

Workforce Plan

2026 - 2030



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Executive Summary

The Shire of Coolgardie is committed to effective workforce planning to ensure appropriate staffing levels and skills that support the delivery of quality services to the community. This plan guides Council in allocating resources efficiently, to attract, recruit, develop, and retain skilled employees.

As a core component of the Integrated Planning framework, the Workforce Plan outlines staffing requirements needed to meet Council and community expectations. It strengthens the Shire's focus on continuous improvement and ensures workforce requirements are well integrated across the organisation.

The Shire's aim is to have the right people in the right roles at the right time, enabling us to respond to changing government, community, economic and employment conditions. We also strive to maintain flexibility that supports staff wellbeing and reflects the lifestyle valued in our community. This approach helps us retain the skills and expertise needed to meet legislative obligations and deliver affordable, high-quality services.

Shire of Coolgardie Background

The Shire of Coolgardie is located in the Goldfields-Esperance region of Western Australia. It encompasses an area of 30,400 km² and includes the towns of Coolgardie, Kambalda, Widgiemooltha and the Aboriginal community of Kurrawang.

From the 2021 Census there were 3,478 people living in the Shire and the median age of community members was 38 years.

The Shire is located 550kms east of Perth, with its northern boundary beginning just 11 km from the centre of the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder. Residents of the Shire interact closely with the City for sporting activities, social interactions and service provision.

The Shire of Coolgardie Council is made up of seven Councillors. The following are the current Councillors and their positions:

Position	Term Expires
President Cr Paul Wilcox	Oct 2029
Deputy President Cr Anthony Ball	Oct 2029
Cr Daphne Simmons	Oct 2027
Cr Tammee Keast	Oct 2029
Cr Corey Matthews	Oct 2027
Cr Julie-Ann Williams	Oct 2029
Vacant	Oct 2027

Economic Profile

The Shire of Coolgardie has a strong mining history, with significant mining production and exploration activities continuing today.

The top industry employers within the Shire are:

- Mining (over 80% of residents are employed by the mining industry)
- Education & Training
- Construction
- Retail Trade
- Accommodation/Food

Recent statistics have highlighted that the value of minerals harvested in the Shire in the 2022/23 financial year exceeded \$3.4 billion. This figure represented a nearly nine percent increase from the previous year and outpaced other local government areas in the region by a significant margin.

The comprehensive mineral resources available in the Shire, including iron ore, gold, nickel, and lithium, position it uniquely with multiple major industries operating simultaneously.

History of the Mother of the Goldfields

The Shire of Coolgardie, known as the "Mother of the Goldfields," presents a fascinating blend of historical richness and contemporary economic significance.

Coolgardie was the heart of the goldrush era when gold was found in 1892. At the height of the gold rush in 1897, Coolgardie was Western Australia's third largest town servicing a population of 25,000 residents and over 700 mining companies.

Kambalda, established in 1897, was also a gold mining town until 1966 when the first of many large deposits of nickel was found in the town. These rich nickel deposits marked the beginning of Western Australia's 'nickel boom'.

Now, the Shire's towns boast grand historical buildings and unique museum collections that continue to attract visitors. With gold, nickel, lithium and iron ore, the Shire continues to thrive through its robust mining operations.

Our Community

The Shire of Coolgardie's vision is to be a connected, progressive, and welcoming community. This vision is underpinned by four key pillars of community:

4 PILLARS OF COMMUNITY



**Accountable and
Effective**



A Thriving Economy



**An Inclusive,
Safe and Vibrant
Community**



**Effective Management
of Infrastructure,
Heritage**

Workforce Planning

The Shire of Coolgardie is required to prepare a Strategic Community Plan, a Corporate Business Plan, Long Term Financial Plan and Workforce Plan. These plans are required under the Integrated Planning Framework and detail the delivery of the Councils agreed Vision to its Community. To assist in the delivery of these plans, informing strategies are developed and provide the detail of the resources required to successfully achieve the outcomes of the plans.

What is Workforce Planning?

“A continuous process of shaping the workforce to ensure that it is capable of delivering organisational objectives now and in the future” (Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) 2004)

The above definition highlights the key elements of workforce planning,

Workforce planning is:

- continuous, due to the changing dynamics of the workplace
- is reviewed regularly to ensure accuracy
- aimed at shaping the workforce with a clearly identified purpose and to bring about particular changes
- guides the allocation of financial resources to the workforce
- has its purpose linked with organisational objectives, and
- applies not just to the current workforce but anticipates future workforce requirements.

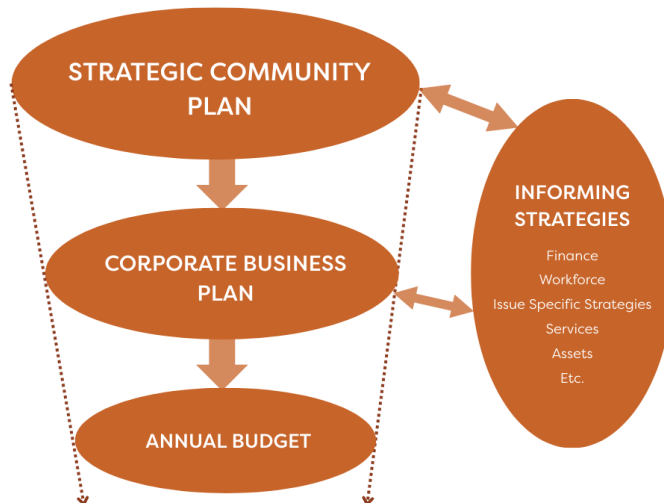
Benefits of the Workforce Plan

- Enables administration to respond quickly and more strategically to change by recognising emerging challenges within the Community.
- Designed to enhance efficiency, effectiveness and productivity by ensuring employees have the right knowledge, skills and suitability for their roles.
- Supports strategic workforce planning by identifying future staffing needs, monitoring staff departures and making arrangements to fill key vacancies;
- Encourages understanding of the organisation's workforce profile to optimise current capacity, and plan for future staffing needs.
- Helps identify and manage employees with critical knowledge to support efficient operations and preserve corporate memory.
- Monitors workforce expenditure and aligns it with business outputs and outcomes to ensure efficient resource use.

Workforce Planning and Integrated Planning

Workforce planning is one of the four key components of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework and Guidelines now in place across the Local Government sector in Western Australia.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Outputs: Plan Monitoring and Annual Reporting

MEASUREMENT AND REPORTING

At the strategic level, our Local Government's Workforce Plan takes into account the community aspirations, priorities and objectives identified in the Shire of Coolgardie's Strategic Community Plan. The Strategic Community Plan sets out the longer term vision for Council and highlights workforce needs.

The Workforce Plan becomes an essential component of the Corporate Business Plan, identifying workforce requirements and strategies for current and future operations over the next four years or more.

The linkages of the Workforce Plan with both Strategic Community Plan and Corporate Business Plan are shown in the diagram above.

Four Steps of Workforce Planning

The methodology used follows the practices and principles of WA Department of Local Government's Workforce Planning Guidelines Toolkit *

There are four distinct stages as outlined in the diagram.

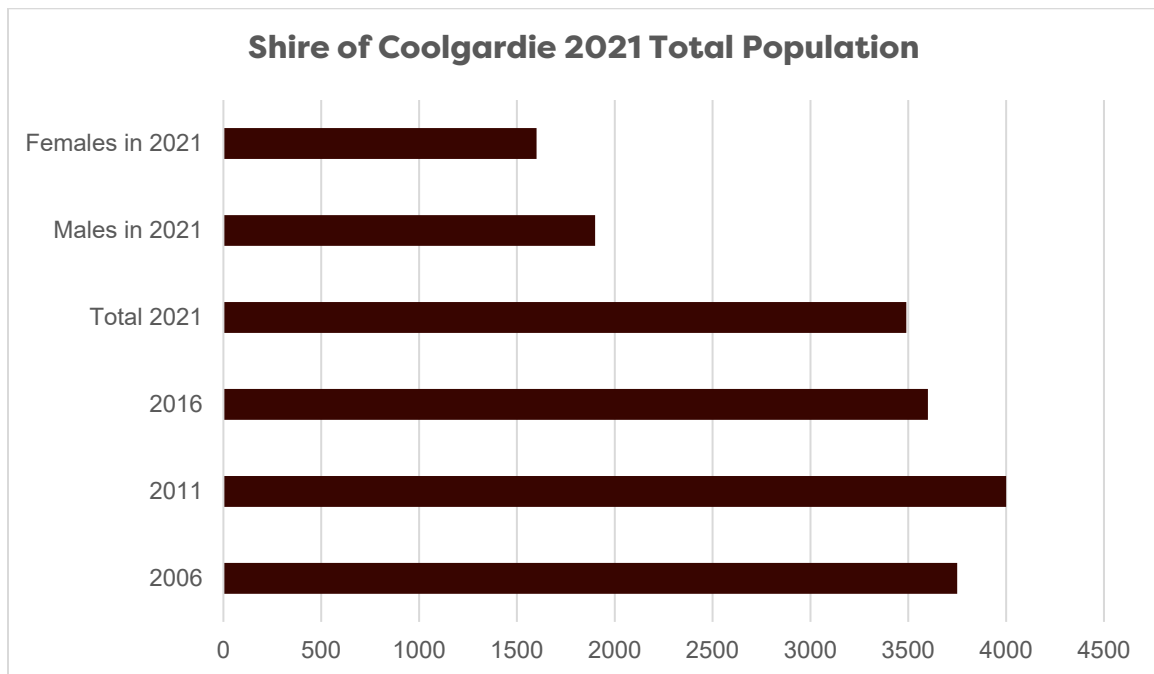


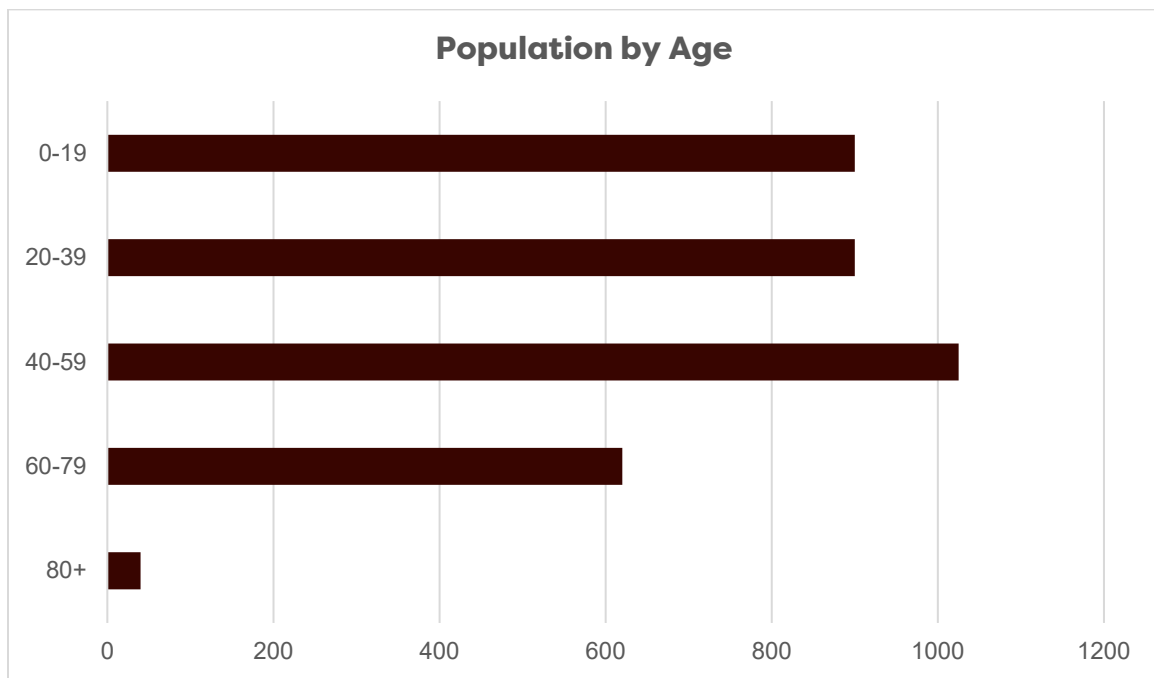
*Ref: <http://integratedplanning.dlg.wa.gov.au>

Internal and External Environment and Planning

An analysis of the demographic profile of the Shire has been undertaken, via the national Census in 2021. At that time, the estimated population of the Shire of Coolgardie was 3,478 with an average age of 38. The next census in 2026 will provide updated data, helping Council and the community understand how the Shire's demographics have changed.

Since 2011 the Shire of Coolgardie's population has seen a level of gradual decline which is not dissimilar to many rural Local Governments. However, with the recent construction of additional mining camps in the Shire, there is the expectation that the population, albeit transient workers, in the next Census will increase and continue to grow during the current resources boom.





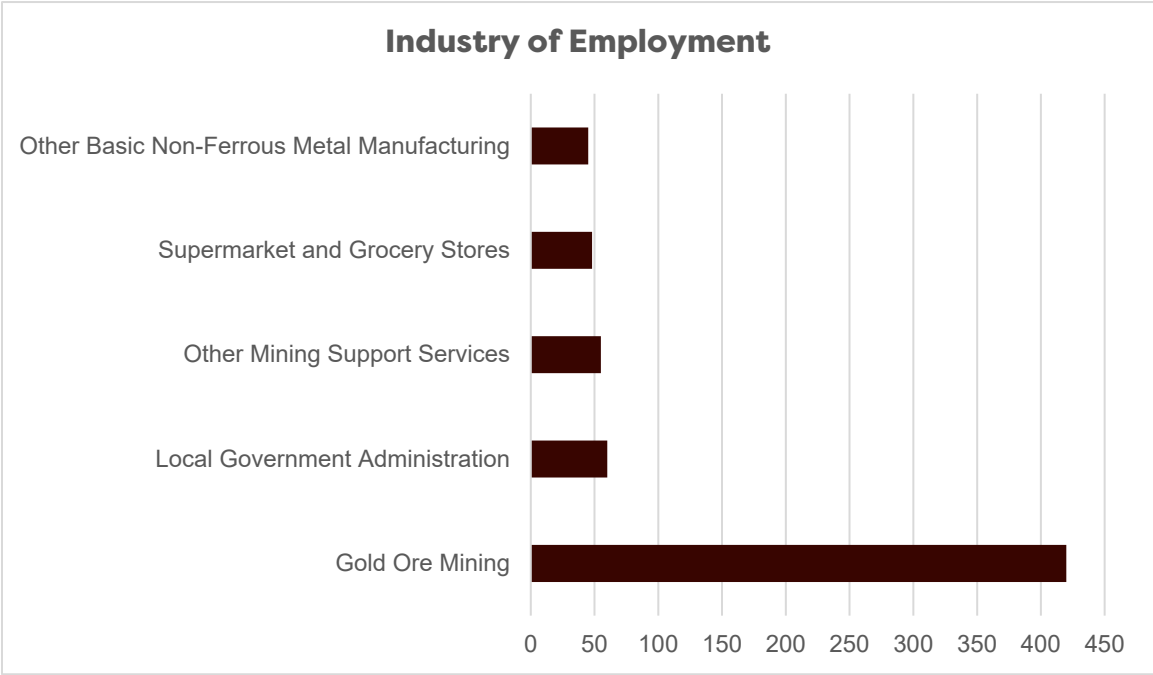
The most common ancestries residing within the Shire of Coolgardie are Australian 33.3%, English 30.2% Scottish 7.8%, Irish 6.4% but notably Australian Aboriginals are 8.9%.

Whilst 21% of the respondents did not advise of their education attainment, 27.9% of residents completed some form of higher education after leaving high school. This level of higher education ensures that businesses in the Shire have been successful in recruiting professionals and trades to the workplaces.

The occupations of those who completed the Census shows a clear bias towards employment from the mining sector. This is not unexpected and will continue to grow as the resources sector and the price of gold continues to rise.

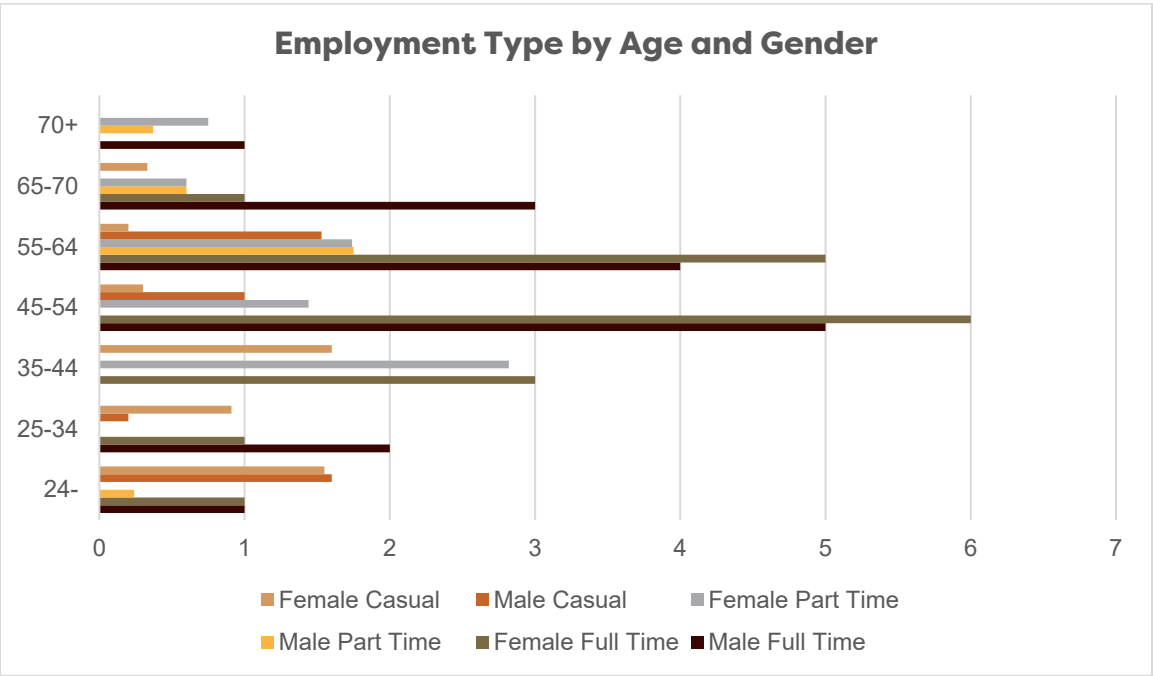


This chart shows the Industry of Employment and shows the net impact of gold ore mining in the Shire in 2021. Again, it is expected that this will continue to grow in 2026.



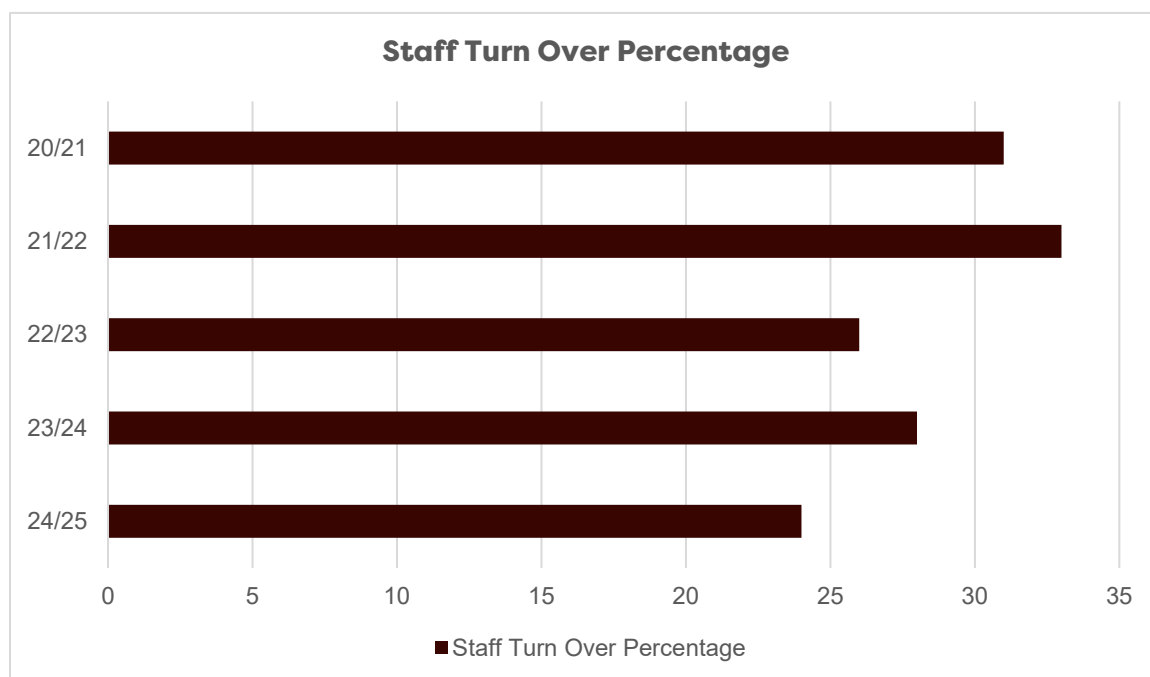
The Shire of Coolgardie had a total workforce of 52 FTE employees as of November 2025. Of the 52 employees, 22 were male and 30 were female.

The Shire’s workforce listed by age is provided below:



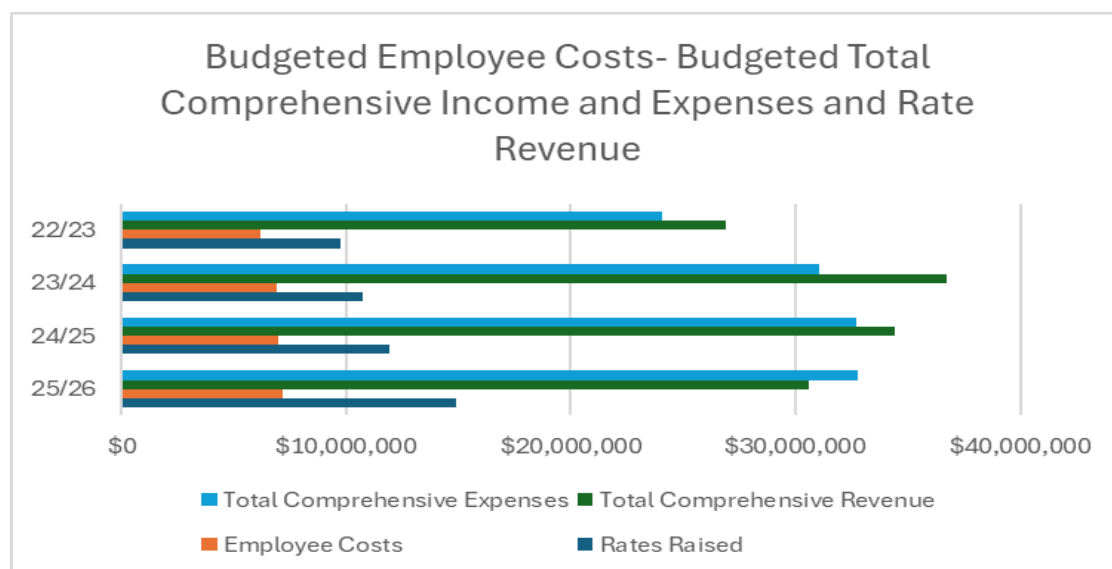
The average staff turnover from 2020/21 to 2024/25 was 29%. The Administration is working to reduce the rate of staff turnover as this is disruptive to the organisation and costly in recruitment and training time and expenses.

The 24/25 financial year did show a decline in staff turnover, this could be attributed to re-stabilisation of the organisation from December 2024, and it is hoped to continue seeing this percentage rate decrease overtime.



Gross employee costs including superannuation, workers compensation and accrued leave were originally budgeted at a total of \$7,156,837 for 2025-2026 and represented 23.3% of budgeted operating revenue and 21.82% of operating expenditure.

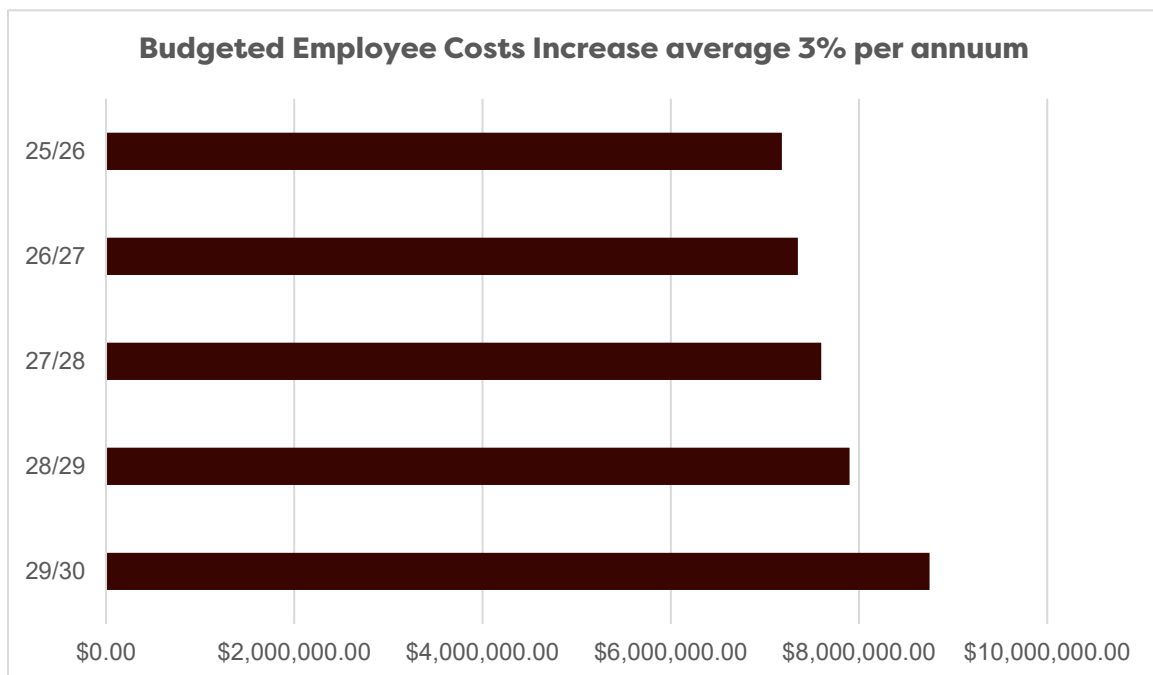
Many local governments due to their size and nature have a higher salaries and wages cost than rates raised, and this places them at significant financial risk should the supporting grants be removed. For the Shire of Coolgardie this is not the case as the budgeted salaries and wages only form 48.14% of the budgeted rates raised.



The costs of salaries and wages increases each year as the cost of living continues to increase which is outside of the employee and the Shire's control. As such, to continue to attract and retain qualified and committed staff, the Shire needs to plan for modest pay increases.

Due to this, an average salaries and wages increase of 3% has been applied to provide Council and the community with an understanding of proposed and expected increases aligned with long-term CPI. It should be noted that these increases do not allow for additional staff to be engaged outside of the current organisational structure, reflecting the conservative nature of the 2025/26 Budget.

The Workforce Plan will be reviewed in 2027, at which time potential future positions will be forecast and budgeted to support increased service provision.



Training and Development

The Shire of Coolgardie provides training and development opportunities for all staff across the organization either on an as needs basis, reflective of changes in requirements or to up skill staff into higher or alternative roles.

The cost of providing and undertaking training across the organisation forms part of the salaries and wages budget, however some training requirements may arise through the year that may fall outside this allocation.

This is a sample of the training that has and will continue to be provided to employees on regular schedules as required.

- Aerodrome Reporting Officer Course and Refresher
- Lifeguard Course and Refresher
- Aquatic Technical Officer
- Regulatory Officer Compliance Skills 1 and 2 (Rangers)
- Dog and Cat Management and Control Skills

- Local Government Governance
- Finance Nuts and Bolts
- Understanding FBT
- Financial Management Reporting
- Budgets
- Introduction to Rates
- Ignite Leadership
- First Aid
- Chemical Handling
- ICAM Investigations
- Chainsaw
- Traffic Management
- Certificate II in Business
- Synergy Records

Workforce Risk

The Shire of Coolgardie is not alone in facing a range of issues within its workforce however the most significant risk is the ageing workforce.

Ageing Workforce - The Shire's workforce is aging, reflecting the demographic of applicants and hires. With the local economy being so strongly mining based, younger employees are looking to gain experience and work in this industry that offers considerably more than the Local Government Industry. Consequently, more mature employees, who have lived this life and live locally are wanting to step back from working in the mining sector and look to the Shire as a prime employer.

This benefits the Shire as these employees come with training and world experience. While they may potentially be shorter term employees, their skills, experience and willingness to work with the Shire makes them desirable employees.

Some risks of employing more mature staff include pre-existing injuries, increased susceptibility reduced physical endurance, adherence to practices that may not align with the Shire, and health issues that could affect their employment.

These matters need to be understood and mitigated where possible by implementing measures like more breaks during hot days, providing access to cool drinks and electrolytes, working around prior injuries etc.

Strategies to Meet Current and Future Workforce Needs

Current Strategies and Policies

The Shire of Coolgardie has the following workforce Policies in place

Workplace Health & Safety

The Workplace Health and Safety Policy aims to establish and maintain, so far as practicable, the highest standard of occupational safety and health for all employees. This is constantly under review within the organisation and training and a cultural focus is placed on all staff having a strong understanding and respect for their own safety, other staff members and the public.

Employee Benefits

As part of Council's ongoing staff attraction and retention strategy, it is beneficial to provide reasonable entitlements/benefits to permanent full-time and part-time employees.

Benefits include over award allowances, isolation allowance, superannuation contributions, school holiday child support services, free gym and pool memberships, Employee Assistance Program, staff training, flexible working arrangements and if applicable to the position relocation contributions, housing allowance or provision, limited or full personal use of a vehicle.

Harassment in the Workplace

The Shire has a responsibility under the provisions of the WA Equal Opportunity Act 1984 and Commonwealth legislation to provide an environment which is free from discrimination and harassment for all employees and members of the public.

Equal Employment Opportunity

The equal employment opportunity goals of the Shire of Coolgardie are designed to provide an enjoyable, challenging, involving, harmonious work environment for all employees where each has the opportunity to progress to the extent of their ability.

Motor Vehicle Use

Council has motor vehicles available for use by employees in order to meet the operational needs of the Council.

Emergency Services Leave

Paid leave of up to 38 hours per calendar year will be granted to employees who are members of an approved volunteer emergency service organisation (such as SES or Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade and St John Ambulance) for the purpose of participating in training or service within the Shire of Coolgardie, at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer.

Employee Training and Development

Council and employees are committed to the achievement of the goals and objectives outlined in the Strategic Community Plan. This will be achieved through a continuous improvement approach driven by key organisational development strategies aimed at ensuring that the Shire meets current and future skill requirements, retains corporate knowledge and builds upon workforce capability and capacity.

Workplace Alterations and Processes

Due to Shire employees being more mature in age, it requires the Administration to review its process and workplace to ensure that these employees are being considered when making decisions about working conditions and actions. This includes considering workload, environmental conditions, task methods, and providing regular checks and additional resources as needed.

Workforce Strategies to Meet Future Needs

Key Area					
Task	Officer	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
Organisational Structure					
• Review the corporate structure in terms of the Councils Strategic direction	CEO	✓		✓	
• Review Terms/conditions of employees to industry benchmarks	CEO		✓		✓
• Monitor service levels and workforce skills requirements	CEO/HR			✓	
• Review/Update all position descriptions	CEO/HR		✓		✓
Workforce Plan					
• Review and update	CEO	✓		✓	
• Update ABS census data	EA		✓		
• Update ABS population data	EA		✓		
• Review process/data to allow analysis of the Shires workforce	CEO			✓	
Recruitment and Selection					
• Continue to employ suitable qualified/skilled staff locally	CEO/HR	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Continue to engage suitable qualified/skilled contractors, consultants and staff	CEO/HR	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Continue to foster resource sharing arrangements with neighbouring Council	CEO	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Identify opportunities for local trainees / apprentices within the Shire	CEO/HR	✓	✓	✓	✓
Staff Retention/Development					
• Review performance review process	CEO	✓		✓	
• Review current staff certifications/Skills/qualifications for compliance	HR	✓		✓	
• Provide training to supervisors/managers on the performance review process	CEO/HR		✓		
• Ensure supervisors/managers provide open and ongoing feedback to employees	CEO/HR	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Provide training for outside staff for asset management data capture/review	CEO		✓		
• Develop an annual training calendar	HR	✓		✓	
• Provide development opportunities through education/training	CEO/HR	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Recognise /acknowledge employee milestones/education/skills development	CEO/HR	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Review/facilitate life/work balance for employees	CEO/HR	✓			✓
• Enhance workforce health and wellbeing	HR	✓			✓
Succession Management					
• Review critical roles throughout the organisation	CEO/HR	✓	✓		
• Support junior level staff to develop skills/experience for career progression	CEO/HR		✓		✓
• Continue to innovate responses to gaps in key roles	CEO/HR	✓	✓	✓	✓

Chief Executive Officer

Responsible for whole of organisation activities including governance, risk, emergency services, strategic planning, human resources, public relations and information technology

