresh labour and skills in most labour markets being new entrants to the workforce: young people and recent school leavers, apprentices and trainees, graduates and cadets.

Strengthening education and training options and pathways in the town is a critical component of ensuring an effective local labour supply, and should be a key priority of the Shire’s workforce development activities as it seeks to expand and diversify its attraction, recruitment and retention streams and strategies. Given that constraints around housing are likely to continue for some time in spite of efforts to alleviate supply and affordability, growing the internal capacity of the Westonia labour market via consolidated education and training pathways would seem to be an important focus for the Shire’s workforce planning in the near to medium term.

Working in partnership with the school, Merredin College—and other providers of education and training in the town (including the Community Resource Centre)—therefore constitutes a critical workforce development and planning challenge for the Shire.

### ***The Shire's Key Advantage as Employer is Flexibility***

Although not able to compete with the mines on salary, or provide affordable housing options to other than a small number of employees, many of those consulted recognised that a key advantage the Shire has as a prospective employer is its ability to offer a more flexible and responsive model of employment than the mining industry, which is structured around long shift rosters with rigorous and onerous safety and risk management issues which, over time, can have negative lifestyle impacts.

The Shire as employer has implemented a range of strategies to support employee needs, including allowing children into the workplace after school, being flexible around attendance at school events, and offering part-time working hours and job share arrangements. And although it was noted by many parties consulted that the Shire demonstrates a strong willingness to accommodate more flexible and family friendly practices, it was felt that more could be done to further increase the Shire's flexibility as an employer, and appeal to a range of potential recruits for whom working in the mines might not be an attractive lifestyle choice.

### ***Promoting the Westonia Lifestyle***

As an adjunct to attracting people to work in the Shire, there was also seen to be some collateral value in promoting the value of living in the Westonia Shire generally.

A key point in this regard is Westonia's unique status as a country town that offers all the charms and benefits of a rural lifestyle, and yet is only 3 hours' drive from a number of larger urban centres that offer all the amenities of metropolitan living.

Westonia's unique charm, nestled amongst 4,000ha of salmon gum, morell and gimlet woodland interspersed with granite outcrops and remnants of the town's gold mining past, including a new mine look out and the numerous Façade Shop Fronts aimed to recreate the look of the main street during the 1900's mining boom is also a marketing point of leverage that could be used to further enhance Westonia's status as a boutique country location with close links to tourist and heritage attractions.

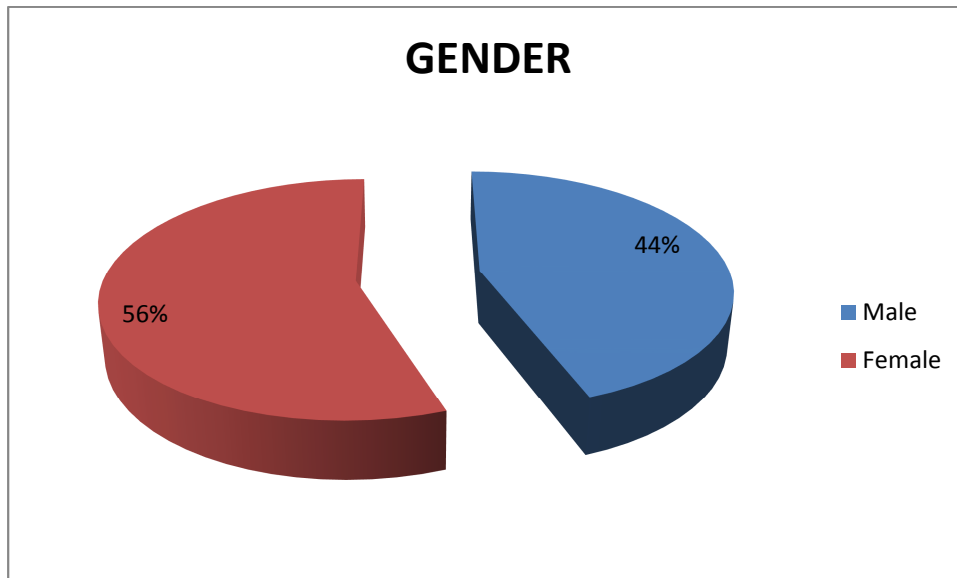
Although these strategies relate more broadly to the marketing and economic development of Westonia itself, promoting the particular rural charms and lifestyle advantages of the Westonia-Wheatbelt area could form a useful part of an enhanced approach to successful attraction and retention strategies at the Shire, and could be incorporated into future attraction and recruitment strategies.

### ***Demographic Data***

As a key input into this review, the Chief Executive Officer conducted a workforce survey to assess the level of staff engagement, commitment and motivation. While many staff participated in workshops, these aspects of working life are often not matters staff will speak about openly, so a confidential survey is usually the most effective way to assess the extent to which staff are committed to remaining with the organisation, and are engaged in and motivated about their work and the organisation.

The survey was issued to 18 staff below CEO level and elicited 11 responses. An overall 62% is a very high response rate.

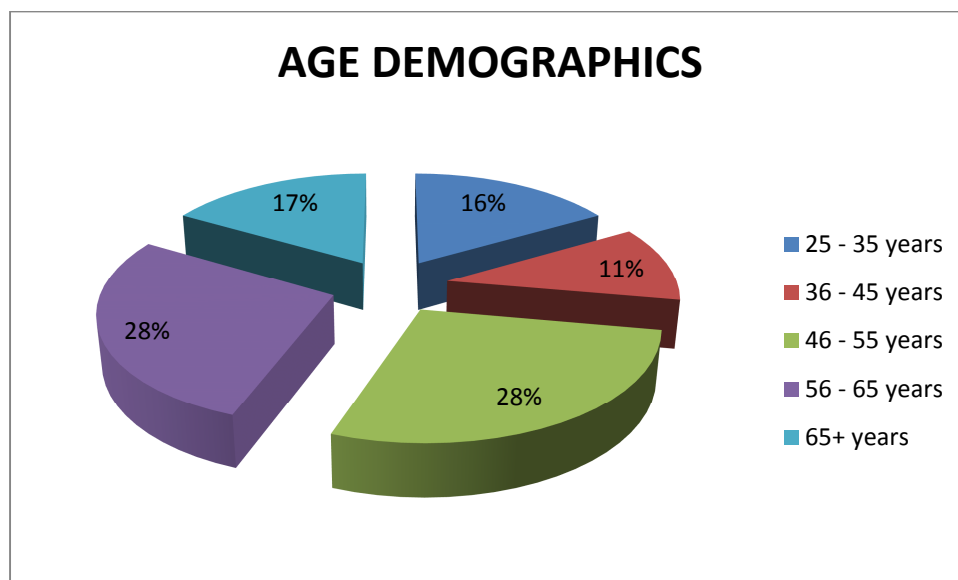
Some key demographic data is outlined in this first section.



**Figure 1. Gender Ratio**

The survey demonstrates relatively even spread of gender in the workforce. Traditionally the office staff has been a predominately female orientated workforce, with the complete reverse trend on the outside works crew.

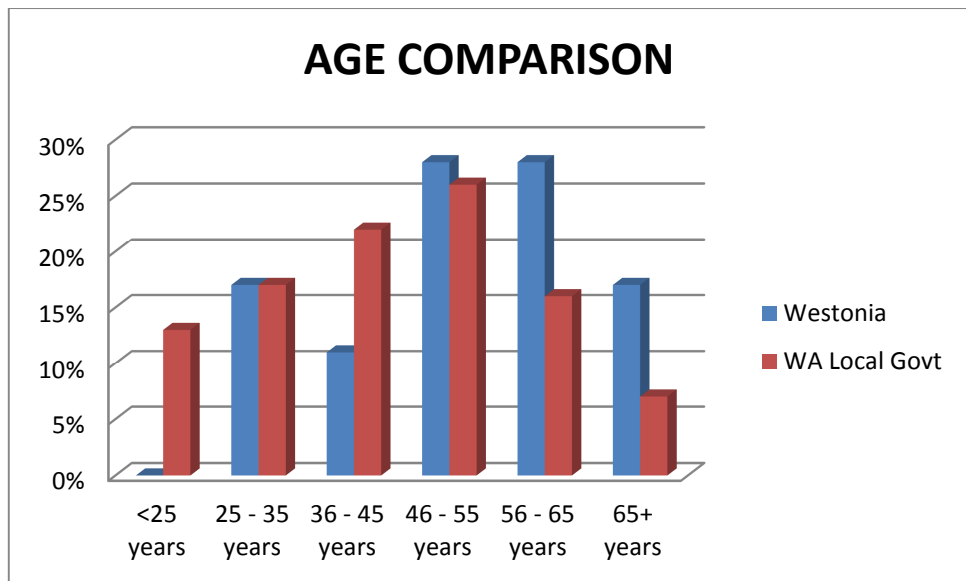
Westonia has been fortunate to have a blend of genders in both office and works crews over the past few years.



**Figure 2. Age Breakdown**

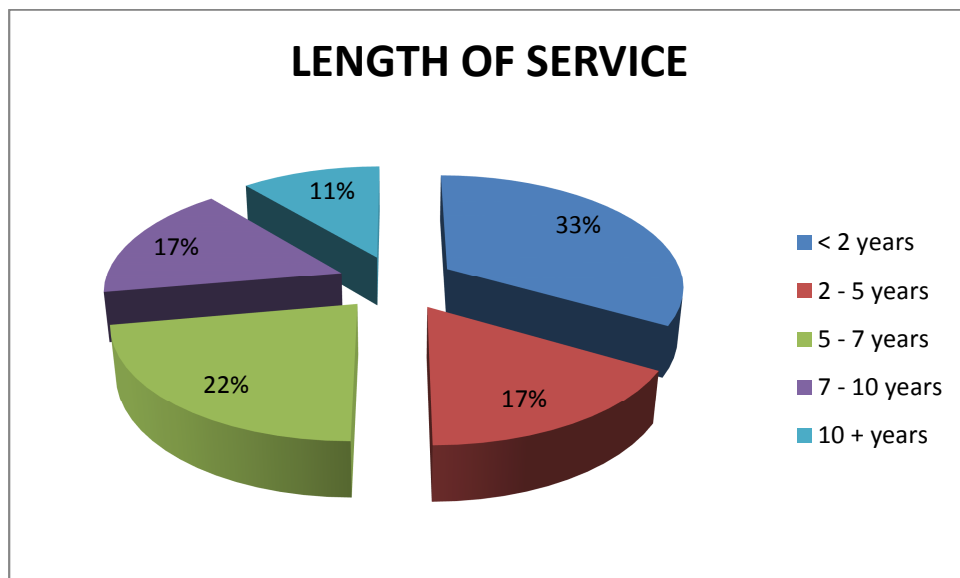
The survey responses revealed an ageing workforce at the Shire, with 73% of the workforce aged 46 and over. This suggests that the Shire may face even more significant workforce

shortages in the future considering that many of its older employees may reach retirement age at around the same time.



**Figure 3. Age Comparison with Local Government**

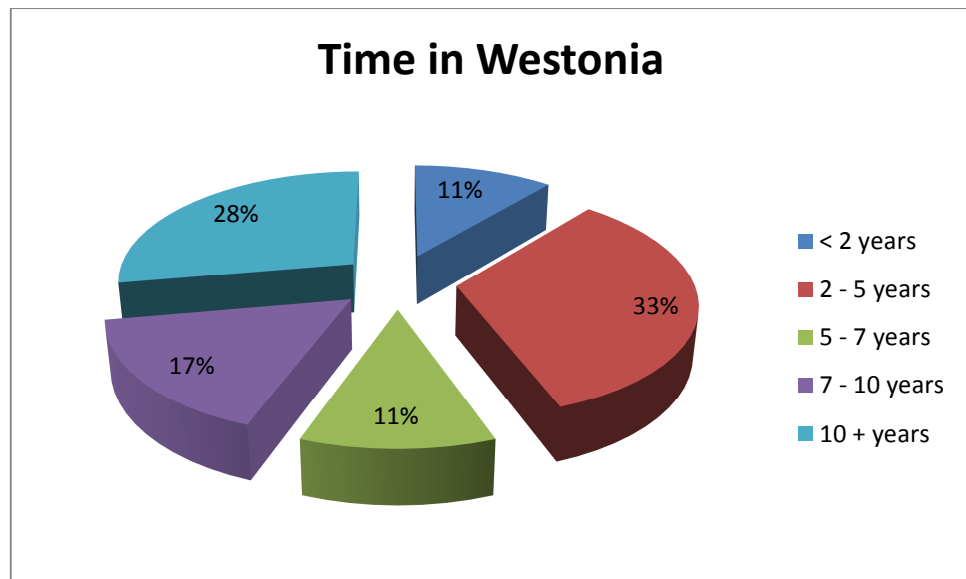
Conversely, the survey also reveals a lack of young people working at the Shire, with no employees aged under 25, and only 27% aged below 45. Targeting younger people (e.g. those with young children looking for part-time work) would potentially provide a ‘feeder group’ as older staff move into retirement/preretirement phase.



**Figure 4. Length of Service**

The survey suggests a largely short-term workforce, in that 50% of staff have been employed for less than five years. This may suggest a level of heavy turnover, as indicated by the Chief

Executive Officer the recent couple of years has seen the retirement and resignation of several long term employees.



**Figure 5. Length of Time in Westonia**

The idea, often suggested during the consultations, that people cannot or will not be attracted to live and work in Westonia is not borne out by the survey data, with around 55% having lived there for seven years or less, which suggests relatively recent relocation. The fact 40% of Shire employees have lived in the town for three years or less suggests it has been possible to attract people to settle in Westonia. Even if their reason for relocating in the first instance is not linked to a job with the Shire it does suggest it should be possible to attract people to the town to work.

#### ***Job Satisfaction and Work Life Balance***

The survey results indicate high levels of overall job satisfaction, with almost all employees agreeing that their job was stimulating and varied and had a great deal of job satisfaction.

That said, there were a small amount that while satisfied with the overall work, showed some clear evidence of dissatisfaction in the perceived lack of training and lack of direction from outside management (only in periods when Works Supervisor had resigned)

- *While the outside crew are proficient in all of the plant, further training in the plant (proficiency tickets) would give the crew more confidence in their ability.*
- *Additional training in safety such as Load binding & Dogman required.*
- *Need clearer direction from management on day to day requirements of the job.*
- *Outside Leadership is limited due to resignation of Work Supervisor; seem to be treading water at the moment.*
- *There is an apparent lack of feedback and Recognition from Supervisor & Council*



There are several initiatives that will increase Council's employer of choice status relating to work life balance. These initiatives include:

- paid parental leave
- flexible hours arrangements
- job sharing
- family friendly work places
- home based work
- phased retirement and
- employee wellness programs.

Some of these initiatives are already occurring on an ad hoc basis but they can be researched and, where appropriate, considered for formal implementation.

Staff are also encouraged to participate in community groups and associated committees.

### ***Succession Plan***

Council need to identify all key positions within the organisation and develop a succession plan for these positions in the medium term . This plan may involve external recruitment and professional development and mentoring of existing staff over a specific timeframe to meet anticipated retirements and future skill shortages.

### ***Mentoring Program***

There is a recognised gap between the younger workers and employees closer to retirement age. A mentoring program needs to be established to develop staff within their chosen field. This may be facilitated by staff identified for phased retirement or other experienced staff prepared to share their knowledge with less experienced employees.

The mentoring program will be on a structured basis and will involve formal training for potential mentors.

### ***Local Government Influences***

#### **Local Government Reform - Metropolitan Local Government Review**

The Metropolitan Local Government Review has created a degree of uncertainty for Metropolitan Local Governments and any change to the structure and function of Local Government in Western Australia will present both challenges and opportunities.

On 25 October 2012, the Minister for Local Government tabled the Metropolitan Local Government Review Report in Parliament. At the time of writing this report, the State Government has not announced any decision regarding this matter.

While the Metropolitan Local Government Review does not have an immediate effect on the structure of Local Government in Westonia, the ramifications of any such review and potential legislation changes can affect the construction and outcomes of this of this Plan.

In the interim, the Shire can only proceed on the basis of Business as Usual.

## 6.0 STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS WORKFORCE TRENDS

This section identifies approaches to positively address the national and local workforce trends and the strategies are summarised in the implementation timetable in the next section.

STRATEGY	ACTIONS	PRIORITY	MEASURE
<b>Strategy 1</b> Retention of Older Workers – Phased Retirement	1.1 Develop and implement a staff procedure that provides options for older workers (over 55 years) to have access to part-time work and/or home based work.  The procedures will include options to move to project based work and mentoring roles with younger	Medium	Implement policy where practical to provide options to employees.
	1.2 Conduct a survey of all employees aged 50 years and over to identify anticipated retirement levels and to gauge employee expectations in relation to ongoing employment.	Medium	Initiate survey to appropriate employees
<b>Strategy 2</b> Succession Plan	2.1 Develop and implement a succession plan for all key positions across the organisation that addresses external recruitment, professional development and mentoring of existing staff over a specific timeframe to meet anticipated retirements and future skill shortages.	High	Develop a plan that suits the needs of Council.
<b>Strategy 3</b> Mentoring Program	3.1 Develop and implement a structured mentoring program so that older employees can share their knowledge and experience with younger workers.	High	Identify staff to participate in mentoring program.
<b>Strategy 4</b> Work/Life Balance	4.1 Implement procedures to provide improved paid parental leave entitlements	Low	Develop procedure pertaining to leave entitlements
	4.2 Develop and implement a system of variable working hours arrangements that meets	Medium	Modify and enhance program currently in place

	Council's operational needs.		
	4.3 Develop procedures for job-sharing where practicable	Medium	Modify and enhance program currently in place
	4.5 Research family friendly best practice organisations and develop recommendations for implementation.	low	Conduct research into family friendly organisations
	4.6 Review and implement home based work procedures.	low	Modify and enhance program currently in place
	4.8 Employees to be encouraged to participate in community groups and associated committees.	Medium	Modify and enhance program currently in place
<b>Strategy 5</b> Employee Retention	1.1 Refer 1.1		
	5.2 Develop and implement a performance management framework focusing on outcomes and results and include the elements of recognition and reward.	Medium	Modify and enhance program currently in place
	5.3 Refer 4.1		
<b>Strategy 6</b> Establish policies and practices to strengthen the commitment, engagement and motivation of existing staff.	6.1 Ensure appropriate opportunities for training and skills development are made available to all staff and they are actively encouraged and supported to participate	High	Performance review discussions result in the identification of appropriate skills development and personnel records reflect attendance
	6.2 Establish more formal and regular communications between supervisors/managers and staff to enable more frequent and ongoing feedback on performance	High	Perceptions regarding the frequency, timeliness and equality of information sharing between senior management and all staff improves
	6.3 Ensure the induction program for new staff is sufficiently robust and effective and includes information specific to working for local government.	Medium	An induction program that meets the needs of all new staff
	6.4 Assess the Shire's capacity to offer marginally	Medium	Shire establishes extent to which it is

	higher pay rates		able to fund higher salaries
	6.5 Consider innovative job packaging models to enable staff to better balance their work-life responsibilities including aligning the work schedules of Shire employees with the rosters of mining staff (where applicable), encouraging job sharing, school hours based work etc	High	A range of different employment models are identified and offered as part of the Shire's retention program. Currently doing this.
<b>Strategy 7:</b> Establish strong relationships between the Shire and young local people.	7.1 Offer a school based traineeship or apprenticeship to encourage young people to consider local government employment.	High	School-based traineeship/apprenticeship program currently established
	7.2 Establish working relationships between the Principals of all local schools and the Shire to enhance young peoples' understanding of the workings of local government.	Medium	Mechanisms established to facilitate ongoing working relationships. Currently doing this.
	7.3 Seek to work in collaboration with the local mining companies to enhance educational opportunities for young people in the Shire.	High	Shire seeks membership of the existing working group
	7.4 Consider hosting a careers day at the Council for school students to enhance their understanding of the breadth of employment opportunities available.	Low to medium	Feasibility assessed. Discuss on a regional basis - WEROC
<b>Strategy 8:</b> Improving housing availability and affordability.	8.1 Explore other options for low cost housing that don't necessarily involve the usual brick and iron 3-4 bedroom houses on a standard block, but a different type of innovative housing product including cottage or terrace style housing, eco-cottages or other low cost, environmentally sustainable and more compact housing models.	Medium	Other housing options identified and progressed
	8.2 Explore the viability of Council renting accommodation in the town/surrounding areas and/or providing more short stay/serviced accommodation for staff.	Medium to High	Increased access to accommodation to address short to medium term needs

## 7.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY/ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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