

# Community Strategic Plan 2021

Delivery Program 2013-2017

and

Operational Plan 2013-14

## Appendix C Workforce Planning

Hurstville City: Building for our future today



Hurstville City Council

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## 1. Introduction

Council's Workforce Plan was developed as part of the Resourcing Strategy to meet the community's priorities and aspirations expressed in the Community Strategic Plan 2021.

Council's Workforce Plan braids together a cable of practices and initiatives which is hoisting professionalism, and making Hurstville an attractive location within NSW Local Government as "employer of choice".

The Workforce Plan enables Council to provide adequate numbers of suitably trained and skilled staff when required to deliver goals whether they be in the short, medium or long term. It also provides a framework for dealing with challenges in a consistent way.

This 4-Year Delivery Program and Operational Plan 20-13-14 reflects progress made to date and refinement of priorities.

## 2. Local Government Directions.

The Department of Local Government Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework is the umbrella legislation under which the Community Strategic Plan is developed. The Plan is underpinned by a Resourcing Strategy which ensures the Council is able to deliver its contribution. The Workforce Plan constitutes the third component together with financial and asset management, which gives confidence that the Council has the capability to deliver sustainably. Simply put, Council will have the right people in the right places with the right skills doing the right jobs at the right time.

Councils have a long history of providing a stable and skilled employment base to support their community. Councils continue to show leadership in contributing to the economic and social fabric of the local community.

The DLG's 'Destination 2036' has identified leadership and skilled staff as key elements to the ongoing viability and sustainability of Local Government. Hurstville's programs are focused not only on building internal capability for the Council, but also for the sector.

Hurstville City Council was awarded for Excellence in Workforce Management by the LGMA (NSW) at their 2012 conference. This LGMA award highlighted that *'Council's Workforce Plan is a process that is directed from the top down, with the General Manager and Executives setting the example for the rest of the staff. Strategic decision making is informed by a number of key human resource (HR) performance indicators, by comparing these results against other metropolitan councils Hurstville are able to identify areas of weakness and alter strategic decisions to achieve goals'*.

## 3. The Organisation

Council is a medium-sized council employing a diverse range of professions. Council staff is made up of a permanent, temporary and casual workforce (used on a short term basis for filling leave positions and assisting with seasonal demands). In response to the ageing population and declining workforce, Council hosts and employs up to 23 trainees in a variety of roles in Children Services, Library & Museum, Parks and Gardens, Engineering, Customer Service, Information Technology and Parking Compliance. This trainee program is focused on attracting new talent into Local Government and allows Council to provide a flexible workforce to deliver the needs of the community.

As at December 2012, Council employed 344 individuals and the vast majority are permanent staff. Gender balance is approximately 50/50 males and females. Females represent 71% of positions at the Senior Manager level. Additionally females manage what are considered traditionally male-dominated functions such as Engineering, Information Technology and Development Assessment. The next level of management in the organisation is identified as Technical Managers. Females comprise approximately 53% which demonstrates a consistently diverse gender workforce throughout the management levels.

Council has an ageing workforce with over a third (36%) aged 50 years and over who are likely to retire over the next 10-15 years. Approximately 34% of staff live within the Local Government Area, indicating that proximity to home is an important factor in an individual's preferred place of employment.

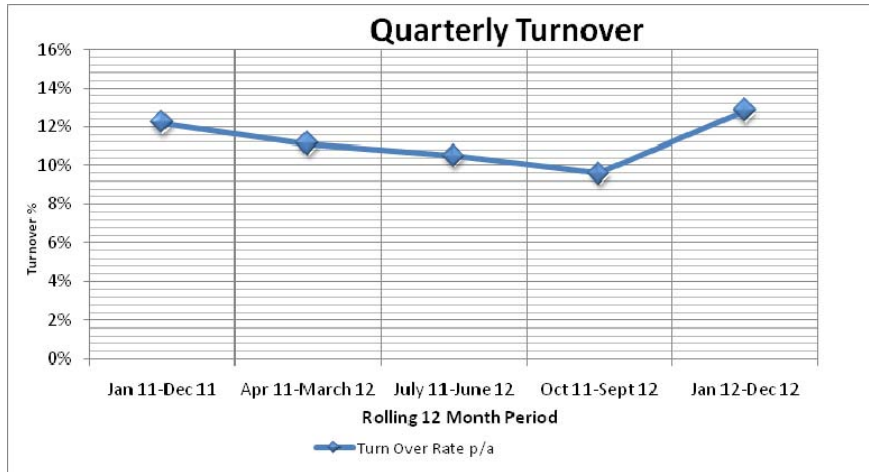
Similar to the wider Hurstville community, Council staff come from a diverse range of cultural and religious backgrounds. Approximately 14% speak a language other than English including Cantonese, Mandarin, Arabic,

Greek and Macedonian. This enables Council to better understand, respond and serve the community. Council provides access to interpreter services when required.

#### 4. Performance

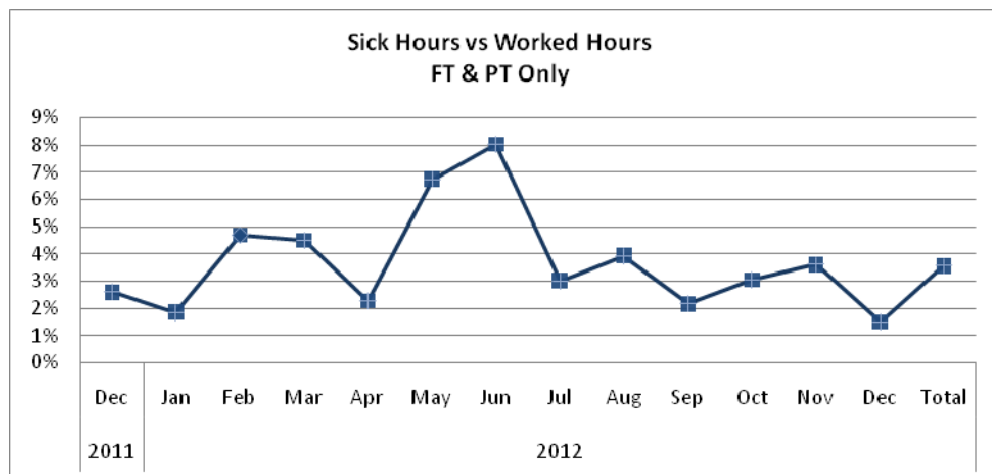
Absenteeism has been reduced to 3.4%, the lowest amongst benchmarked metropolitan Councils. Financial liability for Employee Leave Entitlements has been significantly reduced by encouraging staff with leave balances greater than 8 weeks to take well deserved holidays.

Whilst Turnover has increased from 7.3% during the depths of the GFC in 2009 to 12.1% in 2011, most people are leaving for either career advancement with other Councils or retirement. This creates the opportunity for a new generation of professionals, many of whom are entering through our extensive Trainee Program.

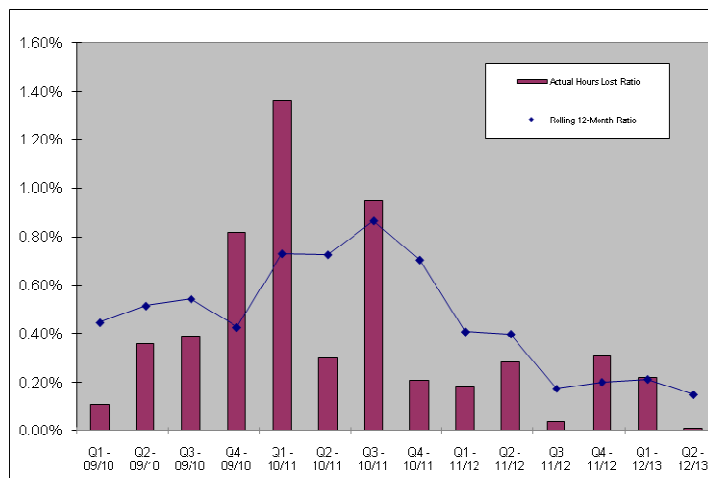


A recent Employee Opinion Survey conducted by Voice Project indicates that Council ranks highly (>80%) on role clarity and results-focused. The survey found that staff scored high on job satisfaction, telling Council that staff understand their role, focus on results rather than activities and enjoy the work they do.

A SSROC Benchmarking study conducted by an external provider in 2011 with 12 Councils showed that Hurstville has the lowest absenteeism rate, demonstrating a focus on staff well being and commitment. It also shows Hurstville has one of the lowest leave liability rates, signifying that apart from minimising the financial liability Hurstville City Council ensures staff regularly take a well earned rest.



Council’s Safety First program continues to reduce the incidence and severity of workplace injuries. The following graph depicts the hours lost through injury as a ratio of total workforce hours worked since 2009/10 together with a 12-month rolling average. Council’s Workers’ Compensation liability continues to reduce as have insurance premiums in recent years.



## 5. Operations

### Leadership Capabilities

Council has conducted extensive review of data, discussions and surveyed Program and Senior Managers to evaluate demand and supply issues facing the delivery of their programs in the short and long term. Council has also conducted several employee opinion surveys and recently rolled out a Leadership Program which has provided valuable feedback.

Understanding what it means to be a Leader and not just a Manager is critical in today’s environment. Hurstville City Council’s Leadership Program is a positive development opportunity for all Leaders and aspiring Leaders, both professionally and personally. It will enhance their skills and knowledge and open their mind to current leadership thinking. This program engaged over 100 aspiring and current Leaders.

An external provider who specialises in Leadership and Culture was engaged to develop a comprehensive leadership framework which embraced Council values and built on behaviours of excellent role models at all levels within Council. An interactive educational program specific to our environment and priorities was rolled-out to almost a third of staff. Leaders are given the tools to build and inspire their teams, as well as the skills and support to use them. Learnings from a suite of HR key performance indicators, which are benchmarked against other metropolitan Councils, inform strategic decision-making.

Joint ownership of staffing decisions at the Executive, functional and operational levels empowers leaders to take control of their most important resource. Decisions are made to optimise the beneficial impacts organisation-wide. Staff and Program Managers have several opportunities through Management Group & Line Managers’ forums, Executive Committee meetings and Directorate meetings to canvas ways and ensure best decisions are made.

Successes are celebrated including staff who choose to take up promotions with other Councils in the LG sector. Council sees that it has provided staff with enriching experiences to encourage them to stay in Local Government and one day return to our Council with enhanced skills and experience. Hurstville City Council leads by example, demonstrating that Local Government is an employer of choice. Council’s mentoring, training and strategic development of staff, coupled with effective performance incentives and positive culture, make Hurstville City Council an attractive location for Local Government professionals.

Using a whole-of-Council approach to management, staff are identified across directorates and teams to spearhead projects deemed important to our community at the local level and the industry more broadly. Recognising the need to improve community confidence in Local Government, Hurstville City Council championed staff to develop an advertising model that proactively highlights Council successes.

To provide effective and innovative service delivery, Council supports an environmental sustainability project, the Georges River Combined Councils Committee by internally hosting, providing financial support, resources and training to staff to maximize performance in this important strategic area.

### Positive Culture

Hurstville City Council proactively encourages a positive culture within the organisation through engagement with staff and the community. Council reinforce a culture of Respect, Accountability and Innovation. This is reinforced in how we recognise and reward our staff from Annual Skill and Performance Reviews through to quarterly Excellence Awards. In 2012 Council implemented a “Respect” program that focused staff attention on our values of honesty and integrity, customer focus, team work and professionalism. Managers spoke to teams during team meetings to ensure the values are understood and applied to day to day work.

### Responsiveness

Community feedback is encouraged in order to gauge customer satisfaction with Council services and facilities to ensure community expectations are met. Teams within Council monitor feedback. For example, of the 59 customer feedback forms received in the January to March 2012 quarter within the Library Museum & Gallery, 75% were compliments and further suggestions for ongoing improvement. Of the compliments, over 27% were related to excellent customer service, demonstrating the positive engagement of staff with the community. The ultimate measure of success is the feedback from our constituents – residents, businesses and elected representatives. Enhanced professionalism by staff at all levels is resulting in improved outcomes across the diverse range of services and facilities provided by Council, as documented in the regular Community Strategic Planning reports.

The Hurstville Community Strategic Plan 2021 identified that young people in the community felt marginalised and isolated. As a result, Council increased resources by recruiting a Youth Liaison Officer and a series of Council-wide programs (for example: Ultimate Visions – a project partnership between Council, Museum of Contemporary Art and Westfield) were implemented to support young people.

### Recruiting and Retaining Talent

Council is focused on attracting, nurturing and retaining the right quality and quantity of key skills in staff. Council provides numerous incentives and strategies to build internal capability, including:

- Clear position description templates which outline the requirements of the role and behaviours.
- Salary sacrifice opportunities such as gym and golf memberships, childcare fees, waste portion of rates for LGA residents and novated leases for vehicles. Council also has arrangements in place with health funds that provide staff with corporate rates.
- Focus on staff health and well being through an extensive program which includes annual flu shots, monthly online health magazine, skin checks and a provider who annually runs sessions on healthy heart, managing stress and male & female health issues.

Hurstville is focused on celebrating its success. Quarterly Excellence Awards, informal reward & recognition program and an annual Bonus Scheme are held. The Executive have maintained the Bonus Scheme as it is a key strategy to drive high performance and encourage innovation in staff.

In tandem with Council’s annual Skill & Performance Review Process, staff are able to apply for an annual bonus, being 2.5% of their gross wage. The criteria are linked to Council’s values of Honesty and Integrity, Customer Focus, Teamwork and Professionalism. Staff must demonstrate how they have added value beyond their role. Whilst the benchmark is very high - out of an average of 75 applications for each of the last several years, approximately 70% are successful both from indoor and outdoor staff.

Staff actively organise and participate in raising funds for community organisations such as the Cancer Council, Pink Ribbon, Biggest Morning Tea and RSPCA.

Every quarter new staff participate in an Orientation Day. They get to meet and spend time with the Executive and then take a tour of our LGA. This allows new staff to see the outcomes of Council’s efforts in the community across a wide range of services.

### Capacity Building

Hurstville City Council’s investment into the development of existing staff contributes significantly to the capacity building of the local government sector. Council harnesses in-house staff experience, skills and

knowledge and develops staff expertise to become local government leaders in the future. Hurstville's leadership program 'Lead for Success' targets all staff who have management responsibilities from Ganger to General Manager.

Council has identified current and potential challenges in our recruitment of professionals to particular segments of our business. Strategies are developed to counter these challenges and ensure Council's capacity to manage services and facilities into the future. Building internal capability will result in Council being less reliant on the external market. One such strategy is the Trainee Program.

Council employs and hosts up to 23 trainees in the professions of Children Services, Library & Museum, Parks and Gardens, Engineering, Customer Service, Information technology and Parking Compliance. Council recognises, for example, that many current library professionals are heading towards retirement and we have an obligation to develop these skills in the next generation of local government employees. Whilst many of the Trainees are employed through an external service provider, Council has a vested interest in the development of these trainees. Council has established a trainee group where all these trainees come together to share and network.

Council-hosted trainees have been successful in receiving highly-sought My Gateway awards including:

- Trainee of the Year 2010
- Southern Sydney Region Trainee of the Year 2010
- IT Trainee of the Year 2010
- Host Employer of the Year 2011
- Achievement Award 2011

Trainees from Hurstville Council have gone on to successful careers within Council and other government departments across NSW.

## 6. Initiatives

Council is pursuing a number of strategies to ensure continuous high levels of service are provided including:

- Continuing to develop its brand as an "Employer of Choice" and utilising the opportunities of flexible work arrangements
- Implementing succession planning within Council to ensure that critical roles and knowledge are managed
- Exploring shared services within the industry to leverage scarce skills and resources
- Identifying strategies for an ageing workforce such as transitional retirement to enable skills and knowledge transfer
- Continuing commitment to bring new skills into the industry in the form of traineeships and apprenticeships
- Working with various industry and professional bodies to close skill gaps and ensure input into changing legislation.
- Targeting those wanting work close to home or to give back to their community
- Growing a culture which fosters trust, respect, accountability, ownership and success
- Continuing to build multiple communication channels and learning platforms throughout the organisation
- Celebrating our successes through reward & recognition programs
- Utilising learning as an opportunity to grow skills within the organisation.
- Harnessing best practice frameworks and technologies
- Communicating with the community regarding expectations of what Council delivers
- Utilising external providers (where appropriate) to assist with project-based work or where there is an internal skills shortage

