



Gunnedah Shire Council  
**Workforce Plan**  
2013/14 - 2016/17

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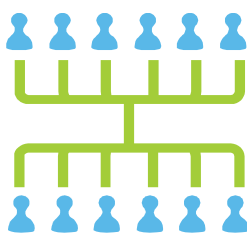
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# 1. What is Workforce Planning



Council’s Human Resources Workforce Plan flows from Council’s primary policy documents including its vision and mission statements and overall strategies.

The aim of the Human Resources Workforce Plan is to provide suitably qualified and highly engaged employees to deliver quality services to our community and internal customers.

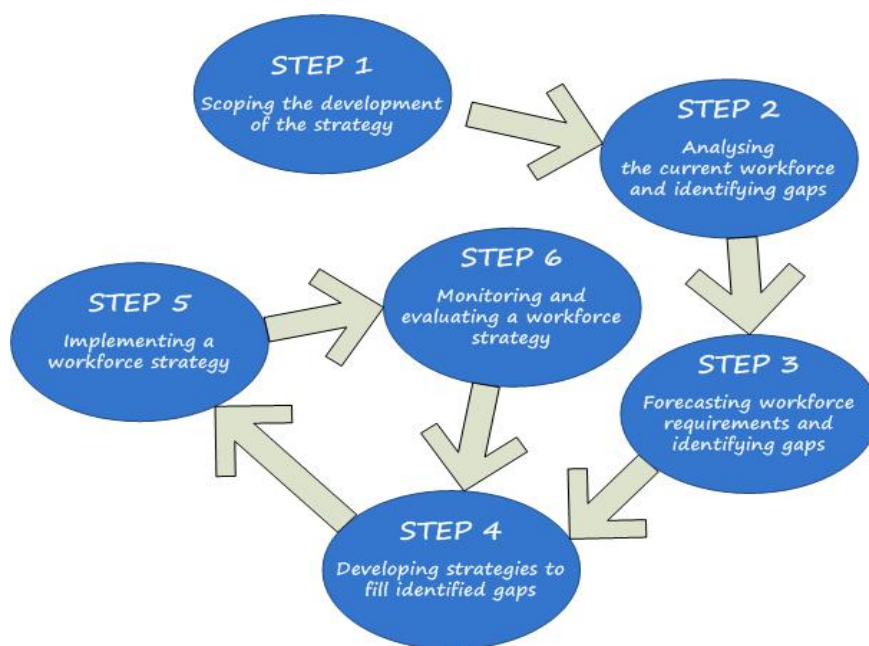
Key elements of the plan for the forthcoming four year period include:

- Continue and review effective staff recognition system for high performance.
- Review and enhance our Risk Management System.
- Annual reviews of leadership assessment and development plan with particular attention to “tomorrow’s talent today” as part of succession planning.
- Review of performance management systems.
- Enhance our internal communication processes.
- 18 monthly engagement surveys with follow up actions.
- Plan, as necessary, for industrial relations changes.
- Acquisition and retention of talent that is aligned to the values and principles of Council.
- Annually review critical assumptions on labour needs.

The approach for the Gunnedah Shire Council’s Workforce Plan is derived from the Premiers Department of NSW Work Force Planning: A Guide document, namely the critical assumptions following the PEEST analysis (Political Economical Environmental Social Trend analysis) and also inline with the Department’s checklist. This has involved consultation across all managerial levels to “ensure that sufficient resources and time” has been allocated to the project.

A full scale agency planning approach has been used as the workforce labour plan forms part of a subset of a corporate plan being the Community Strategic Plan and four year delivery plan.

## Workforce Planning - Developing a Workforce Strategy – the steps to take





## 2. Work Force Plan Action List \*

Area	Objective	Impact	Action
Claims Management	Ensure early return to work for injured employees and minimise lost time injuries	Reduce impact of claims experience in workers compensation	Job Dictionary for suitable duties and ramp down
Training and Development	Align training plan with organisation strategic plan	Staff are trained and given opportunities that provide increase productivity, effective communication quality decision making and job satisfaction experience (coaching, mentoring)	Review opportunities throughout business for traineeships with attention to if traineeships are intended to offer ongoing employment and councils ability to provide support and supervision  Design Return on investment to gauge effectiveness to changes around skills acquisition, behaviour, decision making and employees engagement
Attraction	Apply excellent recruitment processes	Right person right job, cost effective	Minimise loss of productivity through maximalising lead time to recruitment
Employee Branding	Leverage strengths of existing brand position, go where our competitors for labour are not and mitigate negative attributes perceived or real	Knowledge, recognition, awareness and recall of why Gunnedah Shire Council is a great place to work from key opinion leaders and employees	Diversity in the workplace through Diversity Committee via initiatives announcing acceptable behaviour and celebrating our differences
Engaged Employees	Create positive work environment	Psychological and emotional commitment to the organisation where employees stay say and support Council	Employee Engagement Survey deep dive action resurvey
Succession Planning	Align training plan with the organisations strategic plan	Full staff in complement	Leadership model implemented
Work Health and Safety	Provide a safe system of work for stakeholders (workers volunteers and Person Conducting Business Undertakings)	Reduction in Lost Time Injuries and Reportable Injury Frequency Rate	Due diligence (Harmonisation compliant) through Safety Activity Score integration
Retention	Retain staff	Reduce the loss of human capital and minimise loss of production and service	Progression system review
Talent Management	Identify potential and ability	Readiness for deployment into critical positions	Annual review succession planning through 9 box assessment

\* The Work for Plan Action list represents key activities that support the Community Strategic Plan Outcomes being:

- 1.2 Council as an organisation
- 1.6.4 Council as an organisation will provide access to council traineeships and on the job training strengthening the local skill base

### 3. **The Role of Human Resources**

Human Resource Management as a discipline is concerned with the effective and efficient management of an organisation's employees towards the achievement of desirable goals and objectives. It therefore follows that in all organisations, regardless of size, employees must be managed well and provided with leadership.

The basic activities associated with managing people are:

- a) Obtaining suitable people through planned recruitment, selection, retention and induction processes;
- b) Improving employee skills, performance and potential through training, development, learning and knowledge management; and
- c) Enhancing sustainable high performance through the provision of opportunity, reward and recognition, consultation and participation in decision making and work / life balance programs.

The Human Resource team will continue to develop and enhance individual expertise to deliver the full range of services to the organisation. Leadership by the Human Resources team in the fundamental Human Resources procedures at departmental level will ensure a move to best practice in people management.

### 4. **Measuring Our Performance**



Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) assist to ensure that the Human Resources capabilities and actions are aligned to the organisations needs.

The introduction of KPI's in its infancy and we need 12 months of normative data to establish bench marks married together with industry performance for meaningful comparisons. The introduction of KPI's is part of the journey towards continuous improvement.

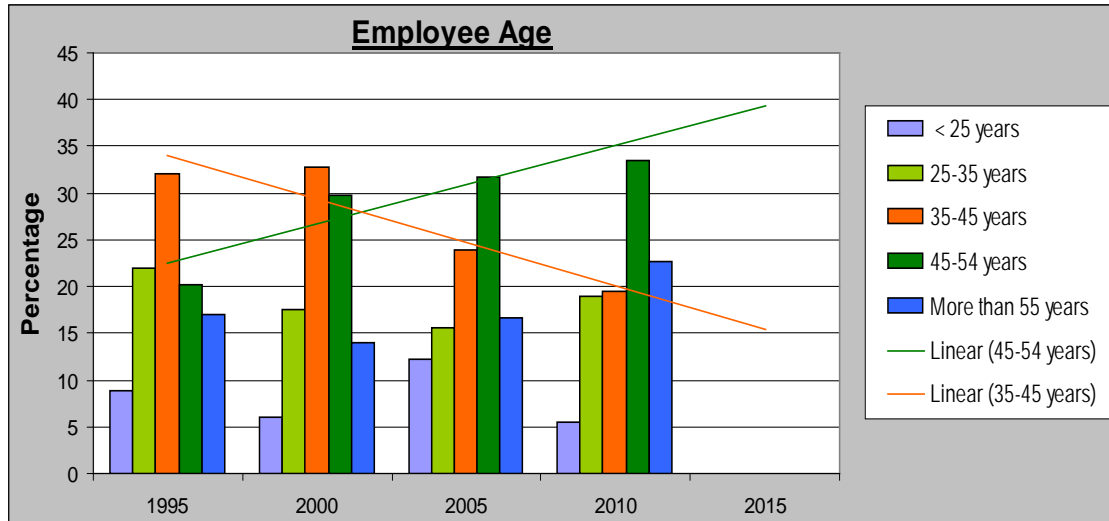
The key Metrics are:

- Absenteeism
- Turnover
- Various Safety Line items
- Engagement
- Learning and Development
- Performance and Outcomes

### 5. Workforce Analysis 1995-2015

To fully understand the needs of the business regarding staff numbers we have forecasted based on trend lines key areas that will impact on our workforce such as length of service, age and part-time versus fulltime.

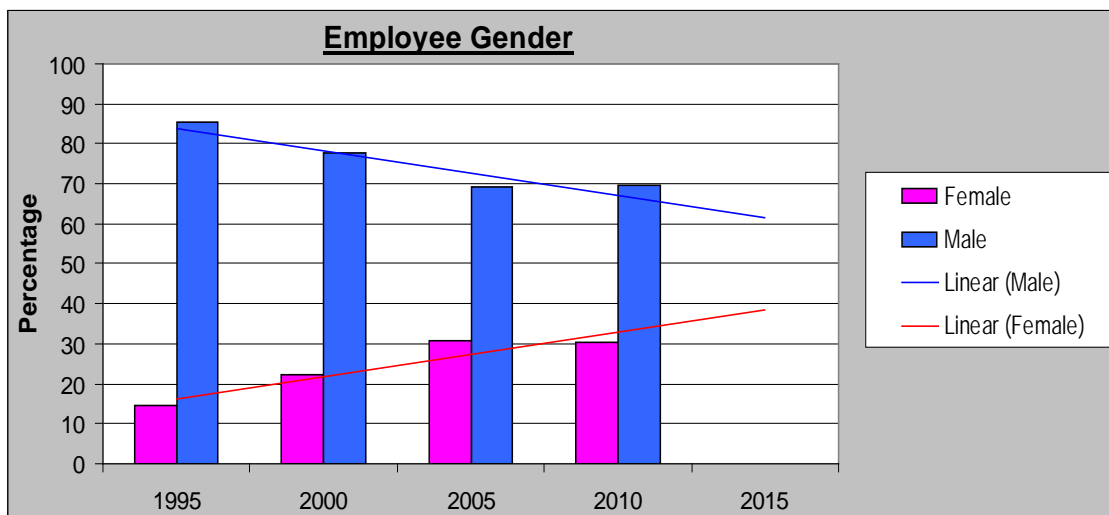
**Table 1**



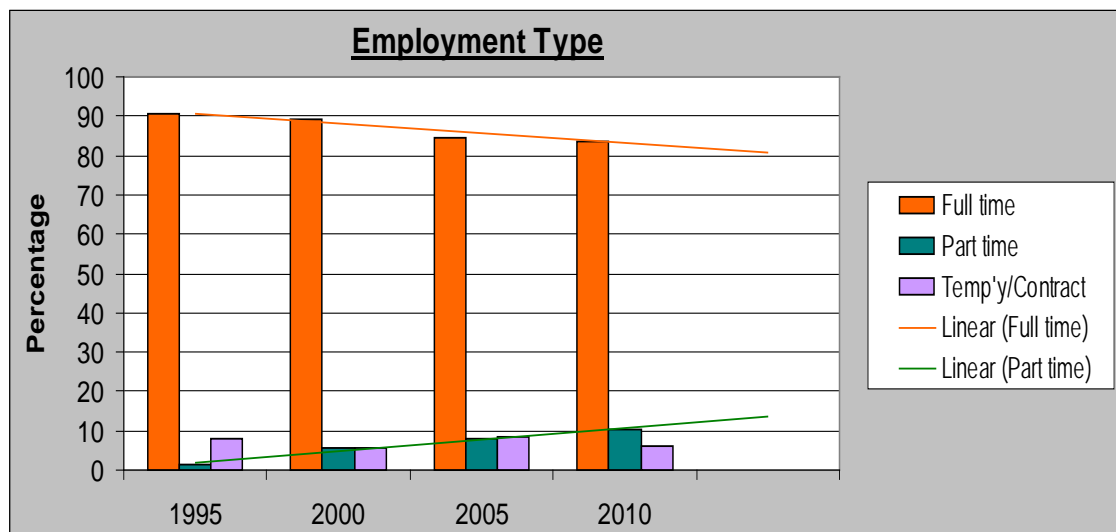
Insights: Increase in employees aged from 45-54 years of age and decrease in employees aged 35-45 years of age. This maybe of a concern particularly regarding outdoor workers.

Consideration will have to be given to the potential impact on claims experience regarding injuries resting from an aging workforce. Council will have to mitigate the risk through revisiting its employment structure. This may result in more part-time employment. How we ramp down employees and marry into their needs in a physical capability context will also need attention.

**Table 2**



Insights: Females in the business will continue to increase married into new legislation introduced 1 January 2011 concerning paid parental leave and the demand by employees for flexible work arrangements there will be an increased need for contracts in the business with expressed periods of tenure ship for maternity relief positions and part-time employment.

**Table 3**

Insights: Both part-time and contract employees continue to increase influenced by a significant change in gender and a desire towards higher quality of life vs work.

An increase in part-time labour is expected to increase with flexible workplace arrangements and potential access to part-time work by older employees.

## 6. Critical Assumptions

In order to estimate the needs for employee numbers based on Full-time Equivalents (FTE's), an approach that considered political, environmental, economical and social trends was used to identify what key elements may occur in the next five years, that could impact on functional areas. These key elements form the critical assumptions.

Changes to the need for Full-Time Equivalents (FTE's) are based on financial capacity of the organisation to pay for increases as per the long-term financial plan and insight to critical assumptions.

## 7. Employee Engagement



Employee engagement is the extent that an employee believes in the mission, purpose and values of an organisation and demonstrates that commitment through their actions as an employee and their attitude towards the employer and customers.

Employee engagement is high when the statements and conversations held reflect a natural enthusiasm for the company, its employees and the products or services provided, (Derek Stockley 2005).

It has been routinely found that employee engagement scores account for as much as half of the variance in customer satisfaction scores.

In a study of professional service firms, the Hay Group found that offices with engaged employees were up to 43% more productive.

Furthermore, those not engaged generated 23% less revenue than their engaged counterparts.



Engaged employees also outperformed the not engaged and actively disengaged employees in other divisions. It comes as no surprise, then, that engaged employees have been statistically linked with innovation events and better problem solving.

### **Gunnedah Shire Council Employee Engagement Plan**

1. Survey Cycle 1.
2. Analysis- What does it all mean about the tool, metrics, and individual results.
3. Share - Communicate with employee's results.
4. Focus Groups - deep dive into results.
5. Actions Targeted.
6. Execution - form action teams, create action plans and make change!
7. Communicate - sell the sizzle - harvest credit.
8. Survey Cycle 2 survey employees to see if actions were meaningful to employees.

### **Results From Cycle 1 December 2010**

The success of Gunnedah Shire Council in serving our community depends on our staff. We need our staff to have rewarding and satisfying jobs as well as a high level of commitment, self awareness, and concern for the wellbeing of our community. It is expected that this survey that we have just completed, will contribute to meeting these needs and that we can track our progress in future surveys.

The Executive Leadership Team (MANEX) has taken time to reflect on feedback and the themes that arise from it. Staff members place a high level of importance on being valued and achieving the goals and objectives of their work area.

We are performing particularly well in some of these areas and we need to work on others. It is important to recognise that this is a journey rather than a 'quick fix', and we will not lose sight of the critical parts of call.

A total of 142 employees participated in the survey, representing a response rate of 81% based on the staff population of 176. This is a positive result for Gunnedah Shire Council. The higher the response rate, the more confident we can be that the survey's results represent your views.

#### **What is important to staff?**

- Valuing employees at Gunnedah Shire Council.
- Achieving my work area's goals and objectives.
- Keeping skilled employees.
- Providing for the health and wellbeing of employees.
- Providing a safe work environment.

#### **Council's areas of strength**

- Health and safety being a top priority when I am performing my job responsibilities.
- My immediate supervisor showing interest in health and safety of employees in my areas.
- Producing or delivering quality products and services in my work area.
- Working as a team in my work area.
- Providing a safe work environment.

**Council's areas for improvement**

- Keeping skilled employees.
- Valuing employees at Gunnedah Shire Council.
- Providing incentives and rewards.
- Cooperating across work areas.
- Demonstration of leadership by the Senior Directors.

**Our Learning's from Comments**

- Providing incentives and rewards to ensure employees feel valued.
- Promoting cooperation and trust throughout the organization.
- Improve communication.

**So What's Next?**

The next step is to hold discussions with a number of employees so as a management team we can gain a better understanding of what lays behind the results. From this suggestions will be taken and actions formed to address the opportunities and consolidate the areas where we are doing well.

**8. Employee Orientation**

Our orientation program needs to be a planned welcome that reaffirms our hiring decision and the employee's decision to join us.

How we introduce our new employees into our organisation and induct them into their role will have a significant impact on their ability to perform their role well. However induction is only part of our responsibility to ensure a new employee or even an employee that is only new to a particular job family is given

appropriate orientation.

Induction will generally deal with house keeping issues such as policy and procedure review where as orientation is the larger picture that assists an employee to feel welcome and where all aspects of various components of commencing a new role are covered.

It is the responsibility of the manager the employee reports to, to ensure their new staff member actively participates in the Gunnedah Shire Orientation Program.

The following outlines Gunnedah Shire's organisational requirements for conducting the Orientation Program.

**Objective Of The Orientation Program**

The purpose of orientation is to ensure that:

- a. All employees engaged to work at Gunnedah Shire are provided with an understanding of the organisations policies, employment practices and expectations.
- b. Employees have an understanding of the organisation and its objectives.
- c. Feel comfortable and are integrated as a valued team member particularly in their own function.

The first three months is the critical time in determining whether a person stays in or leaves a job. A well planned and conducted orientation program ensures that a new staff member becomes thoroughly familiar with the job they are engaged to perform but also ensures they feel they are part of the greater team and an intricate part of our journey towards sustained success for Council.

As such each service area is required to undertake service area specific induction for each new employee.

The Orientation Program provides the opportunity for progress to be reviewed and any problems discussed. It shall be the responsibility of the Manager to ensure regular reviews are conducted with the New Employee.

The on-boarding experience provides an employee with critical information about their role, personnel issues, health and safety, support for their development and some essential facts about Gunnedah Shire Council.

## 9. **Closing The Gap (Attraction and Retention)**



Council must achieve an employer of choice through defining the value proposition for employment.

We recognise that we need to differentiate our business from competitors as a place to work.

Our development programs will exploit opportunities for connectivity across Council.

We will execute on diversity and inclusion plans as they are deployed.

Key Strategies include:

- a. Best practice in collaboration, diversity and people practices.
- b. Assess and understand our current position through the formation of a baseline group of Councils.
- c. Benchmark and target critical actions.
- d. Check these actions against transparent and meaningful measurements.
- e. Ensure key messages of people practices are shared with identified and targeted community and government groups, education dept, chamber of commerce, charities, base hospital doctors, media, careers councillors, centre link and emergency services, these are our potential advocates of our employer brand and our stakeholders in alignment to Community Consultation.
- f. Develop a common approach to the selection of individuals who possess the values, talents, skills and experience required to succeed within Council.
- g. Increase Council's ability to facilitate talent assessment, coaching, and development.

In order for current employees and potential candidates to fully see our value declaration, it's vital that the full scope of what we offer is presented. This is achieved through the promotion of total rewards packaging.

## 10. **Work Health and Safety**



Council's Work Health and Safety Policies detail its responsibilities for maintaining a safe and healthy workplace. Council as an employer has a duty at common law to implement and maintain a safe system of work for both employees and others.

In relation to employees this is often expressed as being a duty to take reasonable care to avoid exposing employees to foreseeable risks of injury.

In relation to others, Council also has a common law duty of care to persons other than employees for risks arising out of its services or activities. Council is also vicariously liable for the action of its employees.

In recent years Council has introduced a risk management process and through improved policies and increased awareness has reduced the incidence of workplace injury and damage to plant and equipment.

Continued emphasis on training at management and supervisor level, as well as the development of an essential safety data base will maintain the process of culture change necessary to achieve excellence in our Work Health and Safety management system.

A key element in our forward planning is the continuation of our internal safety audit and hazard identification program though benchmarking best practice and articulating into action sustained approach in our day to day actions.

The use of the State Cover on-line audit process provides us with a comparison of Council's Work Health and Safety processes against other Councils. This audit is conducted annually.

## 11. **Training and Development**



The overall goal of training and development is the improved performance and productivity of the Organisation. Specific objectives include:

- Develop a positive organizational culture of engaged employees.
- Developing employee core skills (e.g. problem solving, communicating, teamwork and customer service).
- Improving employee skills and technical mastery for their specific role.
- Assisting employees to develop to their optimum potential.

Training data will be reviewed annually to ensure that planned activities and programs are both relevant and cost effective.

Human Resources will provide an overview of training expenditure to ensure that funds are allocated in line with strategic and operational priorities and opportunities are balanced across the organization.

Department managers and leaders will operate in concert with Human Resources through on-time delivery of key accountabilities such a performance reviews and skills inventories to ensure Human Resources delivers meaningful, cost effective, value based training and development program.

## Trainees

Partnerships with the State and Federal Governments Council will continue to provide traineeships to local youth in a range of disciplines based on organizational requirements. Since its inception in 2002, 26 young people from our community have benefited from the trainee program.

Existing worker traineeships continue to provide employees with an avenue to improve their skills and gain recognised qualifications.

Council is currently exploring options of potentially job sharing trainees amongst functions to ensure training plans are rigorously adhered to in order to deliver learning outcomes.

## **12. Performance Management**

The development and implementation of a new salary system continues to be a priority moving forward towards 2015. In 2008/09 the employee development and performance assessment process, focusing on clearly defined position descriptions were used for the first time.

Ensuring managers attain the skills to coach and lead their reports through meaningful dialogue and timely execution of the review process will assist to underpin Gunnedah Shire Council's performance capabilities in a Human Resources context.

### Recognition

To celebrate high achievement and illuminate examples throughout the organisation of high performance the Council has executed on recognition process. Staff are nominated every six months and approval sought from the relevant Directors.

Significant and sustained examples of corporate behaviour that are of benefit beyond the immediate work area and clearly demonstrate Council's core values that are used for recognition are:

- Personal trust
- Respect
- Integrity
- Support
- Honesty
- Confidence and optimism

Behaviour must be supported by examples such as improving an existing process resulting in substantial, measurable savings in time and resources and/or benefits to the Council such as customer satisfaction and positive image.

### 13. **Workplace Diversity**



To provide a truly engaged work force, Gunnedah shire Council understands the importance of providing an environment that supports and facilitates inclusion, awareness, understanding and mutual respect within the Gunnedah Shire Council workforce.

By recognising and embracing our differences - those that are obvious, as well as those that exist below the surface, we can create and sustain a respectful, inclusive work environment where all people feel valued and able to contribute to Gunnedah Shire Council's success.

The current structure regarding Equal Employment Opportunity is compliance centric. Modern Human Resources practices look towards diversity as capturing inclusiveness.

Human Resources proposes a committee that has a broad definition of diversity, and seeks to provide programs and resources that enhance knowledge and encourage understanding of diversity to be called the Diversity Committee.

Diversity can be defined in many different ways. What does it mean to us?

Diversity is a commitment to recognising and appreciating the variety of characteristics that make individuals unique in an atmosphere that promotes and celebrates individual and collective achievement.

Examples of these characteristics are: age; cognitive style; culture; disability (mental, learning, physical); economic background; education; ethnicity; gender identity; geographic background; language(s) spoken; marital/partnered status; physical appearance; political affiliation; race; religious beliefs; sexual orientation.

The Diversity Committee will be dedicated to creating a more inclusive environment in all realms of service grounded in respect and appreciation for individual differences.

The Committee will "commit to the value of a broad approach to diversity that includes ethnic, cultural, religious, gender and experiential differences".

- Mount a long-term diversity program through the work of the Diversity Committee.
- Initiate a dialogue with Council employees to define and examine diversity issues.
- Set priorities and take action to ensure a climate of openness, acceptance, and respect for individuals and points of view.
- Outcomes and the journey taken will form part of Gunnedah Shire Council's value declaration for attraction.



## 14. Review Of The Strategy



To ensure Gunnedah Shire Council's workforce strategy remains relevant and delivers on its objectives and remains aligned to the delivery plan and community strategic plan, its critical regular reviews against key milestones are undertaken. This will allow for the plan to remain live and permit informed changes to ensure adequate resources are allocated.

Monitoring and evaluation will include:

1. Performance measures identified in the strategy through use of Key results areas.
2. Include engagement with internal and external stakeholders.
3. Provide recommendations and timeframes for improving the strategy.
4. Include tollgates to identify risks and to provide strategic interventions to address them.

Understanding the return on investment on training, annual gap analysis on key positions, succession planning, and annual reviews of benchmarks will ensure we challenge ourselves towards best practice. This will form the basis to ensure the Workforce Plan remains efficient, effective and relevant.