



VICTORIA'S **FUTURE LOCAL GOVERNMENT WORKFORCE**

INSIGHTS REPORT

Local Government
Professionals Victoria
September 2025



Contents

Executive Summary	4
1. Introduction	9
1.1 About this Insights Report	10
1.2 Role of local government	10
1.3 Purpose and structure	10
2. Current state of the Victorian local government workforce	13
3. Factors shaping labour market dynamics	37
3.1 Constraints to workforce supply	38
3.2 Shifts in the regional operating context shaping demand	42
3.3 Global macro-trends shaping workforce futures	45
4. Feedback from the sector	49
5. Future workforce considerations	53
5.1 Design a skills-based organisation	54
5.2 Improve long-term workforce planning	56
5.3 Leverage the multi-generational workforce	58
5.4 Create experiences, not just employment	59
5.5 Boost inclusion and diversity	60
5.6 Enhance the sector's profile as an employer of choice	61
APPENDICES	63
Appendix A: Consultation	64
Appendix B: Council groupings	66
Appendix C: VLGGC function descriptions	68
Appendix D: Council FTEs by service area	69
About LGPro	73

Executive Summary

Local government is being challenged to meet an uncertain future of work, but the requirement for its workforce to be sustainable and suitably skilled is clear.

Local Government Professionals (LGPro) Victoria engaged SGS Economics and Planning to prepare an Insights Report to outline recent trends, highlight key drivers of future need, and stimulate ideas and discussion around what is needed to develop a future-fit Victorian local government workforce.

In doing so, this Paper highlights key insights which are outlined below.

There are persistent skills gaps and recruitment challenges across the Victorian local government sector.

Widespread recruitment challenges, particularly in rural and regional areas, an ageing workforce and the risk of succession gaps, and the ability to balance community needs and expectations in a cost-constrained environment are some of the features of the 2025 local government workforce context. This has widened skills gaps within the existing workforce, particularly in the areas of urban and town planning, engineering, and building surveyors.

These challenges are not unique to the local government sector, nor are they likely to be fully resolved in the short-term. The Australian Government's Jobs and Skills Summit in September 2022 highlighted that many of these workforce challenges are shared across Australia, employers, all levels of government, and unions, and that a co-ordinated approach is needed to grow the workforce, create job opportunities, and boost productivity.

Due to the immediate skills gaps and recruitment challenges faced by local government, they tend to dominate workforce planning attention, thereby limiting the local government sector's ability to imagine a truly future focused workforce model.

We are yet to uncover the full potential of a diverse and growing Victorian local government workforce.

Victoria's local government workforce comprises almost 300 occupations who have a role in almost all aspects of daily life. Although local governments all deliver a similar type of core service, there is no single workforce archetype or planning approach that meets the unique needs of Victoria's 79 local governments.

It is increasingly evident that traditional models of recruitment, education, and even how a 'job' is defined may not suit the aspirations of a new generation of workers seeking value, choice, and flexibility in how they personalise and experience their career pathways.

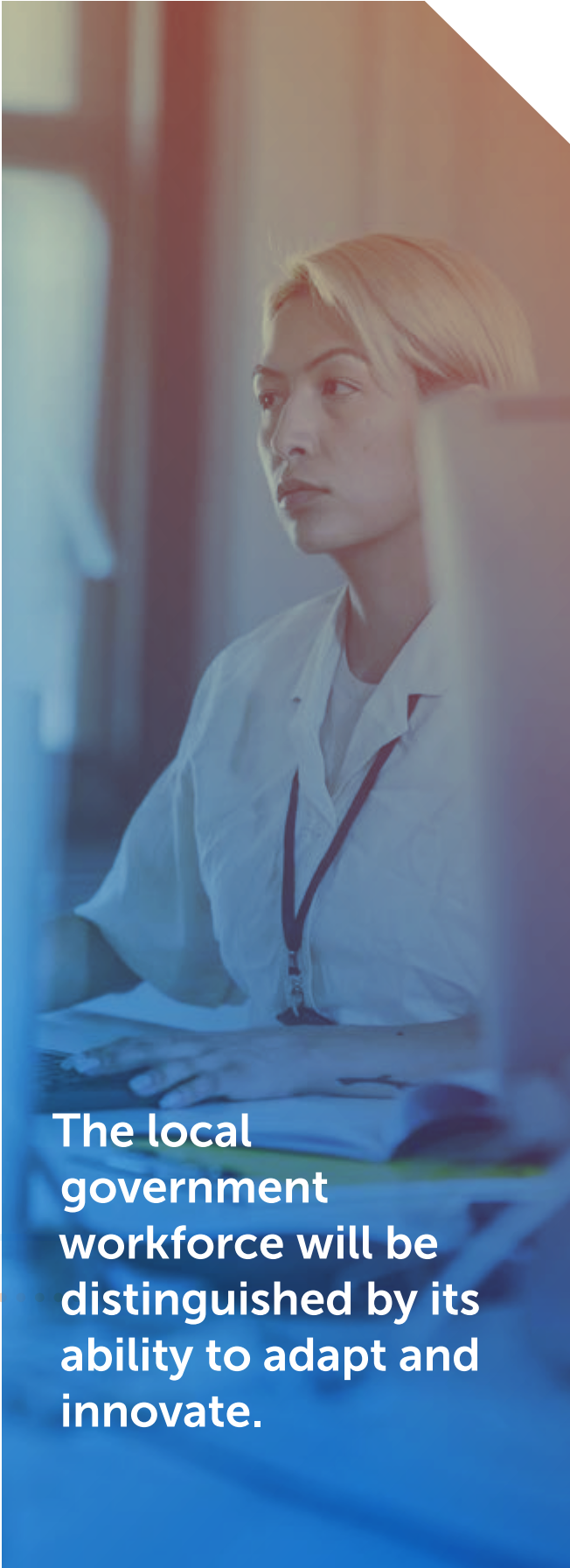
There is more that the Victorian local government sector can do to embrace its diversity (in all dimensions: occupational, socio-demographic, experiential) to appeal to a future workforce that is seeking a non-traditional role.

External labour market influences are creating a window of workforce opportunity.

The local government workforce is constantly adapting and responding due to external factors. Recent reforms in kindergarten, aged care, National Disability Insurance Scheme legislation, planning and building, and the rate cap are reshaping the operating context of many local governments.

The impacts range from a greater demand for compliance and reporting skills to a decline in demand for certain roles where local governments are choosing to exit the service area. In many areas, factors such as local governments' financial sustainability, strategic priorities, and the historical impact of workforce skills and capability gaps continue to take their toll on strategic workforce planning.

Meanwhile, an ageing workforce, employee expectations and other macro-trends are shaping the dynamics of local and regional labour markets, resulting in a need to modernise recruitment practices, reconsider the local government 'offer' and prevailing models of career progression.



The local government workforce will be distinguished by its ability to adapt and innovate.

Recommendations

A future-fit workforce should be grounded in local government’s purpose and place. In the face of changing communities and economies, the local government workforce will be distinguished by its ability to adapt and innovate whilst keeping sight of its place-based mission to enhance the wellbeing and livelihoods of all community members.

This Insights Report, informed by consultation with 22 Victorian local governments, highlights six considerations for the sector.

1. Design a skills-based organisation.



The Victorian local government workforce stands out for its occupational diversity. Recruitment and retention should reflect this, moving beyond short-term efforts to fill one role at a time to focus on flexibility across council’s teams and ensuring choice for existing employees to explore new roles internally.

The future local government workforce ...

Is built around a skills-based model that informs the pipeline of graduate recruitment to experienced staff approaching retirement. Internal staff are proactively supported to diversify their skills through internal recruitment opportunities.

While a variety of skills will be needed in the future, AI and digital literacy are rapidly emerging as some of the most sought after by the local government sector. However, it will be critical to support workers to use AI safely, transparently, and effectively without displacing the human touch at the heart of the local government.

The future local government workforce ...

Is empowered to use AI safely, transparently, and effectively to improve the delivery of local government services, without displacing the human touch at the heart of the local government.

2. Improve long-term workforce planning.



Councils continue to grapple with longstanding skills shortages and capacity constraints, exacerbated by cost and other pressures. The cycle of reactive workforce planning hinders a proactive, long-term approach to meeting future needs.

The future local government workforce ...

Embeds both local and regional insights on labour market dynamics and resolves challenges through continuous knowledge sharing.

3. Leverage the multi-generational workforce.



Australia’s workforce is more age diverse than it has ever been, due to an ageing population and a changing retirement context where people are continuing to work later in life. Better leveraging a multi-generational workforce means forging connection between experienced and early career workers for knowledge transfer, career guidance and a more cohesive workplace culture.

The future local government workforce ...

Builds a cohesive workplace culture which leverages a multi-generational workforce through providing leadership opportunities for the next generation while valuing and actively providing a role for the older workforce through knowledge transfer, innovation, and mentorship.

4. Create experiences, not just employment.



Today’s workforce is more likely to seek values-based organisations who are aligned in purpose and mission. Creating a fulfilling workplace environment where local government employees are supported personally and professionally to do this will be key to attracting and retaining the future workforce.

The future local government workforce ...

Routinely intersects multiple skill areas, teams, and stakeholder interactions, creating a unique employee experience grounded in local connections and clear links to tangible community outcomes.

5. Boost inclusion and diversity.



The place-based nature of local governments’ impact means that it is critical for the workforce to reflect the diversity of their communities. This enables more informed decisions, greater visibility over the things that matter to residents and visitors, and more solid foundation for building trust.

The future local government workforce ...

Embraces diversity in all its forms – age, cultural, gender, ability, professional backgrounds – to shape better policies and programs that meet the needs of everyone in the community.

6. Enhance the sector’s profile.



The local government sector is not universally seen as an employer of choice. There is a need to enhance and better communicate local government’s profile, its role, and the opportunities arising from a career in the sector.

The future local government workforce ...

Is recognised as providing lifelong employment opportunities that can make a difference to local people in the local community.



1. Introduction

- 1.1 About this Insights Report
- 1.2 Role of local government
- 1.3 Purpose and structure

1. Introduction

1.1 About this Insights Report

In Victoria, all councils plan for their future workforce needs; a requirement under section 46(4) of the *Local Government Act (2020)*. Regular workforce planning is crucial for ensuring that key foundations – organisational structure, workforce composition, projected staffing requirements, budgeting, and initiatives to advance workforce gender equality, diversity and inclusiveness – are tailored to emerging needs.

But 20 years from now, what version of the future Victorian local government workforce will prevail? And what version is desired?

One that continues to meet the needs of their communities and adapt to emerging opportunities? Or one that pushes the frontier of change and offers a masterclass in workforce transformation for other sectors and for our local government peers around the world?

To truly envision what a future-fit workforce looks like, what it does, and what it needs requires longer-term thinking and imagination. To reinvigorate sector discussion, LGPro Victoria engaged SGS to prepare this Insights Report. In it, we highlight recent trends, outline key drivers of future need, and pose several directions to enhance a future-fit Victorian local government workforce.

1.2 Role of local government

Local governments deliver a breadth of services and infrastructure that directly shape community health and wellbeing. Section 4 of the *Local Government Act 2020 (Vic)* (the Act) outlines that ‘the role of a Council is to provide good governance in its municipal district for the benefit and wellbeing of the municipal community’. Section 9 of the Act further outlines a series of overarching governance principles, that collectively prioritise current and future municipal wellbeing, sustainability (economic, social, environmental, financial), community engagement, informed decision making that accounts for regional, state and national plans, and the pursuit of ‘innovation and continuous improvement’.

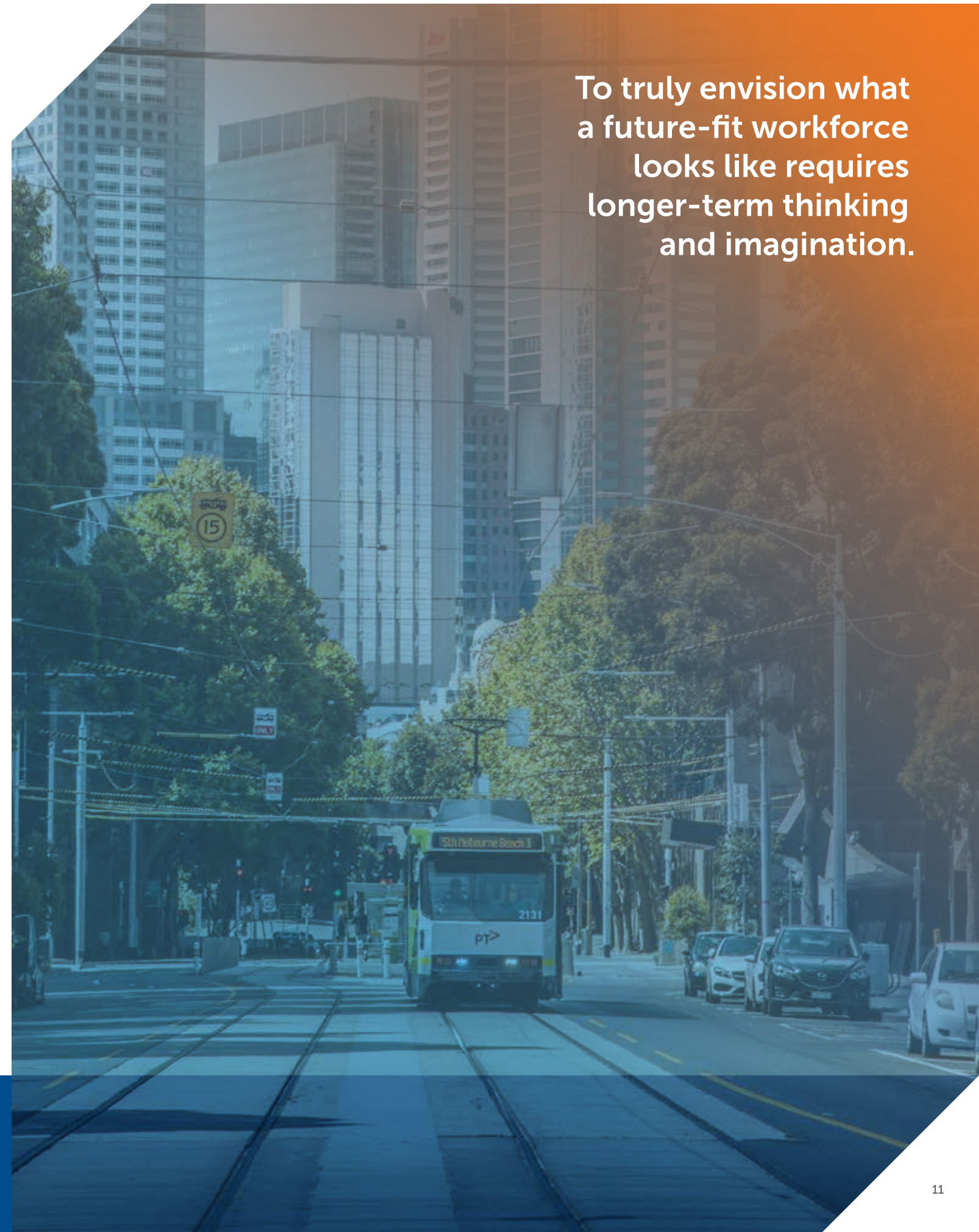
These overarching governance principles necessarily shape how Victorian local governments plan, consult, and deliver services and infrastructure. Local governments cannot fulfil this breadth of responsibilities without a sustainable and suitably skilled workforce. In the face of changing community profiles and local economies, it is more important than ever for local governments to continue to leverage its key attributes, such as civic mindedness, a place-based mission, occupational diversity, and interconnections across the local government sector. In doing so, they also need to ensure that the workforce is adaptable and resilient, and the organisation is keeping pace with new technologies and ways of working, notwithstanding uncertainties in the operating context.

1.3 Purpose and structure

This report:

- Profiles the current Victorian local government workforce and recent spatial trends in employment by service area (Chapter 2)
- Summarises key factors relating to the operating context, internal drivers, and macro-trends of Victorian local government that are shaping the sector’s workforce needs (Chapter 3)
- Consolidates insights from stakeholder consultation and research (Chapter 4) to identify six future directions and considerations for a future-fit workforce (Chapter 5).

To truly envision what a future-fit workforce looks like requires longer-term thinking and imagination.



2. Current state of the Victorian local government workforce

2. Current state of the Victorian local government workforce

The following analysis summarises key features and recent trends in the Victorian local government workforce.

This profile is developed from Australian Bureau of Statistics Census of Population and Housing data as well as annual council employment data collected by the Victorian Local Government Grants Commission (VLGGC) Questionnaire.¹

Some indicators in the analysis are further examined by council group, based on the Australian Classification of Local Government (ACLG). There are 22 classes of local governments defined in the ACLG. For the purposes of analysis, they are regrouped into Metropolitan, Regional Town/City, Metropolitan Fringe, and Rural councils. A concordance is provided in Appendix A.

We note also that growth area councils, largely in Metropolitan Fringe areas of Cardinia, Casey, Hume, Melton, Mitchell, Whittlesea and Wyndham,² may experience some workforce drivers and pressures more acutely due to the scale and pace of population growth and the impacts this has on service need, service expectations, and access to local workforce.

The Victorian local government workforce has historically outnumbered State Government employees, although the gap has narrowed in recent years

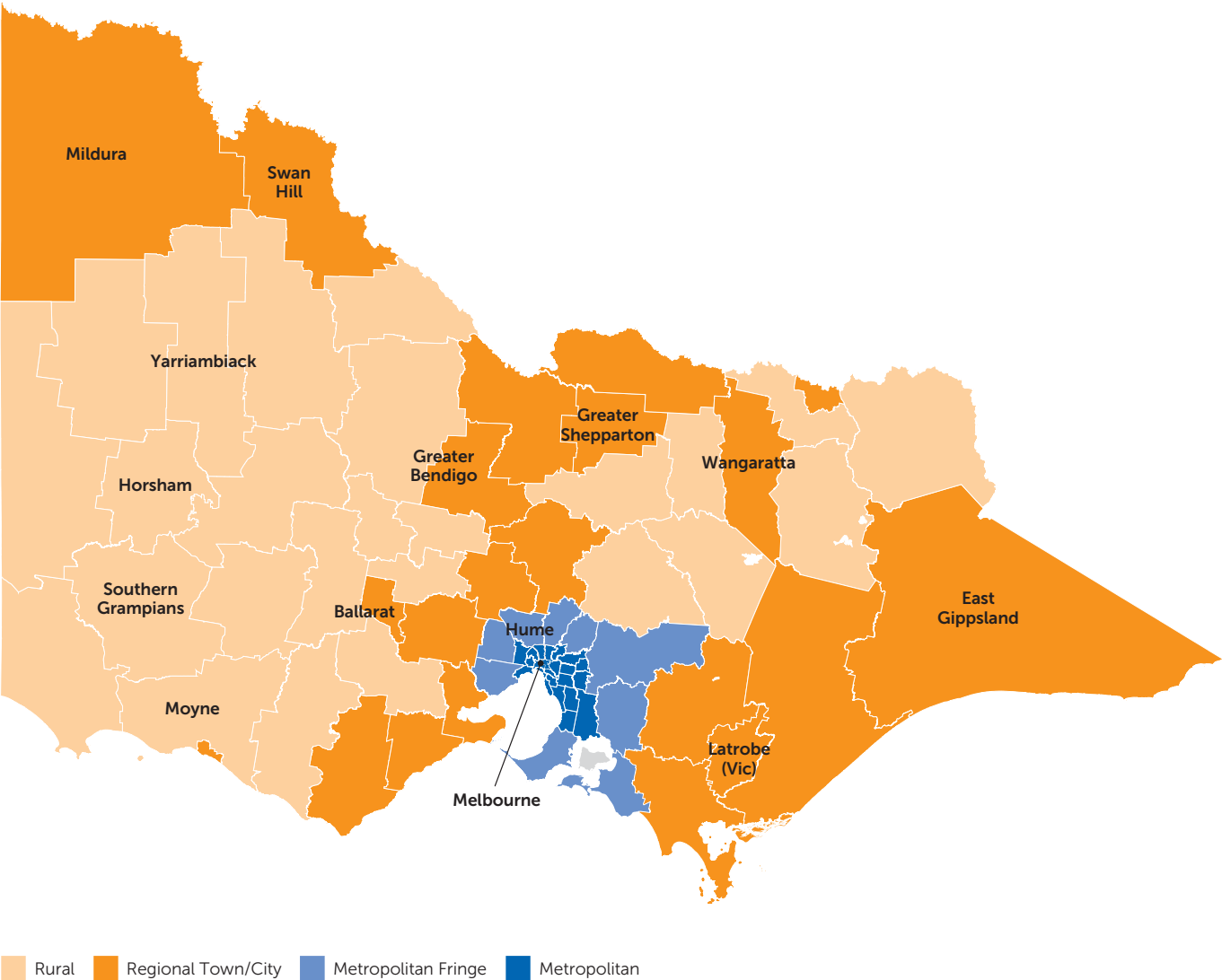
Figure 2 outlines total employment in the Victorian local and state government sectors between 2011 and 2021. The data shows that while the local government sector employed more workers than Victorian Government over the last decade, the gap is narrowing. Part of this increase in state government FTE could be attributed to a hiring boost during the COVID-19 pandemic to support and maintain public health and safety and to provide economic stimulus.

Some of this state government workforce may have been from the local government sector. This is, workers with relevant and transferable skills seeking alternative employment with more competitive wages, as well as workers who were in non-essential or facility-based roles that were stood down.³

Five years on from the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, there are signs of imminent structural shifts in the state government workforce. In February 2025, the Victorian government announced an intention to reduce the public sector workforce by 2,000 to 3,000 jobs to align with pre-pandemic levels.⁴ In May 2025, an update to the independent review of the Victorian public service affirmed that a reduction in Victorian public service workforce was looming, while noting that it would not affect 'frontline roles for nurses, teachers, police officers, or child-protection workers'.⁵

Given local and state government workforce share some similar roles and skills (planning, service network and reforms, assets, management and others) when there is an active expansion or contraction of the state government workforce this can either put additional pressure on the local government workforce (with a transfer of workers) or provide local government with an increased pool of potential workers (contraction of state government workforce).

Figure 1: Victorian councils by broad group



Source: SGS Economics and Planning (2025). Note: Broad groups are based on the 22 categories in the Australian Classification of Local Government, aggregated into one of five groups (Metropolitan, Regional Town/City, Metropolitan Fringe, Rural and Large Rural) based on population and other factors.

Note that for the purposes of this analysis, Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census data counting persons by Place of Usual Residence is used to profile the local workforce. In 2021, there were 43,175 FTEs in the Victorian local government sector.

These figures exclude workers employed by Victorian local or state government but who do not reside in Victoria. ABS Census data was used given it is the only internally consistent dataset that reports workforce size for both levels of government.

1 The Victorian Grants Commission Questionnaire collects data on council employment by gender and service area to inform its calculations for the distribution of the Financial Assistance Grants. VLGGC (2025), 'Consultation & Council Data', <https://www.localgovernment.vic.gov.au/funding-programs/victoria-grants-commission/consultation-and-operations>

2 Victorian Government (2024), 'Infrastructure funding where homes are being built', <https://www.vic.gov.au/infrastructure-funding-where-homes-are-being-built>

3 ABC (2020), 'Calls for State Government to help thousands of local council staff who are without pay during coronavirus restrictions', <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-05-06/coronavirus-vic-councils-call-on-government-help-council-staff/12220022>

4 ABC (2025), 'Victorian government to cut thousands of public sector jobs to rein in spending', <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-02-20/vic-govt-public-sector-job-cuts-spending-review-budget/104958948>

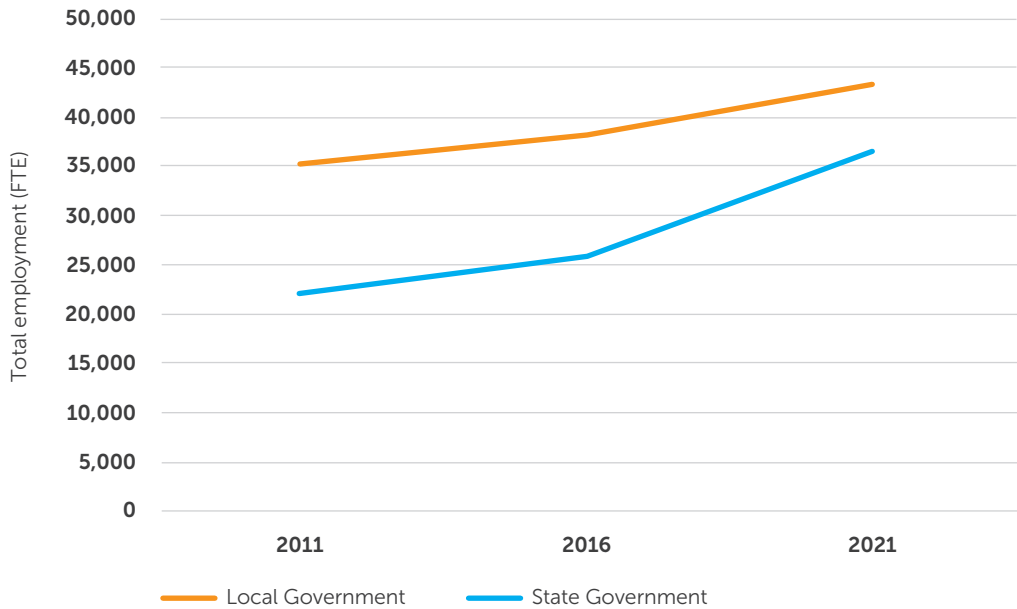
5 The Mandarin (2025), 'Bad news for VPS as budget cuts loom', <https://www.themandarin.com.au/292291-bad-news-for-vps-as-budget-cuts-loom/>

Figure 2: Victorian local and state government workforce (FTE), 2011 to 2021

Victoria	2011	2016	2021	# change 2011–21	% change 2011–21
Local Government	35,289	38,162	43,175	7,886	22%
State Government	21,968	25,757	36,485	14,517	66%

Source: ABS (2011, 2016 and 2021).

Figure 3: Local and State Government employment, 2011–2021



Source: SGS Economics and Planning (2025) using ABS Census (2011, 2016, 2021)

Nationally, state and territory government workforces are growing faster than the local government sector workforce.

However, the disparity is most pronounced in Victoria and largely due to recent changes in the size of Victorian State Government workforce, which grew by 7.21% per annum between 2016 and 2021 (Table 1).

Table 1: Change in Local and State Government FTE employment, 2011–2021

Victorian	FTE change 2011–16	FTE change 2016–21	Total FTE change 2011–21	CAGR (%) 2011–16	CAGR (%) 2016–21	Average CAGR (%) 2011–21
Local Government	2,873	5,013	7,886	1.58%	2.50%	2.04%
State Government	3,789	10,728	14,517	3.23%	7.21%	5.20%

Source: ABS (2011, 2016 and 2021).

At the sector scale, there has been overall positive growth in the Victorian local government workforce

Between 2016–17 and 2022–23 the local government workforce increased by 9%, with year-on-year growth other than in 2022–23. In 2022–23, the size of the metropolitan council workforce (total FTEs) was almost half of the local government FTE (49.5%).

Overall FTE growth across the sector and by council group has been positive, however all councils other than Metropolitan Fringe experienced declining FTE between 2022 and 2023 (Table 2).

This is potentially due to a combination of workforce trends reported in the aftermath of COVID-19 pandemic, such as the change in funding availability along with the reported rise in worker burn out, lower levels of motivation in the workforce, and a desire for greater flexibility which led many to seek alternative job opportunities.⁶

Table 2: FTE total by council group, Victoria, 2017–23

Group	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2017–23 growth (%)
Metropolitan (n=23)	16,707	17,510	17,462	17,714	18,202	18,226	18,205	9%
Metropolitan Fringe (n=12)	5,935	6,083	6,280	6,480	6,627	6,834	6,954	17%
Regional Town/City (n=20)	7,891	7,904	8,046	8,225	8,554	8,437	8,107	3%
Rural (n=24)	3,166	3,129	3,238	3,359	3,533	3,637	3,468	10%
	33,699	34,627	35,026	35,779	36,916	37,134	36,734	9%

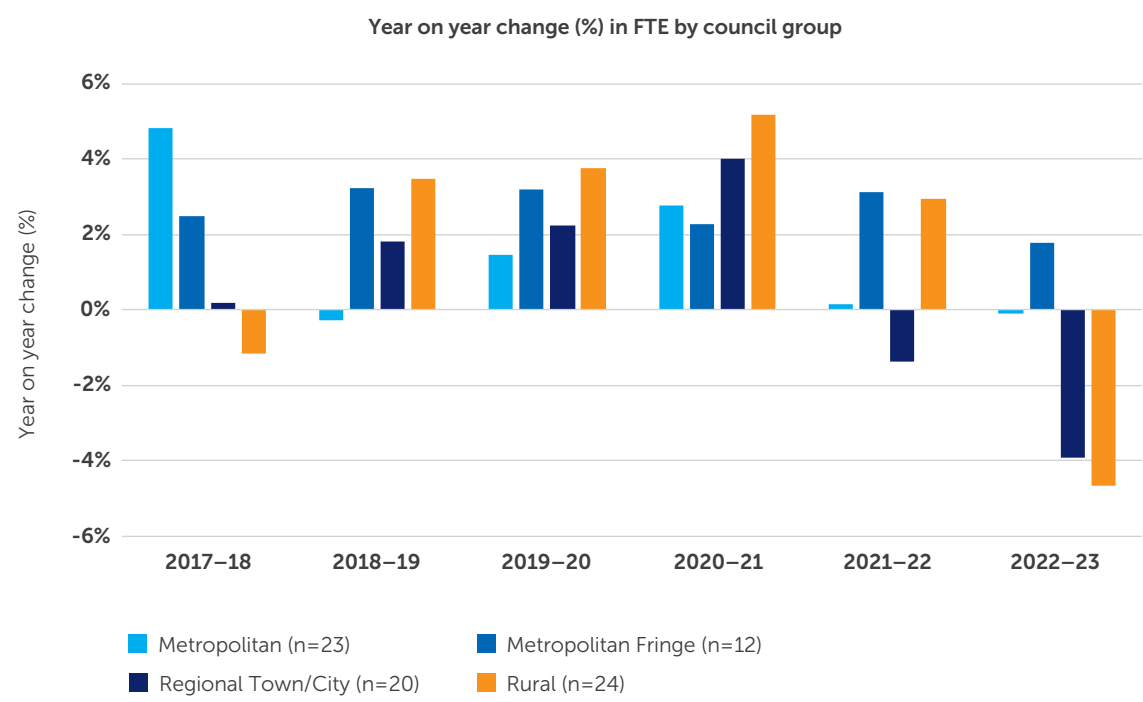
Source: SGS Economics and Planning (2025) using ABS Census (2011, 2016, 2021)

6 University of Melbourne (2023), 'The great resignation didn't happen in Australia, but the great burnout did', <https://findanexpert.unimelb.edu.au/news/63392-the-great-resignation-didnt-happen-in-australia-but-the-great-burnout-did>

As further articulated in Figure 4, annual proportionate FTE growth varied by council group between 2017 and 2023.

Rural councils had the greatest proportionate increases and decreases, however with a smaller FTE pool, small changes are more pronounced. Across the time period, Metropolitan councils growth has been the most stable.

Figure 4: Annual change in FTE by council group, Victorian local government, 2017–23

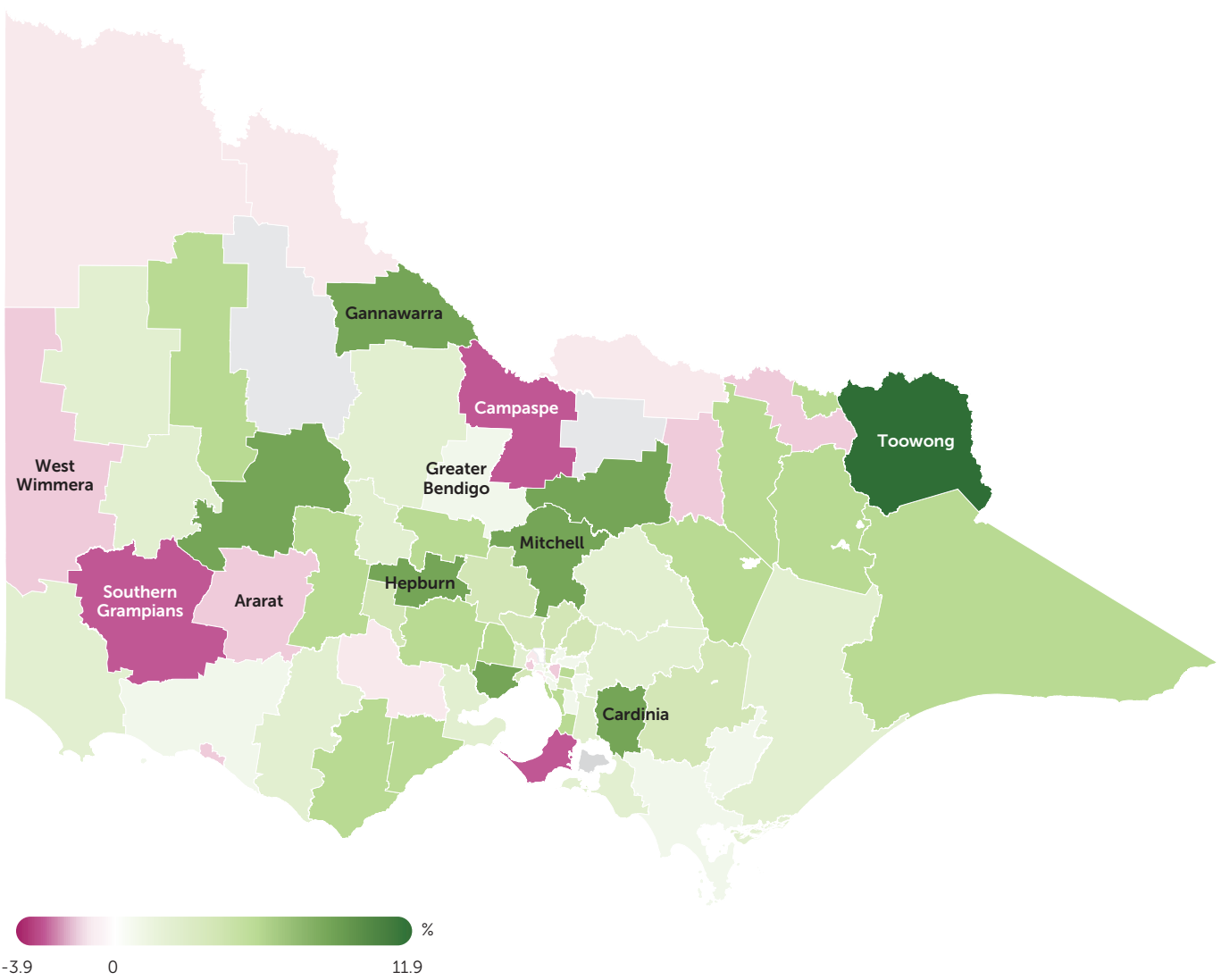


Source: Victorian Grants Commission Questionnaire (2017–23)

There are pockets of significant growth and moderate decline in workforce size across individual councils

Figure 5 shows the distribution of councils by highest and lowest FTE growth rate between 2017 and 2023.

Figure 5: Average annual FTE growth by council, 2017–23



Source: SGS Economics and Planning (2025), Victorian Grants Commission (2017–23). Note: Data for Buloke and Greater Shepparton was not available in the source data, these LGAs are shown in grey. The LGAs with the five highest (Toowong, Mitchell, Cardinia, Gannawarra, Hepburn) and five lowest (Mornington Peninsula, Southern Grampians, Campaspe, Ararat, West Wimmera) average annual FTE growth rates between 2017–23 are labelled.

The top ten largest and smallest councils by FTE size in 2022–23 are summarised in Table 3 and Table 4. The data shows that in addition to employing a sizeable workforce, some metropolitan and metropolitan fringe councils FTE are also growing rapidly. Four of the Victorian local government’s seven growth area councils⁷ are represented in this mix.

Meanwhile nine of the smallest ten councils by FTE in 2022–23 are Rural councils. Some are experiencing a decline in workforce size, however Towong Shire Council has experienced 96% FTE growth between 2017 and 2023 (52 additional FTE), followed by Strathbogie Shire Council (32% FTE growth, 29 additional FTE).

Table 3: Largest Victorian councils by FTE total, 2022–23

Council	Group	2022–23 FTE	% FTE growth, 2017–23
Melbourne (C)	Metropolitan	2,453	5%
Greater Geelong (C)	Regional Town/City	1,597	12%
Wyndham (C)	Metropolitan Fringe	1,460	33%
Casey (C)	Metropolitan	1,237	11%
Hume (C)	Metropolitan Fringe	1,026	18%
Kingston (C)	Metropolitan	946	30%
Whittlesea (C)	Metropolitan Fringe	927	16%
Merri-bek (C)*	Metropolitan	864	16%
Brimbank (C)	Metropolitan	847	5%
Darebin (C)	Metropolitan	799	17%

Source: Victorian Grants Commission Questionnaire (2017–23). *Formerly Moreland City Council. **Bold** represents growth area council.

Table 4: Smallest Victorian councils by FTE total, 2022–23

Council	Group	2022–23 FTE	% FTE growth, 2017–23
Queenscliff (B)	Metropolitan Fringe	40	3%
West Wimmera (S)	Rural	74	-8%
Pyrenees (S)	Rural	85	22%
Hindmarsh (S)	Rural	94	9%
Alpine (S)	Rural	105	18%
Towong (S)	Rural	106	96%
Ararat (RC)	Rural	112	-9%
Mansfield (S)	Rural	116	19%
Benalla (RC)	Rural	117	-8%
Strathbogie (S)	Rural	120	32%

Source: Victorian Grants Commission Questionnaire (2017–23). Note: Excludes councils for which the VGC data reported nil.

7 Victorian Government (2024), ‘Infrastructure funding where homes are being built’, <https://www.vic.gov.au/infrastructure-funding-where-homes-are-being-built>

The top ten councils by FTE growth and decline between 2017–23 are a mix of rural, regional town/city and metropolitan fringe councils (Table 5, Table 6).

Table 5: Top ten Victorian councils by FTE growth, 2016–17 to 2022–23

Council	Group	2016–17 FTE	2022–23 FTE	% FTE growth, 2017–23
Towong (S)	Rural	54	106	96%
Mitchell (S)	Regional Town/City	227	333	46%
Cardinia (S)	Metropolitan Fringe	319	464	46%
Gannawarra (S)	Rural	142	197	39%
Hepburn (S)	Rural	116	160	38%
Wyndham (C)	Metropolitan Fringe	1096	1460	33%
Strathbogie (S)	Rural	91	120	32%
Northern Grampians (S)	Rural	147	194	32%
Melton (S)	Metropolitan Fringe	484	632	31%
Kingston (C)	Metropolitan	726	946	30%

Source: Victorian Grants Commission Questionnaire (2017–23) **Bold** represents growth area council.

Table 6: Top ten Victorian councils by FTE decline, 2016–17 to 2022–23

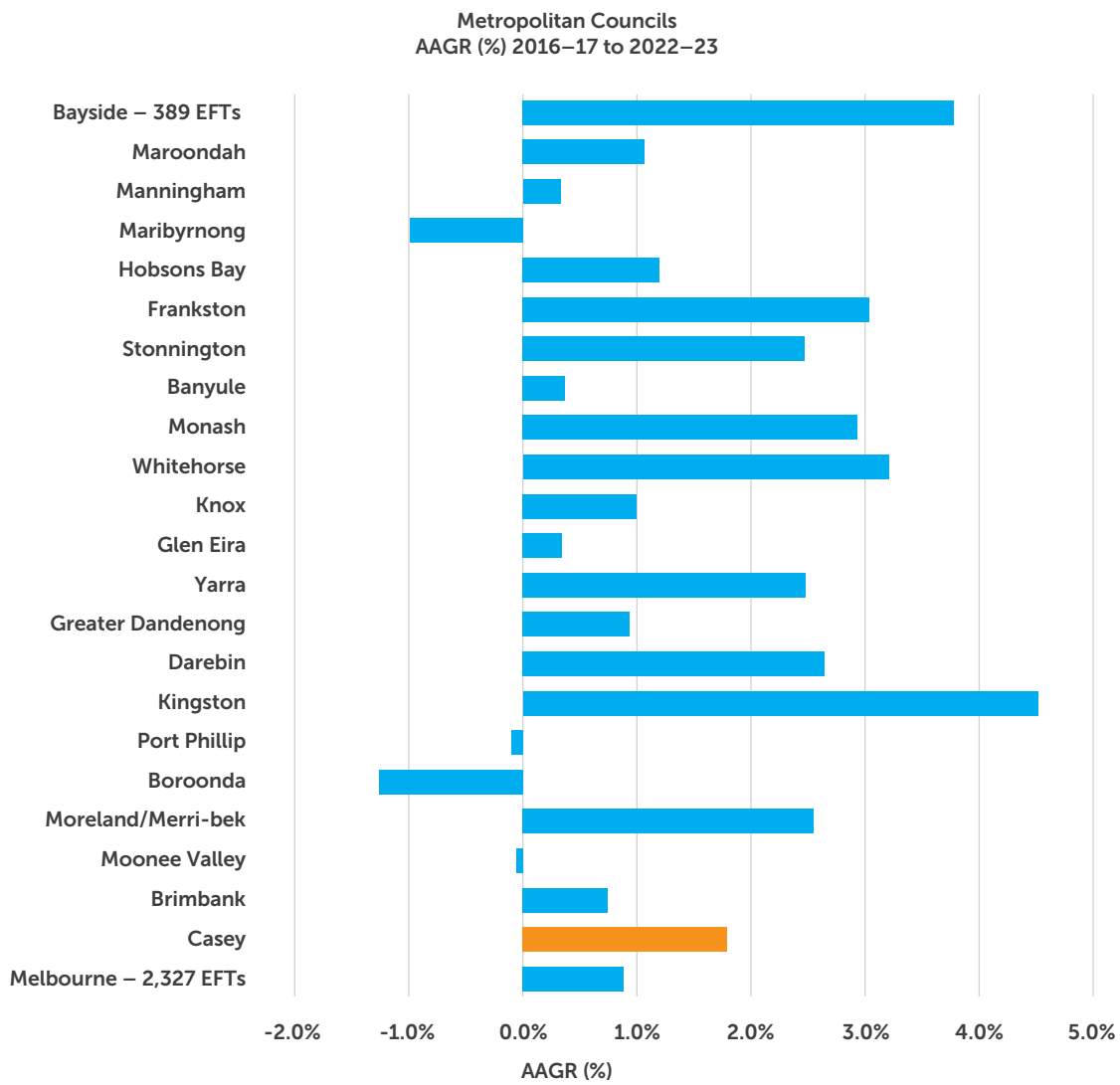
Council	Group	2016–17 FTE	2022–23 FTE	% FTE decline, 2017–23
Mornington Peninsula (S)	Metropolitan Fringe	668	527	-21%
Southern Grampians (S)	Rural	205	171	-17%
Campaspe (S)	Regional Town/City	312	280	-10%
Ararat (RC)	Rural	124	112	-9%
West Wimmera (S)	Rural	81	74	-8%
Indigo (S)	Rural	137	126	-8%
Benalla (RC)	Rural	127	117	-8%
Boroondara (C)	Metropolitan	737	683	-7%
Maribyrnong (C)	Metropolitan	493	464	-6%
Warrnambool (C)	Regional Town/City	375	359	-4%

Source: Victorian Grants Commission Questionnaire (2017–23)

The following considers the average annual growth in FTE by council and council group between 2017 and 2023. Growth area councils are highlighted in green. In relation to Metropolitan councils the growth rate significantly varies with Boroondara and Maribyrnong have the largest decline followed by Port Phillip and Moonee Valley.

Alternatively, Kingston and Bayside have the highest growth rate. There could be a range of reasons for these changes, including right sizing the organisation, responding to reforms, and service reviews.

Figure 6: Metropolitan councils FTE average annual growth rate (AAGR), 2017–23

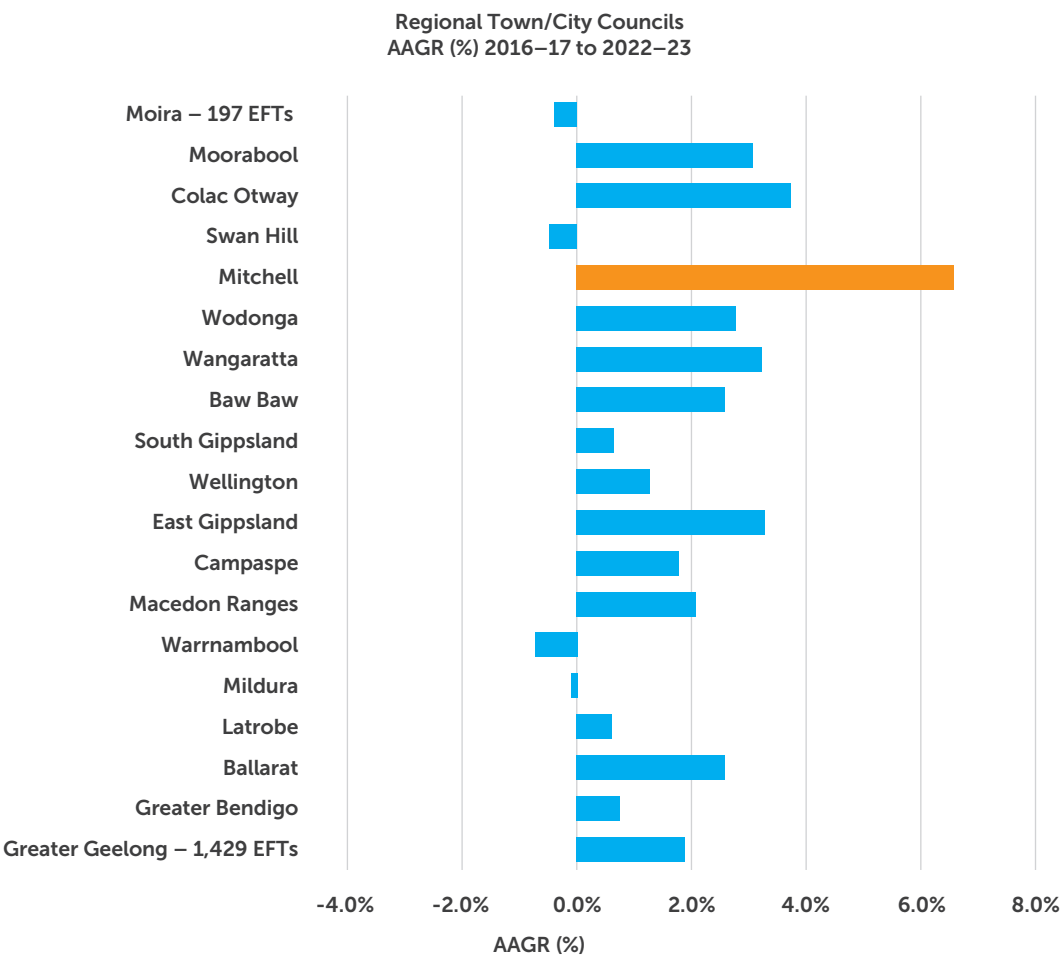


Source: SGS Economics and Planning using VGC data (2025). Notes: Orange highlight denotes Victorian government designated growth area communities. Councils are organised from top to bottom in ascending order of 2016–17 FTE.

Regional Town/City councils also have varied growth rates. Campaspe, Warrnambool, Swan Hill, Moria, and to a lesser extent, Mildura have had a negative growth rate.

Mitchell Shire has had a significant positive growth rate, however this likely due to it being a growth area council.

Figure 7: Regional Town/City councils FTE average annual growth rate (AAGR), 2017–23

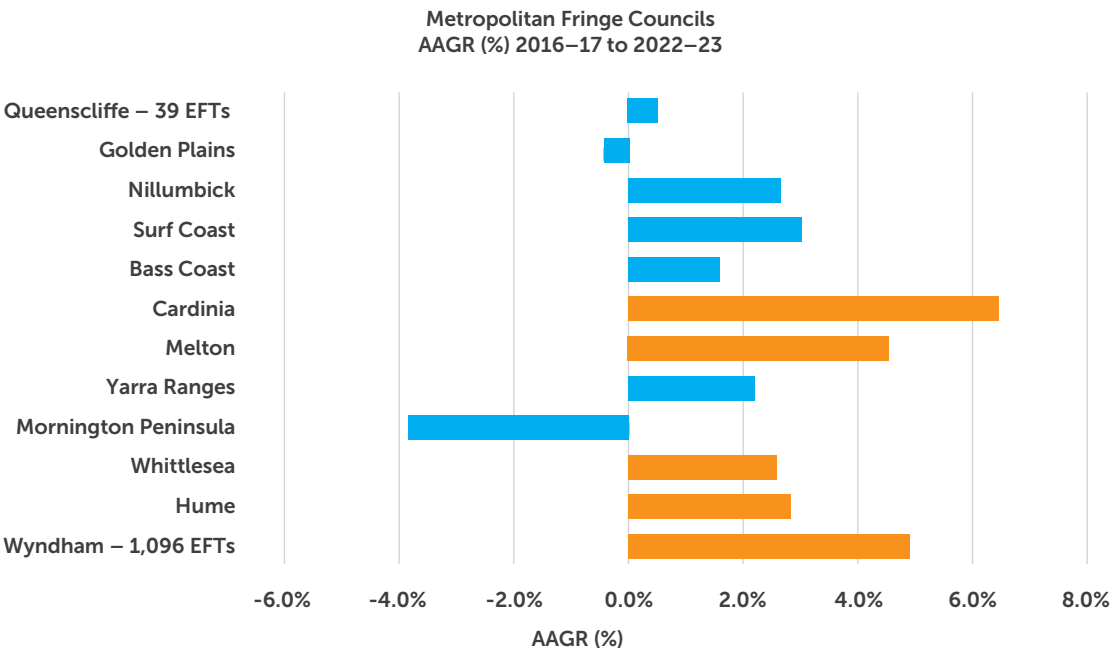


Source: SGS Economics and Planning using VGC data (2025). Notes: Orange highlight denotes Victorian government designated growth area communities. Councils are organised from top to bottom in ascending order of 2016–17 FTE. Greater Shepparton is excluded from this analysis as 2022–23 FTE was not available in the source data.

Metropolitan Fringe councils have largely all had positive growth rates other than Mornington Peninsula which has almost -4% growth rate, with a decrease of 141 FTE. Golden Plains has also seen a slight negative growth rate. The growth area councils of Cardinia and Wyndham have had the strongest growth rate.

Cardinia and Mitchell (Regional Town) experienced similar growth rates. Both of these councils are at a similar level in relation to building out as growth area councils, whereas many of the other growth area councils are starting to stabilise.

Figure 8: Metropolitan Fringe councils FTE average annual growth rate (AAGR), 2017–23

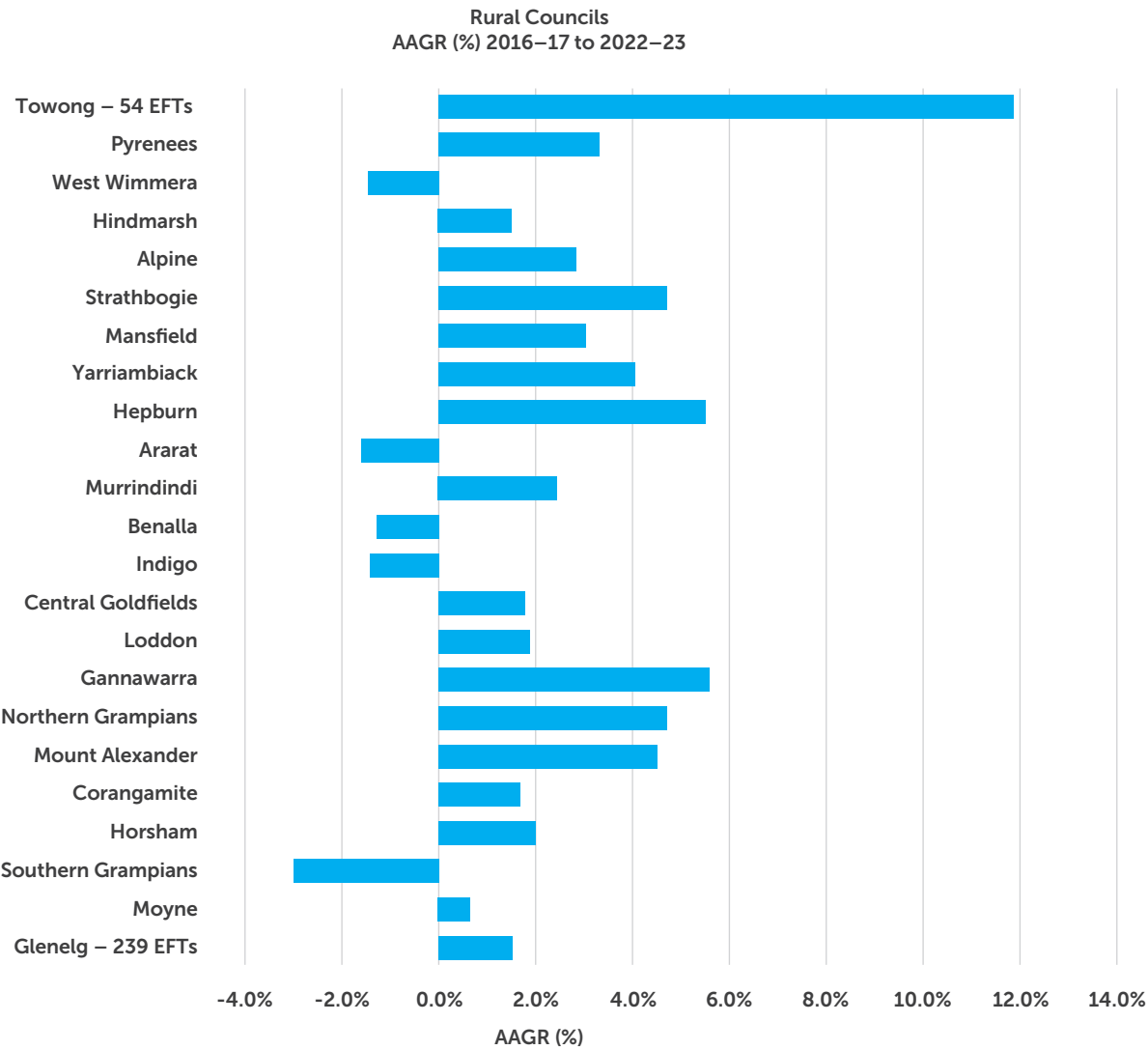


Source: SGS Economics and Planning using VGC data (2025). Notes: Orange highlight denotes Victorian government designated growth area communities. Councils are organised from top to bottom in ascending order of 2016–17 FTE.

Rural councils saw a variety of growth rates with 5 councils seeing a negative growth rate, Southern Grampians the highest.

Positive growth rates varied, however other than the key outlier of Towong, most other councils received a growth rate of 2% or more.

Figure 9: Rural councils FTE average annual growth rate (AAGR), 2017–23



Source: SGS Economics and Planning using VGC data (2025). Notes: Councils are organised from top to bottom in ascending order of 2016–17 FTE. Buloke Shire Council is excluded from this analysis as 2022–23 FTE was not available in the source data.

Metropolitan and rural councils differ in the proportionate mix of workforce by service area

An analysis of council FTEs by service area shows that councils vary considerably in workforce mix (Table 7). A description of each service areas is included in Appendix B.

In 2022–23, Metropolitan Fringe and Regional Town/City council workforces had a higher share of Governance employees than Rural and Metropolitan councils, while Rural councils have a significantly higher share of employees in the Local Roads & Bridges service area.

Across all council groups, there is a higher proportion of Governance, Family & Community Services, Recreation & Culture, and Business & Economic Services workers compared to other service areas.

Table 7: Proportionate workforce by service area and council group, 2022–23

Service area	Metropolitan (n=23)	Regional Town/City (n=20)	Metropolitan Fringe (n=12)	Rural (n=24)
Governance	18%	22%	25%	19%
Family & Community Services	18%	16%	22%	13%
Aged & Disabled Services	9%	5%	4%	5%
Recreation & Culture	17%	17%	16%	12%
Waste Management	3%	3%	3%	3%
Traffic & Street Management	8%	6%	6%	4%
Environment	5%	4%	4%	4%
Business & Economic Services	17%	13%	15%	12%
Local Roads & Bridges	4%	15%	6%	27%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: SGS Economics and Planning (2025), VLGGC (2023).

Between 2016–17 and 2022–23, there was a 6–7% decline in the Aged & Disabled services workforce across all council groups (Table 8). Conversely:

- Regional Town/City councils experienced a 6% increase overall in Governance FTEs
- Metropolitan Fringe councils experienced a 4% increase overall in Business & Economic Services FTEs, followed by a 3% increase in Recreation & Culture FTEs

- Rural councils experienced a 4% increase overall in Family & Community Services FTEs.

The share of council workforce in other service areas remained relatively stable over this period.

Table 8: Proportionate workforce by service area and council group, % point change 2016–17 to 2022–23

Service area	Metropolitan (n=23)	Regional Town/City (n=20)	Metropolitan Fringe (n=12)	Rural (n=24)
Governance	2%	6%	2%	1%
Family & Community Services	0%	0%	2%	4%
Aged & Disabled Services	-6%	-6%	-7%	-6%
Recreation & Culture	0%	0%	3%	0%
Waste Management	1%	0%	-2%	0%
Traffic & Street Management	0%	-1%	0%	1%
Environment	1%	-1%	0%	1%
Business & Economic Services	1%	2%	4%	1%
Local Roads & Bridges	1%	0%	0%	-3%

Source: SGS Economics and Planning (2025), VLGGC (2023).

Appendix C contains more detailed charts showing the trends over time by council group.

Victorian councils have significantly expanded the number of Governance, Business & Economics, Family & Community Services and Recreation & Culture FTEs in recent years

- Between 2016–17 and 2022–23, Metropolitan, Regional Town/City, and Metropolitan Fringe Councils groups each added over 1,000 FTEs to their workforce, compared to an additional 346 FTEs among Rural councils. As noted in Table 9, the highest growing service areas by council group were:
- Governance: An additional 400–700 FTEs in each of the Metropolitan, Regional Town/City, and Metropolitan Fringe council groups (representing a 30–58% increase between 2016 and 2023)
 - Family & Community Service: An additional 172 FTEs across Rural councils, representing 63% growth between 2017 and 2023. Note however that nominal growth in this service area was higher in Metropolitan and Metropolitan Fringe council groups (both experienced overall growth of around 380 FTEs)
 - Business & Economic Services: An additional 419 FTEs across Metropolitan Fringe councils, translating to 69% growth in this service area between 2017 and 2023. Note that nominal growth in this service area was higher across Metropolitan councils (+495 FTEs).

Possible drivers of growing workforce demand in Governance, Business & Economics, Family & Community Services and Recreation & Culture functions include the State Government kindergarten reforms, a growing focus on corporate sustainability reporting and governance, and an increased focus on service reviews.

The major area of FTE decline across the local government workforce was Aged & Disabled Services, ranging from 755 fewer FTEs across Metropolitan councils (~33%) in 2022–23 compared to 2016–17 to 173 fewer FTEs (~50%) across Rural councils.

This is likely due to the Commonwealth aged care reforms which has seen several councils exit and or dramatically decrease their service offer in aged care.

These and other influences are considered in greater detail in Chapter 3, which combines research and consultation insights. Appendix C contains more detailed charts showing the trends in service areas over time by council group.

Table 9: Proportionate change (%) in FTEs by service area and council group, 2016–17 to 2022–23

Service area	Metropolitan (n=23)	Regional Town/City (n=20)	Metropolitan Fringe (n=12)	Rural (n=24)
Governance	30%	58%	33%	19%
Family & Community Services	14%	17%	35%	63%
Aged & Disabled Services	-33%	-47%	-52%	-50%
Recreation & Culture	10%	17%	54%	10%
Waste Management	37%	17%	-30%	30%
Traffic & Street Management	14%	7%	15%	35%
Environment	28%	4%	14%	59%
Business & Economic Services	20%	39%	69%	23%
Local Roads & Bridges	54%	17%	18%	2%

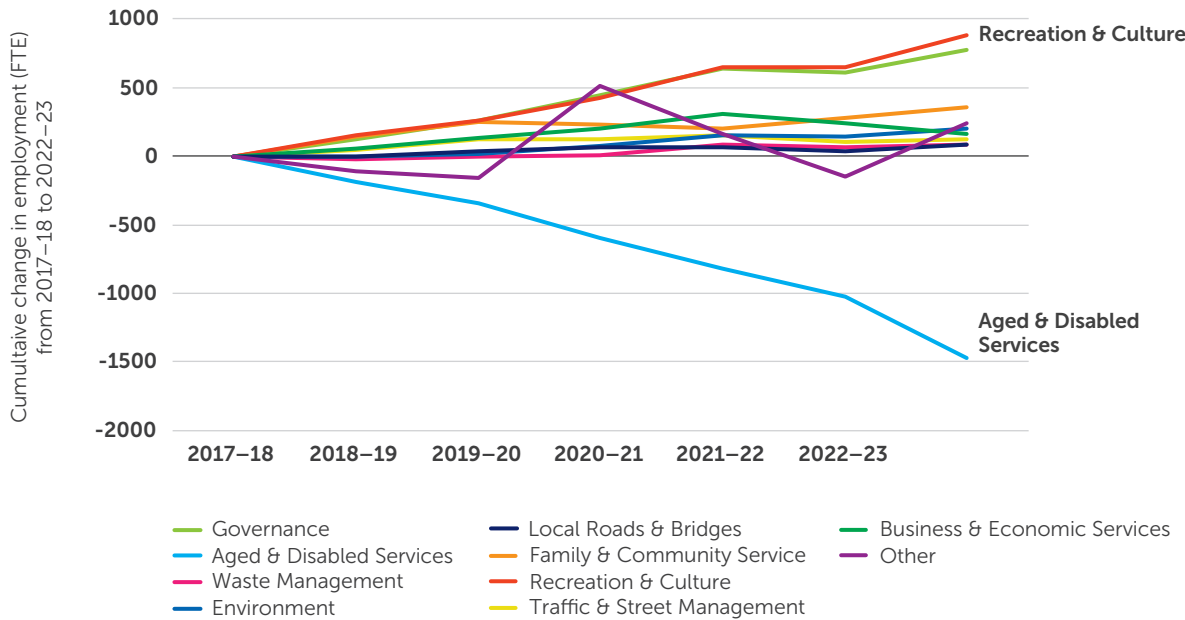
Source: SGS Economics and Planning (2025), VLGGC (2017–23).

There has been a cumulative decline in councils’ aged and disability services workforce from 2018 to 2023

This section provides an analysis of cumulative growth and declines in the number of FTEs by service area and council group. Across the sector, the highest nominal growth was in the Recreation & Culture service area (+875 FTEs between 2018 and 2023), followed by Governance (+771 FTEs).

The highest nominal decline by service area across the sector was in Aged & Disabled Services (-1,472 fewer FTEs in 2023 compared to in 2018) (Figure 10).

Figure 10: Cumulative change in FTEs by service area across Victorian local government, 2018 to 2023



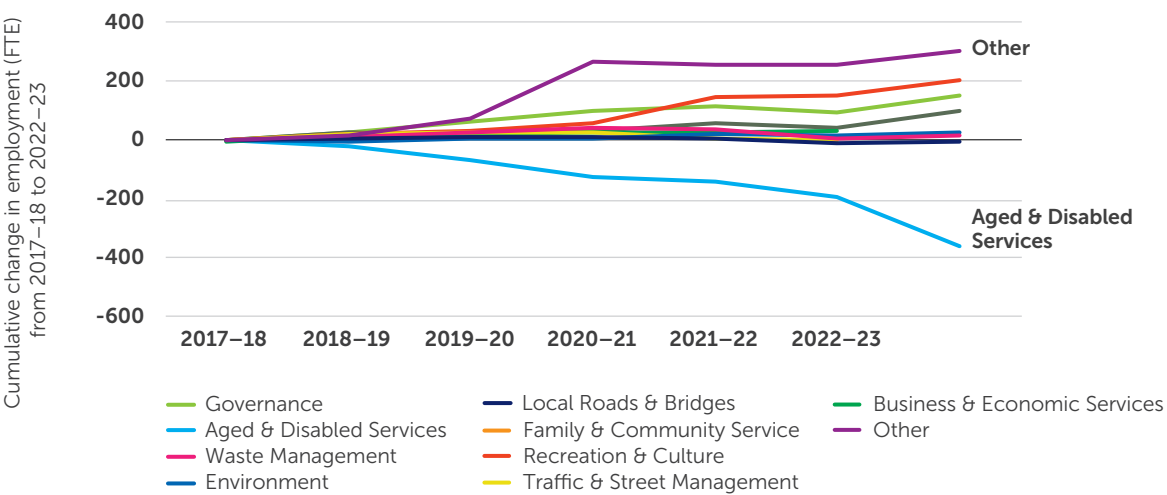
Source: SGS Economics and Planning (2025), VLGGC (2018–23). Service area category names are based on the VLGGC Questionnaire.

Across Regional Town/City councils, total FTEs in the Aged & Disabled service area declined by 361 FTEs between 2018 and 2023, consistent with the Victorian sector trend (Figure 11).

The highest FTE growth was in the ‘Other’ service areas, growing by 301 FTEs between 2018 and 2023. This service area in the VLGGC questionnaire includes a range of occupations, including asset and property management, rangers, capital project managers and municipal emergency support.

This was followed by growth of an additional 201 FTEs in the Recreation & Culture service area over the same period, and an additional 151 FTEs in the Governance workforce in Regional Town/City councils.

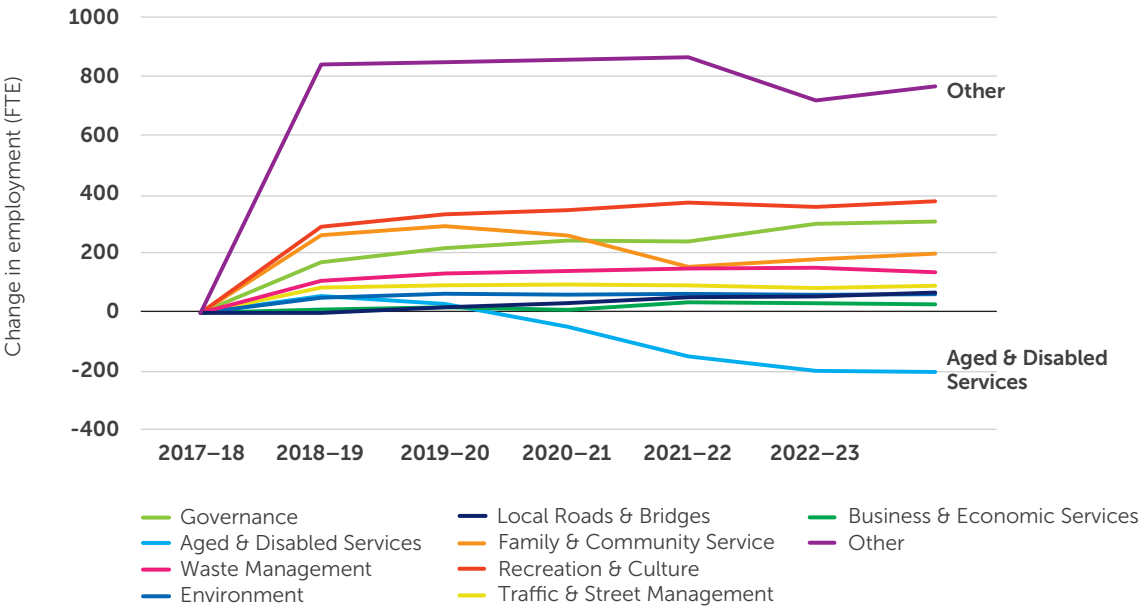
Figure 11: Cumulative change in Regional Town/City councils' FTE by service area, 2018 to 2023



Source: SGS Economics and Planning using VGC data (2025). Service area category names are based on the VLGGC Questionnaire.

Between 2018 and 2023, the Metropolitan Fringe council workforce grew by 1,880 FTEs. The highest FTE growth was in 'Other' service areas, growing by 773 FTEs. This was followed by growth in the Recreation & Culture service area of an additional 382 FTEs between 2018 and 2023, and an additional 312 FTEs in the Governance workforce over the same period. The only service area with declining employment is Aged & Disabled services with a cumulative decrease of 200 FTEs between 2018 and 2023 (Figure 12).

Figure 12: Cumulative change in Metropolitan Fringe councils' FTE by service area, 2018 to 2023

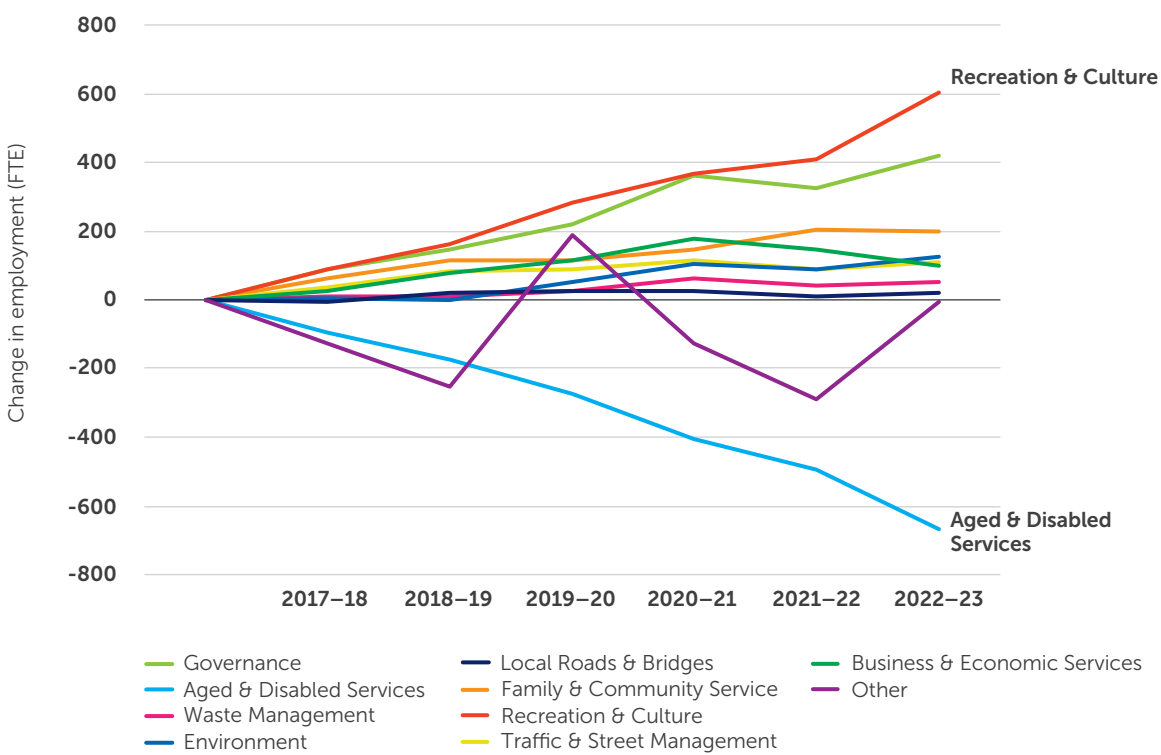


Source: SGS Economics and Planning using VGC data (2025). Service area category names are based on the VLGGC Questionnaire.

Between 2018 and 2023, Metropolitan councils' workforce grew by 974 FTEs, of which 609 FTEs was in the Recreation & Culture service area and 424 FTEs was in the Governance workforce (Figure 13).

Similar to the Victorian local government sector trend, there was a net decrease (668 fewer FTEs in 2023 compared to 2018) in the Aged & Disabled Services workforce.

Figure 13: Cumulative change in Metropolitan councils FTE by service area, 2018 to 2023



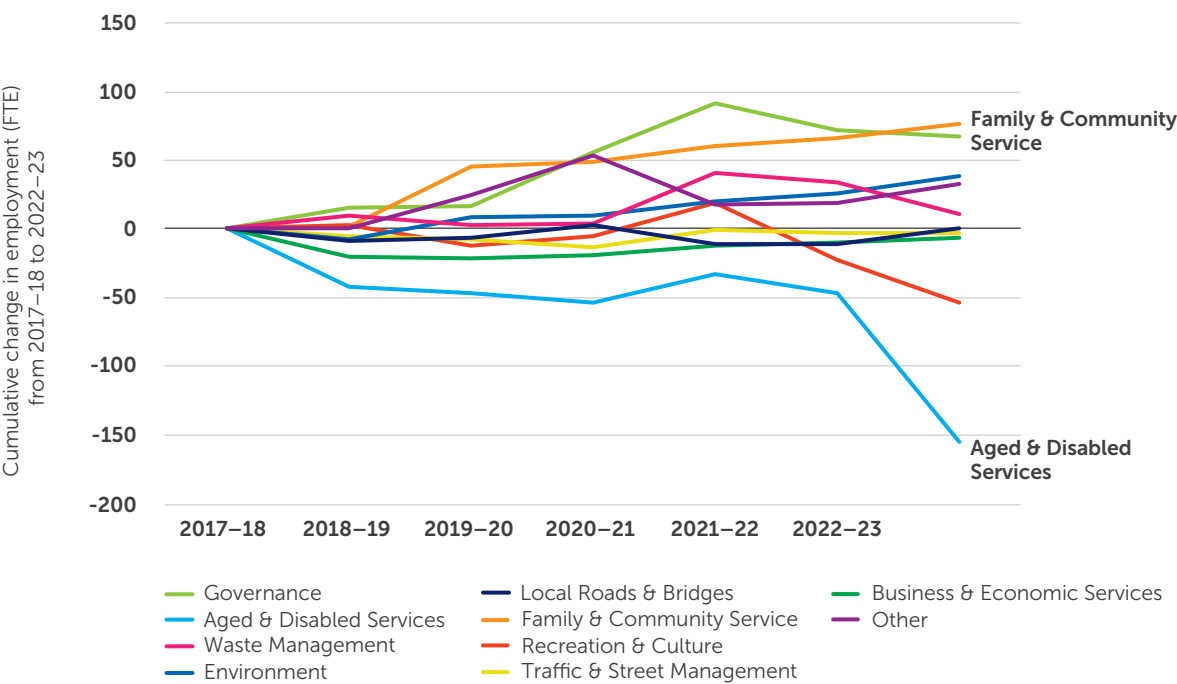
Source: SGS Economics and Planning using VGC data (2025). Service area category names are based on the VLGGC Questionnaire.

Rural councils have experienced the highest nominal growth in Family & Community Services

In contrast to the above growth trends in Recreation & Culture and Other services areas, Rural councils experienced the highest FTE growth in the Family & Community service area (an additional 76 FTEs in 2023 compared to 2018), followed closely by growth in the Governance workforce (an additional 68 FTEs in 2023 compared to 2018). Note however that these figures are considerably lower than FTE growth in other council groups.

Similar to the Victorian local government sector trend, Rural councils experienced a net decline in the Aged & Disabled services workforce of 155 FTEs between 2018 and 2023. This was followed by a decline of 54 Recreation & Culture FTEs over the same period (Figure 14).

Figure 14: Cumulative change in Rural councils’ FTE by service area, 2018 to 2023



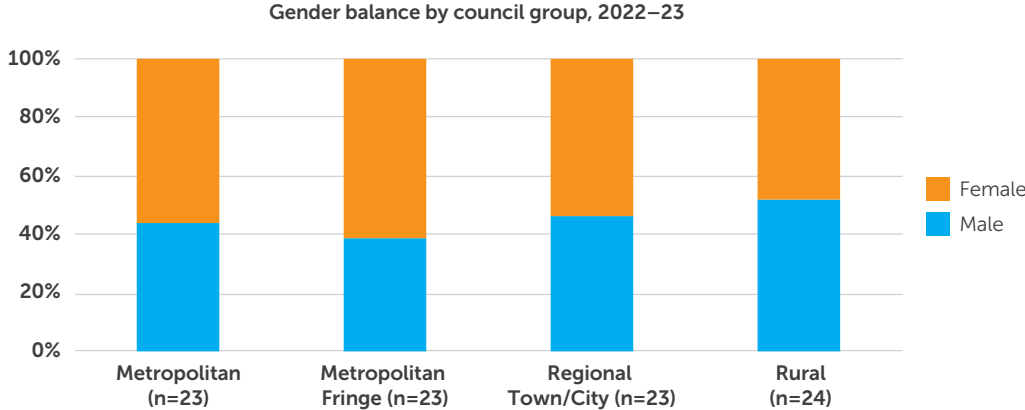
Source: SGS Economics and Planning using VGC data (2025). Service area category names are based on the VLGGC Questionnaire.

Recent reform has improved gender balance in Victorian local government workforce

2021 ABS Census data indicates that, overall, there is higher female participation in the Victorian local (61% female) and state (59% female) workforce. Recent legislative and strategic developments, such as the introduction of the *Gender Equality Act (2020)* and the Victorian government’s *Our Equal State Strategy* in 2023 together establish an environment where policy development, targets-setting, monitoring and progress measurement are collectively focused on advancements in gender equity.

An analysis of 2022–23 FTEs by gender and council group shows that all have a greater share of female employees, except for Rural which is relatively even split (Figure 15). An analysis of this over time (2017–23) shows that this gender ratio has been relatively stable over the years.⁸

Figure 15: Gender participation by council type, 2022–23



Source: SGS Economics and Planning using VLGGC data (2025)

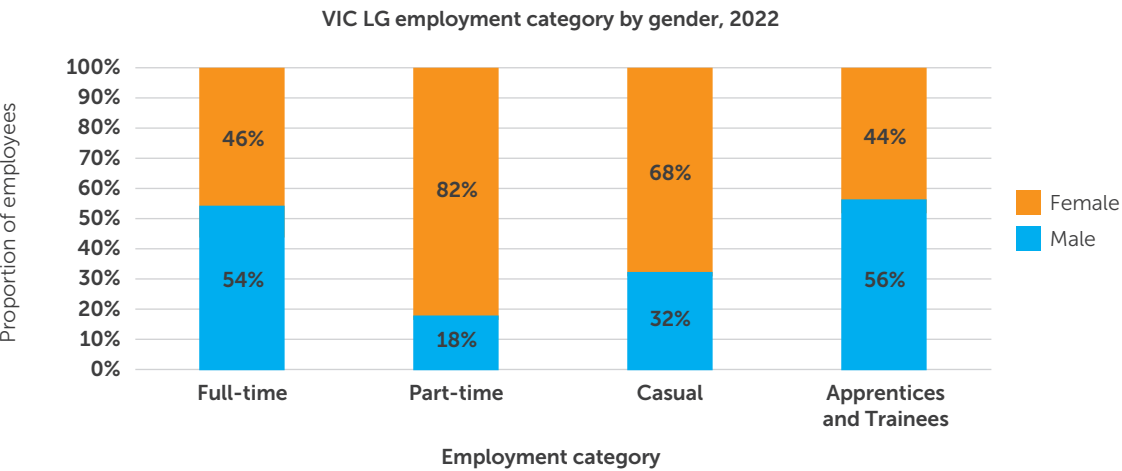
Past research shows that the overall workforce participation by gender hides underlying trends by employment type, occupation, level of seniority within the organisation, and even location of work.⁹ Higher female participation in Victorian local government can in part be explained by the fact that many Victorian local governments have historically overseen the delivery of aged care, kindergarten and care and support economy programs for their communities. These are industries whose workers are majority women.

The implications of recent kindergarten and aged care reform on Victorian councils leaving these sectors to private providers on longer-term gender balance in the workforce remains to be seen.

The 2022 Local Government Workforce Skills and Capability Survey showed that overall female participation in the sector is driven by female part-time and casual workers, compared to fewer female full-time workers (Figure 16).

8 Victorian Grants Commission Questionnaire (2017–23)
9 Recent research into gendered mobility patterns highlights that the spatial dimension of workforce participation. The co-location of services and transport options, as well as the ease of navigating urban settings, are all determinants of women’s economic security and employment. Hill, E., Cooper, R., Lee, T., & Seetahul, S. (2024). Building a more equitable future of work for women in NSW: opportunities for government action.

Figure 16: Victorian local government employment category by gender, 2022



Source: ALGA (2022) Local government workforce skills and capability survey.

Metropolitan councils were among those with the highest difference in the number of female and male employees. Casey, Kingston, Wyndham, and Hume each employed 300–450 more female workers compared to male workers, compared to the City of Melbourne workforce which has 500 fewer female than male workers.

Some of these councils have raised concerns about the financial impact of the Victorian Government’s kindergarten and aged care reforms, which may have medium to longer-term implications for the workforce gender profile.

The City of Casey has signalled it will continue to offer kindergarten services where this is within council’s capacity, but that there would be no increase to kindergarten staffing levels.¹⁰ By 31 December 2024, Wyndham City Council ceased to provide aged care services to older residents, moving away from a direct service model.¹¹ As these reforms continue to be implemented, depending on individual council decisions, this may see a change in the gender balance in Victorian local governments.

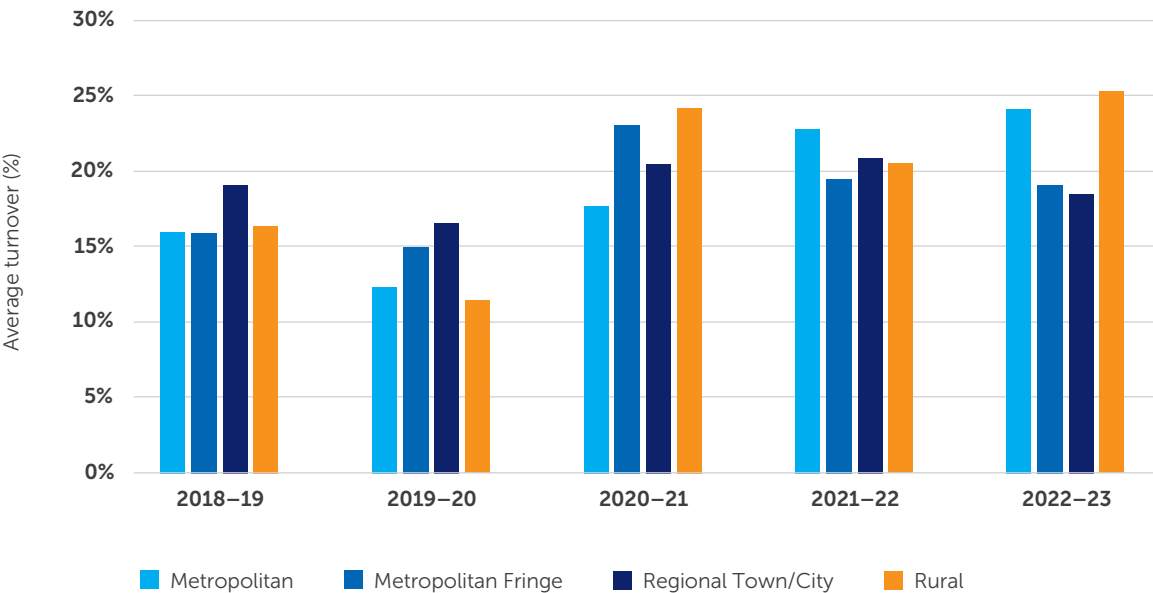
10 Lucas, F (2024), ‘Casey Council calls the kindergarten infrastructure gap financially unviable’, <https://thesector.com.au/2024/05/07/casey-council-calls-the-kindergarten-infrastructure-gap-financially-unviable/>
11 Wyndham City Council (not dated), ‘Aged Care Services’, <https://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/services/aged-disability/support-services/aged-care-services>

Staff turnover rates are increasing across all council types in Victoria

Throughout Victoria, councils are seeing higher turnover rates within the last five years. In 2018–19 the State wide average turnover rate of 17% increased to 22% in 2022–23 (Figure 17).

Rural councils tend to have the highest turnover overall, peaking in 2022–23 at 25%. All councils had their lowest turnover in 2019–20. This is likely due to COVID-19 and job market uncertainty.

Figure 17: Council turnover rates, 2018–19 to 2022–23



Source: SGS Economics and Planning using VLGGC data (2025)

3. Factors shaping labour market dynamics

- 3.1 Constraints to workforce supply
- 3.2 Shifts in the regional operating context shaping demand
- 3.3 Global macro-trends shaping workforce futures

3. Factors shaping labour market dynamics

This chapter summarises the key factors shaping the workforce needs of Victoria’s local government.

This is categorised as follows:

- **Operating context:** Factors characterising the immediate environment of the local government sector, such as reform and regulatory change, geographic setting (e.g. urban, remote, cross-border), and community needs and expectations.
- **Internal drivers:** Internal factors at the sector and/or council scale, such as strategic priorities, historical workforce skills and capability gaps, financial sustainability, and preferred service delivery models.
- **Macro-trends:** External forces that are typically beyond the local government sector’s control and which are shaping the long-term outlook of the wider economy and communities.

3.1 Constraints to workforce supply

Financial sustainability issues limit flexibility in recruitment and retention

Financial constraints faced by local governments continue to be a key challenge.¹² Since 2015, rate-capping has limited council income in the face of increasing costs of infrastructure and service delivery, leaving many councils with the prospect of reductions to their services.¹³ Adding to this, councils are having to take on more of the cost of community services including public libraries, maternal and child health, and building services.¹⁴ Cost-shifting for libraries has gone from a 50-50 split of state and local government share of costs, to councils taking on an average of 80% of library funding.¹⁵

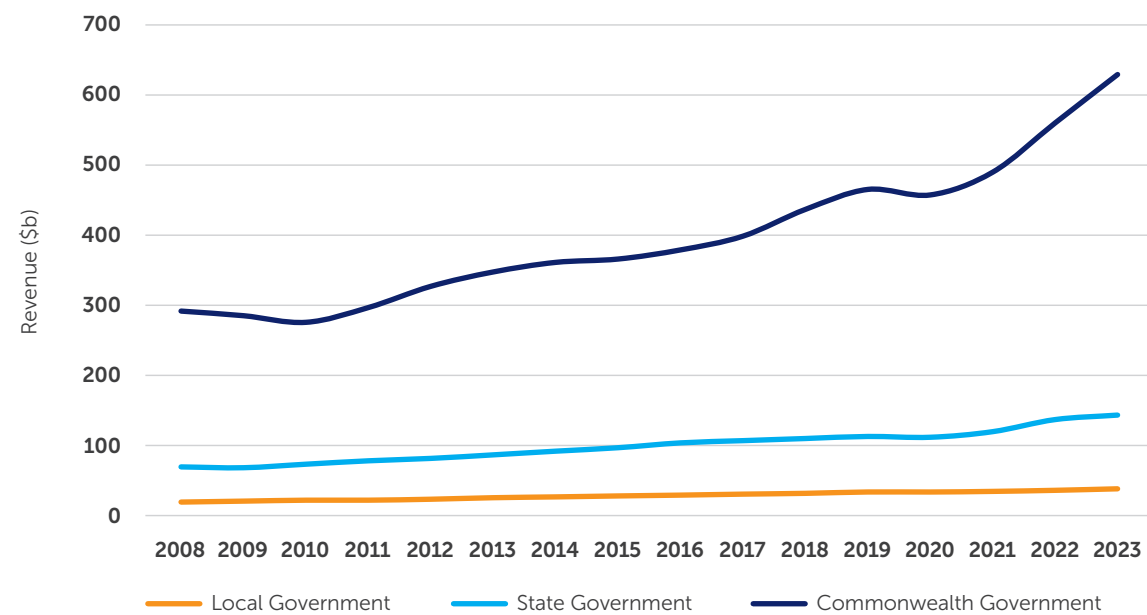
While wider cost pressures are not unique to the local government sector, many local governments are disproportionately impacted. Unlike other employers and other sectors, local governments are often the provider of last resort and are bound to place-based service provision no matter the local labour market conditions.

That is, local government cannot elect to operate in a more favourable market of labour supply, nor can they consolidate operations across administrative boundaries.

Between 2018 and 2023, the average annual growth rate in income across the Australian local government sector was 4% per annum, compared to 5.2% across Australian State and Territory Governments and 8% for the Commonwealth Government.¹⁶

This comparison of local governments’ own source revenue and revenue raising in state and Commonwealth governments sheds light on the differences in financial autonomy between the tiers of government. Long-term growth in local governments’ own source revenue has stagnated over the past 15 years, compared to increases in state and commonwealth revenue (Figure 18).

Figure 18: Income by Australian government sector, 2008 to 2023



Source: SGS Economics and Planning (2024), ABS Government Finance Statistics.

This is leaving local governments more dependent on state and federal government grants to meet funding needs. While funding for some FTEs is available through grant programs the uncertainty of these programs and the accompanying loss of corporate knowledge is a risk. To counter this, some local governments are moving towards an outsourcing model that fills FTE with labour hire workers, or workers/organisations hired under a fixed-term contracts.¹⁷ This includes many outdoor roles such as civil maintenance and parks and gardens, along with waste management.

Workforce capabilities and skills gaps lead to operational and service delivery risks

The 2022 Local Government Skills and Workforce Survey found that nine in ten councils across the country are experiencing skills shortages, up 30% in 2018.¹⁸

Regional governments face even bigger challenges with a higher turnover rate compared to metropolitan councils (20% vs 15%),¹⁹ and workforce attraction difficulties fuelled by a limited options for suitable and affordable housing, local amenities, pay differentials and competition with the private market.²⁰ Rural and regional councils are more affected by higher staff turnover which results in a cyclical loss of capacity over time. Alternative approaches to workforce planning and development are needed to respond to these challenges, with lessons available from the private sector including recruiting from under-represented groups.

Recent insight from an outer metropolitan Melbourne council indicate that local government wage increases are falling behind both CPI increases and award rate increases, effectively eroding any incentive that local government wage premiums may have had in the past.

12 Inquiry into local government sustainability Submission 140 – Supplementary Submission (8 November 2024), https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House/Regional_Development_Infrastructure_and_Transport/Localgovernmentsustaina/Submissions

13 VLGA (2024), VLGA welcomes report following inquiry into local government funding & services, <https://www.vlga.org.au/news/vlga-welcomes-report-following-inquiry-local-government-funding-services>

14 Regional Cities Victoria (2024), 2024 Victorian Government Inquiry into Local Government Funding and Services – RCV Submission

15 Coade, M. (2024), 'Why parliamentarians want the Victorian auditor to look into who is paying the price of public libraries', <https://www.themandarin.com.au/282607-victorian-parliamentarians-want-auditor-to-look-into-public-libraries/>

16 SGS Economics and Planning (2024), Financial sustainability in Australian local government

17 Inquiry into local government sustainability Submission 140 – Supplementary Submission (8 November 2024), https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House/Regional_Development_Infrastructure_and_Transport/Localgovernmentsustaina/Submissions

18 ALGA (2022), Jobs and skills crisis in local government, <https://alga.com.au/jobs-and-skills-crisis-in-local-government/>

19 ALGA (2022)

20 LGA (2022); Public Skills Australia (2024), Federal, State/Territory & Local Government Workforce Plan 2024, <https://psa-directus-prod.azurewebsites.net/assets/acd96fb3-8c56-4df4-9670-6a92e6eb696d>; Likely, A (2024), Trends shaping local government in 2025, Government News, https://www.governmentnews.com.au/type_contributors/trends-shaping-local-government-in-2025/; Legislative Council Economy and Infrastructure Committee (2024)

Specific areas of skills and occupational gaps include:

- Town planners, engineers, and building surveyors as housing affordability continues to decline, planning and building regulation changes, and government housing targets increase
- Maternal and child health staff and childcare workers as more women are working and government reforms to increase hours of access to free kindergarten. Beyond this, significant increases in demand alongside increases in wages for Victorian hospital-based nurses,²¹ aged care, and early years workers will put further pressure on local governments that are experiencing wage stagnation
- Information technology workers, as well as AI literate workers, and the use of smart technologies continue to proliferate work practices²²
- The push for sustainable infrastructure and net-zero emissions will create high-demand for jobs in the traditional areas of architecture, building and surveying, builders and plumbers, civil engineering, electricians, and mechanics, and in emerging occupations including battery storage, circular design, energy auditing and efficiency, and resource recovery and sustainability.²³

Many of these occupational and skills focus areas are reflected in existing local government workforce strategies across Victoria.²⁴

Survey data from 41 Victorian local governments who responded to the 2022 Local Government Workforce Skills and Capability Survey highlights the most common occupational skills shortages experienced between 2020–21. That report noted that (emphasis added):

Urban and town planners, engineers, and building surveyors** were the top professional skill shortage areas experienced in 2020–21, identified by 59 per cent or more of responding local governments. These were the same as the top three listed in 2018, however the percentage of local governments identifying them as a current shortage has risen considerably from 41.9 per cent.²⁵ **Environmental health officers and human resource professionals**, ranked 4th and 5th in 2020–21 were not previously in the top five, suggesting that **shortages are deepening in these areas.

***IT and ICT technicians, care persons and accounts clerks** were the top shortage areas among trade occupations in 2022. Again, these were identified in 2018 but the proportion of local governments identifying this has risen considerably. Truck driver shortages ranked 4th in this survey but were not a top ten shortage area in 2018, suggesting they are an emerging shortage area.*

A direct comparison between these top occupational skills shortage areas and FTE trends across Victorian local government outlined in Chapter 2 is not possible, as the categories from the survey do not map perfectly to the categories in the VLGGC questionnaire. However, the most commonly identified shortage area – urban and town planners – is captured under ‘Business & Economic Services’.

Table 10: Occupational skills shortages in Victorian local government, 2020–21

Category	Occupation	# responding local governments	% responding local governments
Professional and Technical	Urban and town planners	29	71%
	Engineers	27	66%
	Building surveyors	24	59%
	Environmental health officers	19	46%
	Human resource professionals	19	46%
	Computing/ICT professionals	16	39%
	Project managers	13	32%
	Allied health professionals	12	29%
	Building surveying technicians	12	29%
	Engineering technicians	12	29%
Operational and Trade	IT/ICT technicians	15	37%
	Care persons (aged, disability)	13	32%
	Accounts/pay roll clerk	10	24%
	Truck drivers	10	24%
	Supervisors/team leaders	8	20%
	Tradespersons – Automotive	8	20%
	Waste management/Recycling operator	8	20%
	Tradespersons – Horticultural	7	17%
	Youth support worker	7	17%
	Customer service workers	6	15%

Source: 2022 Local Government Skills and Capability Survey.

Competition from the private market also adds challenges, as there are fewer graduates to fill roles such as urban planners and engineers at council.²⁶ Meanwhile, universities are discontinuing planning programs despite calls for greater support.²⁷

Government funding has recently been provided for a pilot program working with higher education providers to address shortages of engineers, town planners and allied health professionals.²⁸

21 Premier of Victoria (2024), Nurses And Midwives To Receive 28.4 Per Cent Pay Rise, <https://www.premier.vic.gov.au/nurses-and-midwives-receive-284-cent-pay-rise>
22 Legislative Council Economy and Infrastructure Committee (2024); SGS Economics and Planning (2022), 2022 Local Government Workforce Skills and Capability Survey, <https://alga.com.au/app/uploads/2022-Local-Government-Workforce-Skills-and-Capability-Survey-National-Report.pdf>
23 Victorian Government (2023), Clean Economy Workforce Development Strategy 2023–2033, https://djsir.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0012/2179677/Clean-Economy-Workforce-Development-Strategy-2023-2033.pdf
24 City of Yarra (2022), Workforce Strategy 2022–2026
25 2018 Local Government Workforce and Future Skills Report – Victoria, p. 46.

26 Day, J (29 October 2024), Data reveals ‘alarming’ shortage of urban and regional planners across the country, psnews.com.au, <https://psnews.com.au/data-reveals-alarming-shortage-of-urban-and-regional-planners-across-the-country/147677/>
27 Planning Institute Australia (14 October 2024), Media Release – New data shows shortage of Urban and Regional Planners worsening, <https://www.planning.org.au/pia/news-resources/articles/latest-updates/2024/new-data-shows-shortage-of-urban-and-regional-planners-worsening.aspx>
28 Premier of Victoria (21 August 2024), More Job Pathways For Local Government Workers,

3.2 Shifts in the regional operating context shaping demand

Kindergarten reform will significantly increase demand and competition for early childhood educators

The Victorian Government are investing \$14 billion into a range of initiatives over the next decade as part of the Best Start, Best Life Reform.²⁹ The initiatives ramp up capacity for more children to access kindergarten through more free kindergarten (introduction of 15 hrs of 3 year old kindergarten and increasing 4 year old kindergarten from 15 hrs to 30 hrs), the provision of more early learning centres and more funding for kindergarten infrastructure.

It is estimated that an additional 11,000 early childhood professionals are required to deliver the rollout of free kinder and pre-prep across Victoria.³⁰ Nationally, over 12,500 early learning service providers are already 'struggling... to meet the regulatory requirements for the educator-to-child ratios'.³¹ To incentivise early childhood workforce supply, the Victorian Government Best Start, Best Life reforms include incentives to attract, upskill and retain quality early childhood teachers and educators as well as career advancement programs to support the skilled workforce.³² The incentives include scholarships, financial support for upskilling, free TAFE, and designated education and training pathways through the Early Childhood Tertiary Partnerships program.

Jobs and Skills Australia's 2024 capacity study on workforce needs for Australia's early childhood education and care sector identified several supply-side barriers to growing the sector's future workforce. These include:³³

- Low remuneration compared to other competing career pathways
- Low incentives to motivate pathways into middle leadership
- Physical barriers to access to work (e.g. distance to travel, access to transport)
- Few specialisation pathways in the sector
- Existing structures that result in 'administrative overload' from compliance and managing parental expectations
- Minimal support for new migrant early childhood educators.

Many Victorian councils directly provide kindergarten services. This includes the delivery of kindergarten infrastructure, kindergarten teachers, and coordination of enrolments across the municipality. As a result of these reforms, in order for councils to maintain their current market share of service provisions they will need to dramatically increase the number of kindergarten teachers and kindergarten facilities.

This is a significant financial expense for local governments, as such many councils are reconsidering their ongoing role in the service. For those councils that do not have a strong not-for-profit and private market landscape (Regional and Rural councils), this is a much harder decision.

Aged care reform is already contracting segments of the Victorian local government workforce

Changes to Australia's aged care system were introduced following the *Aged Care and Other Legislation Amendment (Royal Commission Response) Act 2022*. They intended to improve accountability and transparency in the aged care sector. The Victorian local government sector is considerably impacted by the recent reforms due to the 'historically high number of councils delivering [aged care] services'.³⁴ Since 2021, at least 80 councils nationally have exited the Commonwealth-funded Home Support Program to some degree, of which 46 are in Victoria.³⁵

The Federal Government's aged care reforms will transition from block funding, where councils receive money to provide services based on the number of people needing support, to a consumer-directed or 'packaged' model where funding is based on individual need and provider(s) of choice. Funding reform, increased governance, reporting and information sharing requirements, as well as additional oversight of health care pricing and costing are some of the factors expected to increase costs to council.

Moreover, councils have called for time to transition and adapt to meet new service requirements under the new legislation due to increased complexities and limited funding.³⁶

The City of Port Phillip estimated that maintaining its in-home aged care service would require a new delivery model costing \$1.42 million annually, a threefold increase to current costs.³⁷ While many metropolitan councils have since withdrawn from direct service delivery in response, in rural and regional areas with thinner service markets this is often not an option.

For those councils who stay in the service, there is a national demand for Aged & Disability Care services workers, putting additional pressure on service delivery. In addition, there are ongoing changes to service delivery with further regulatory requirements putting further pressure on service delivery capabilities.

Of the councils who exit a direct service model, the short-term impacts include ensuring there is a suitably skilled provider and workforce to oversee the transition phase and minimise impacts to older residents. Medium to longer-term, it is possible that councils could shift their focus from direct aged care services to broader ageing in place initiatives integrated across planning, infrastructure, programs, and activities.

Similarly, local governments may be reconsidering their role in disability services provision

Workforce related National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) reforms include a worker registration scheme and professional development requirements. Victoria's workforce plan for the NDIS includes \$26 million to be invested in workforce development, training and skills initiatives.³⁸

The cost burden of the registration, additional training and supervision is expected to compound existing financial pressures.³⁹ For councils, NDIS was an opportunity to opt-in to a broader service delivery.

As with the aged care reforms, the impact of the expanding range of providers resulted in most councils determining to not register as a NDIS service provider. 'Only three councils continue to provide services as NDIS providers, with one recently announcing its intention to cease NDIS service provision.'

Many councils still play a linkage role for community members along with ensuring infrastructure, programs and activities are inclusive of people with a disability. This was previously supported through State Government funded access and inclusion officer roles, however this funding has also been removed following the introduction of the NDIS, resulting in many councils reducing their ongoing support and linkage role.

Planning reforms will increase demand for technical planning officers, notwithstanding a national shortage of planners

There has been a suite of new planning reforms such as *Victoria's Housing Statement*,⁴¹ new Housing Targets, a new *Plan for Victoria*⁴², and changes to the planning system via new *Townhouse and Low-Rise Code* and *4 Storey Apartment Standards*⁴³. Collectively these planning reforms are increasing the demand for strategic and statutory planners within local and state government.

New housing targets from the state government have put pressure on many local governments, particularly in metropolitan locations, to plan and approve more dwellings. The state government has even gone as far as to suggest that if local governments do not make sufficient progress against targets that they will remove their planning powers.⁴⁴

29 Victoria Government (2023), The Best Start, Best Life reforms, <https://www.vic.gov.au/best-start-best-life-reforms>

30 Lucas, F (2024), Victoria's Budget delivered to mixed reviews from ECEC sector, The Sector, <https://thesector.com.au/2024/05/09/victorias-budget-delivered-to-mixed-reviews-from-ecec-sector/>

31 Australian Childcare Alliance (2023), 2023 Survey Feedback: Capping enrolments due to staff shortages, <https://childcarealliance.org.au/media-publications/244-aca-enrolments-survey-report-november-2023/file>

32 Victorian Government (2025), 'The Best Start, Best Life reforms', <https://www.vic.gov.au/best-start-best-life-reforms>

33 Jobs and Skills Australia (2024), 'The future of the early childhood education profession', https://www.jobsandskills.gov.au/sites/default/files/2024-09/the_future_of_the_early_childhood_education_profession_-_extended_report.pdf

34 Egan, C (2024), '80 councils nationwide jump ship from CHSP in less than three years', <https://www.theweeklysourc.com.au/home-care/another-vic-local-council-exits-chsp-as-80-councils-nation-wide-jump-ship-over-25-yrs>

35 Ibid.

36 Skatssoon, J (July 16, 2024), Councils call for two years to implement new Aged Care Act, Australian Ageing Agenda, <https://www.australianageingagenda.com.au/executive/councils-call-for-two-years-to-implement-new-aged-care-act/>

37 Sambul, N (21 February 2024), 'Frightening': Council looks to axe in-home aged care services, The Age, <https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/frightening-council-looks-to-axe-in-home-aged-care-services-20240220-p5f6ci.html>

38 Victorian Government (2 June 2021), Our Plan, <https://www.vic.gov.au/keeping-our-sector-strong/our-plan>

39 Fordyce, S (13 August, 2024), Victoria in Focus by Sarah Fordyce, August 2024, National Disability Services, <https://nds.org.au/news/victoria-in-focus-by-sarah-fordyce-august-2024>

40 Municipal Association of Victoria (2023), MAV submission to the Review of the NDIS, https://www.mav.asn.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0012/33204/Submission-to-the-NDIS-Review-Aug-2023.pdf

41 Victorian Government (2024), 'Victoria's Housing Statement', <https://www.vic.gov.au/victorias-housing-statement>

42 Victorian Government (2025), 'Plan for Victoria', <https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/planforvictoria>

43 Victorian Government (2025), '4 Storey Apartment Standards', <https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/guides-and-resources/guides/all-guides/residential-development/4-storey-apartment-standards>

44 Premier of Victoria (24, February 2025), If Councils Won't Unlock Space For More Homes – We Will, <https://www.premier.vic.gov.au/if-councils-wont-unlock-space-more-homes-we-will>

Meeting these targets will require substantial growth in the labour market, with some estimating that a 15% growth on the 2022 construction workforce (approximately 50,000 jobs) will be needed.⁴⁵ This is at a time when, nationally, there is high competition for the construction workforce. State government investments in 41 Renewable Energy Zones across Eastern Australia⁴⁶ will see construction workforce demand peak in the early 2030s. This coincides with the 2032 Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games, which is estimated to need 30,000 to 40,000 additional workers each year from now until the games to support major infrastructure development.⁴⁷

Planning reform is also putting greater pressure on local government planning officers. Under new deemed to comply process rules, there is a greater onus on councils to scrutinise the 'small details of controls and complex legal challenges from applicants'.⁴⁸ Attracting and retaining skilled planning staff – already the leading skills shortage area identified by Victorian and the national local government sector – may in the future become more difficult given the actual or perceived procedural complexities.

Building reform may result in a greater need for compliance and enforcement roles in local government

For any project that requires a building permit, a building surveyor is required. Building surveyors can be found through either the private market or through local government.

The Victorian Government has been undertaking a review of the building system. This includes the introduction of the *Building Legislation Amendment Bill 2023*. Amongst others, this Bill amended the *Building Act 1993* to appoint a State Building Surveyor, the appointment of a Building Monitor, along with categorisation of practitioners, and sharing of knowledge and information. These changes, amongst others aim to ensure Victoria has safe and high-quality buildings.

In order to undertake building surveying work, each local government must appoint a Municipal Building Surveyor (MBS). Across the sector there is a lack of both building surveyors and MBS's. The sector has been working to improve this through a range of initiatives including sharing of MBS's across municipalities, training and mentoring programs including the implementation of the state government Women Building Surveyors Program to grow the pool of building surveyors and contracting out building surveyors and MBSs.

The number of qualified building surveyors is not only a small pool but also an ageing one. Research undertaken by Bronwyn Weir and Frances Hall found that 'less than 50% of Rural MBSs intend to retire within 10 years, whereas for Metropolitan and Regional Councils this figure is over 60%. For non-MBS council officers, about one third currently working in Rural Councils intend to retire within 10 years (for Metropolitan this increases to 39% and for Regional Councils only 8%)'.⁴⁹ This report results in 10 recommendations and 5 potential models of service delivery to decrease the individual risks placed on building surveyors as well as a shared model of service delivery across regions.

Local governments are already exploring shared service models for building surveyors in the face of acute workforce shortages. There is a role for local governments to highlight the critical nature of building surveyors and other relevant occupations and skills and to convey the impacts and risks to the community if the workforce shortages are not addressed. Local governments' voice will be important to inform advocacy on addressing industry shortages through education reform and Vocational Education and Training pathway designs.

3.3 Global macro-trends shaping workforce futures

A 2022 ALGA survey of local governments reveals that in Victoria, the factors that will drive future skills requirements for local governments were: an ageing workforce, major infrastructure projects, increasing levels of governance and compliance, technological change, changes in government funding levels, population growth, and climate change. Despite this, only 56% of local governments reported that they were proactively planning for this change. In the near term, participants identified a need for more roles and upskilling to meet the demand for digital skills and an increasing focus on renewables.⁵⁰

An ageing workforce highlights the imperative of effective succession planning

The ageing workforce is a key issue for local governments, with 90% of Victorian local government respondents to the 2022 Local Government Workforce Skills and Capability Survey said that an ageing workforce was impacting future skills needs. The Australian local government sector is second only to agriculture, forestry and fishing when it comes to an ageing workforce.⁵¹

The impact of an ageing workforce in local government presents risks in the form of lost corporate memory, knowledge and skills gaps if succession planning is inadequate, and missed opportunities to strengthen ties with newer workforce entrants who seek career mentors and role models. These are not unique to the sector, however, unlike other employers, local governments face unique challenges such as increased competition with the private sector, limited wage-based recruitment levers, and constraints to workforce planning capacity. Many local governments also employ a sizeable outdoor workforce (e.g. operational and field-based staff) who are approaching retirement age.

Technology will significantly shape local governments' ways of working, however sound change management is key to maintaining a positive employee experience

The possibilities for the future workforce through leveraging technology are wide-ranging.

This includes the ability for rural and remote local governments to tap into a wider talent pool, to explore resource sharing arrangements, as well as improved sector workforce retention for workers who desire hybrid and flexible working arrangements.⁵²

Stakeholder consultation undertaken for this Paper also revealed that technology is automating task-oriented functions and therefore unlocking workforce capacity to focus on more strategic tasks. Similarly, technological support has a role in enhancing the breadth and depth of local governments' existing or even new functions. For example, the concept of a digital twin – interactive, virtual models of the built environment – is helping councils around Australia and the world to improve disaster management and emergency response planning by enabling the workforce to conduct simulations and scenario planning. Technology is also aiding with the engagement with community, through apps to send through customer requests to online dashboards to collect feedback from the community on a range of topics and draft strategic directions.

Technological advancements are clearly an opportunity for local governments to access a wider talent pool and consider the feasibility of resource sharing arrangements. However, the pace of technological change may also cause frictions in workforce planning and development during the transition phase.

Variations in digital literacy across the local government workforce and the degree of disruption to established processes are just some of the factors that might warrant upskilling support from local governments. Moreover, consultation affirmed the value of solid change management processes to combat fatigue among the workforce regarding digital system upgrades and impacts on organisational structures.

There is a growing awareness of health and wellbeing at work as a strategic enabler

There is growing awareness that wellbeing in the workplace is vital to workforce health and productivity, where previously the focus in many sectors was one of compliance with work health and safety regulations.

45 Mahendran, R (2023), Victoria's Housing Statement: Boosting Labour Force crucial to achieving new targets, Urbis, <https://urbis.com.au/insights-news/victorias-housing-statement-boosting-labour-force-crucial-to-achieving-new-targets/>

46 Infrastructure Australia (not dated), 'National Electricity Market: Renewable Energy Zone expansions', <https://www.infrastructureaustralia.gov.au/ipl/national-electricity-market-renewable-energy-zone-expansions>

47 Australian Broadcasting Corporation (2024), 'Queensland construction industry needs thousands of workers for 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games', <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-03-27/brisbane-olympics-construction-workers-needed-thousands/105096808>

48 Rowley, S (2025), Reshaping Victorian residential development provisions, SGS Economics and Planning, <https://sgsep.com.au/publications/insights/reshaping-victorian-residential-development-provisions>

49 Bronwyn Weir and Frances Hall, 2025, Building surveying resources in rural Victoria

50 SGS Economics and Planning (2022), 2022 Local Government Workforce Skills and Capability Survey

51 University of Technology Sydney (2019), 'Strategies for managing local government's ageing workforce', <https://www.uts.edu.au/news/2019/07/strategies-managing-local-governments-ageing-workforce>

52 CivicPulse (2023), Benchmarking remote work in state and local government, <https://www.civicpulse.org/post/benchmarking-remote-work-in-state-and-local-government>

Recognition of the prevalence and seriousness of mental health issues has become more accepted within society generally, and employers need to be responsive to these needs when recruiting and supporting long-term employees. The Victorian Government will also introduced new psychosocial regulations towards the end of 2025, requiring councils to identify psychosocial hazards, eliminate or reduce risks, produce prevention plans, and greater reporting requirements.⁵³ This will require a review of existing policies and in many instances this will result in greater compliance requirements and require a compliance and regulation team.⁵⁴

In addition to workforce mental health and wellbeing, the local government workforce often experiences high exposure to community needs, particularly in times of crisis, and in some communities is a service provider of last resort.

Being the closest level of government to the community, dealing with community mental health and wellbeing is increasing becoming a core component of frontline workers roles. This requires additional training. Furthermore, these pressures and responsibilities can impact workforce wellbeing if appropriate supports are not in place.

While flexible workforce arrangements are helpful, local governments need to be vigilant about maintaining healthy workplace cultures to avoid the loss of talented and suitable workers.⁵⁵ To support this some councils are delivering leadership culture and transformation programs, re-writing role descriptions to focus on people leadership and regularly measuring staff engagement, all of which significantly increased employee engagement.⁵⁶

Climate change is embedding sustainability and related roles into the local government workforce

Communities depend on local governments for support during and after natural disasters, but without greater resources local governments are limited in their ability to drive mitigation and preparation efforts.⁵⁷

More frequent and severe natural disasters are leading many councils to undertake climate adaptation planning and develop emergency response plans. Embedding sustainability officers and other skills into the 'business as usual' workforce will be key, yet councils 'face financial and other barriers to effective action, including labour shortages and the need for new organisational skills and knowledge'.⁵⁸ Councils' readiness to respond to climate change is outpaced by the experience of it, fuelled by limitations in resources, skills, knowledge and capacity to engage audiences within council.⁵⁹

East Gippsland Shire Council has recently flagged that preparing and responding to natural disasters is causing a significant financial burden, including the cost of rebuilding communities. They are calling for a reform to simplify the disaster recovery funding models across all levels of government, significantly increase the level of funding, and expand the scope of the funding to 'better support local government authorities in covering the high costs associated with disaster response and relief work and rebuilding assets' and proactive work to improve resilience.⁶⁰

Climate change will continue to drive demand on local government workforce as the need for planning for mitigation, adaptation, and disaster preparedness and response increases over time. Consultation revealed that climate change is already starting to impact councils' recruitment decisions, with councils expanding into new service areas, such as climate adaptation and building climate resilience in the community. To strengthen infrastructure resilience, demand for asset managers and engineers are also likely to increase.

Technology will significantly shape local governments' ways of working.

53 Ible, C & Greeves, M (2025), New psychosocial regulations announced for Victoria, MinterEllison, <https://www.minterellison.com/articles/new-psychosocial-regulations-announced-for-victoria>
54 Victorian Government Solicitor's Office (2024), Proposed Psychological Health Regulations for Victorian employers are under consideration, <https://www.vgso.vic.gov.au/proposed-psychological-health-regulations-victorian-employers-under-consideration>
55 PwC (2022), Local Government Culture Project Insights Report, https://www.localgovernment.vic.gov.au/___data/assets/pdf_file/0019/186211/090522_FINAL-updated_LG-Culture-Project_Insights-Report.pdf
56 Government News (2021), 'Transforming leadership culture', <https://www.governmentnews.com.au/transforming-leadership-culture/>, accessed 29 May 2025
57 ALGA (2024), Inquiry into local government sustainability Submission 181, https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House/Regional_Development/Infrastructure_and_Transport/Localgovernmentsustaina/Submissions
58 Kerry Ferguson (2022), Local government workforce and capability planning, LGIU, <https://lgiu.org/publication/local-government-workforce-and-capability-planning/>
59 Victorian Climate Resilient Councils (2024), About VCRC, <https://www.vcrc.org.au/about.html>
60 Bairnsdale Advertiser, Natural disaster recovery funding reform needed, 8 May 2025, Natural disaster recovery funding reform needed – Bairnsdale Advertiser

4. Feedback from the sector



4. Feedback from the sector

Three focus groups were held between 13–14 May 2025 to hear from Victorian councils.

Attendees’ roles ranged from People & Culture managers to Learning & Organisational Development officers, as well as strategic human resources and workforce planning analysts.

A list of councils who attended a focus group is provided in Appendix A. Local government leaders and officers were also engaged at two subsequent sessions: the LGPro Annual Conference on 5 June and the People Module of the Executive Leaders Program on 13 June 2025.



A recurring theme from these discussions was that the future local government workforce is not a fixed destination. There is a need for flexibility across the cycle of workforce planning, given the pace and breadth of supply-side (e.g. legislative reform, education and training, an ageing workforce) and demand-side (e.g. financial sustainability of local government, climate change, digital transformation) workforce drivers.

The discussions echoed many drivers of a changing local government workforce detailed in previous chapters. Rather than reproduce those themes here, this section highlights the additional areas of strategic workforce planning that need to be considered.

There is no single workforce archetype or planning approach that meets the unique needs of Victoria’s 79 local governments.

Across the state, differences in local leadership and governance structures, the spatial structure of major regional employers and transport to work, the training and education provider landscape, institutional relationships and service demands all necessitate a place-based approach to workforce development.

Nonetheless, there is greater potential to more routinely share insights and resources.

Toolkits and best practice policies should be used as the basis for localising insights to the council context, rather than individual councils starting from scratch. Participants noted that previous efforts to embed a community of practice or similar forums to share knowledge and resources were piecemeal and often hampered by a lack of dedicated capacity to coordinate the sessions.

There is strong appetite to collectively articulate the local government sector’s employee value proposition.

Local governments’ place-based mission and deep commitment to the public interest align well with the employment experience sought by an emerging generation of workforce entrants. In a climate of acute skills shortages and competition for labour, this is one area where the local government sector has a distinct competitive advantage.

Although occupational and skills shortages are widespread in the economy, their impacts on local governments are often more pronounced.

Unlike other employers, local governing bodies do not have the flexibility to relocate to more ‘favourable’ markets, are generally less able to compete with the private sector on remuneration (e.g. in digital transformation and cybersecurity risk), and are subject to uncertain grant funding arrangements that undermine staff retention. In response, some councils have successfully implemented service sharing and cadetship roles (e.g. for municipal building surveyors) to grow the pipeline. Smaller and/or regional and rural councils also tend to face greater challenges in workforce attraction and retention due to local availability of affordable and suitable housing, child care, and other services, which can stagnate recruitment success.

Alongside the demand for high-skilled, technical workers, the local government sector should be responsive to the need for interpersonal skills such as frontline resilience.

This is especially important to support communities navigating the cycles of resilience building and resilience loss in the aftermath of natural disasters and other shocks. In times of emergency response and loss recovery, skills in trauma-informed care and leadership through crisis are indelible attributes. Moreover, role modelling the provision of frank and fearless advice and building political acumen across the workforce was regarded as especially important.

Local governments anticipate growing demand for skills in change management, digital and artificial intelligence, climate, risk and governance.

Some councils noted that some skill areas that are currently outsourced, e.g. legal, may be brought in-house in the future to handle emerging risk areas, e.g. cybersecurity and sustainability reporting. Other critical skills and competencies that were assessed as current shortage areas or gaps include service reviews and the ability to oversee transformational projects.

Local governments also anticipate declining workforce demand in other areas due to a range of drivers.

For example, in relation to task-oriented skills (that may be automated), volunteer-based roles (due to delayed retirements), and certain service areas such as aged care services (due to legislative constraints and service viability).

5. Future workforce considerations

- 5.1 Design a skills-based organisation
- 5.2 Improve long-term workforce planning
- 5.3 Leverage the multi-generational workforce
- 5.4 Create experiences, not just employment
- 5.5 Boost inclusion and diversity
- 5.6 Enhance the sector's profile as an employer of choice

5. Future workforce considerations

The findings of this research suggest six themes that the Victorian local government sector could consider in the future:

1. Design a skills-based organisation

2. Improve long-term workforce planning

3. Leverage the multi-generational workforce
4. Create experiences, not just employment

5. Boost inclusion and diversity

6. Enhance the sector's profile

5.1 Design a skills-based organisation

Key finding

The Victorian local government workforce stands out for its occupational diversity. Recruitment and retention should reflect this, moving beyond short-term efforts to fill one role at a time to focus on flexibility across council's teams and ensuring choice for existing employees to explore new roles internally.

The future local government workforce ...

Is built around a skills-based model that informs the pipeline of graduate recruitment to experienced staff approaching retirement. Internal staff are proactively supported to diversify their skills through internal recruitment opportunities.

For decades, the predominant hiring model in developed economies has tended to filter candidates based on formal qualifications and the individual's prospects of 'longevity' in their target role. Today, non-linear career pathways are increasingly common, involving multiple career rotations over the course of one's working life. Local government is the perfect setting to support the opportunity to have multiple careers, and many local governments are already leveraging this opportunity.

Hiring on a skills basis considers one's core skills and competencies. In this context, skills-based hiring lowers organisational costs as workers can more easily experience new opportunities within the one organisation. For smaller councils who often face challenges in access to workforce, a skills-based approach can re-orient the focus on recruiting and upskilling internally to fill needs. When these opportunities are realised across the organisation, there are associated benefits to more multidisciplinary practice, effective knowledge sharing, and sector workforce development.

A 2022 survey of over 1,200 professionals highlighted the 'decreasing relevance of jobs', finding that '71% of workers already perform some work outside of the scope of their job descriptions ... only 24% report they do the same work as others in their organisation with the same job title and level, [and] 81% of business executives say work is increasingly performed across functional boundaries'.⁶¹ With almost 300 occupations among the Victorian local government workforce, there is an opportunity to explore skills-based models that enable employees to stay within local government, experience new teams and scopes of work, and grow their connection to the sector.

Moreover, structural shifts in some economies will increase demand for interpersonal skills across multiple teams.

For example, in host communities most impacted by major renewable energy investments as well as those experiencing a decline in the mining industry, local governments' community and economic development functions will need to embed qualities of frontline resilience, lived experience and community engagement. This is because while some residents may leave in search of education and employment opportunities elsewhere, others, including households with multi-generational connections to mining, may require greater social and wellbeing supports.

These skills will also be important as many councils take on a greater supporting role in mental health, wellbeing and youth services. With rising rates of mental health challenges and growing complexity on community needs, local government are often the first point of contact. Embedding the skills of resilience and leadership across the workforce will ensure local governments and their staff are comfortably placed to support their communities and respond flexibly to emerging challenges.

Demand for trade and practical skills have been a pinch point across Australia, with local government being no exception. Masters Builders Australia (MBA) estimate that 130,000 construction workers and 42,500 electricians will be needed to meet new housing goals within the next four years.⁶² Already, local governments have difficulty in filling contractors for manual labourers, landscapers, waste management alongside the backlog of infrastructure builds, repairs and maintenance. For many years, the emphasis has been on tertiary education above vocational education leading to a smaller pipeline of tradespeople to service this growing demand.

A skills-based hiring model could be explored through local governments' partnerships with schools, TAFEs and industry bodies, in a way that supports employment pathways and programs among tradespeople tailored to councils' workforce needs. This partnership provides an opportunity for councils to grow their potential hiring pool of tradespeople while providing real-world experience through placements. This will also promote awareness and positive perceptions of vocational education, building the parity of esteem between different career paths.

Key finding

While a variety of skills will be needed in the future, AI and digital literacy are rapidly emerging as some of the most sought after by the local government sector.

The future local government workforce ...

Is empowered to use AI safely, transparently, and effectively to improve the delivery of local government services, without displacing the human touch at the heart of the local government.

AI refers to the ability of computer systems and machines to simulate human reasoning and decision-making. When it comes to the use of AI in local government, the list of applications is long. A recent study by Queensland University of Technology (QUT) identified 262 cases of AI adoption in 170 local councils and across 5 key domains: administrative services, health care and wellbeing, transportation and urban planning, environmental management, and public safety and law enforcement.⁶³

Studies of AI's impacts in local government have generally focused on its potential to transform specific tasks or capacities. For example, there is evidence to show that AI significantly enhances digital service capacity,⁶⁴ expedites application processes and has predictive power for homelessness prevention.⁶⁵ Notably, studies have also concluded that human capital is an 'important mediating pathway'.⁶⁶ That is, an AI-literate workforce is both important for maximising AI's potential within an organisation and has a multiplier effect for 'attracting high-calibre human capital'.

Recent research estimates that for one UK council, productivity gains from AI adoption could be as high as £30 million per year (approximately AUD \$62 million), time savings of 26%, and a salary bill savings of 25%.⁶⁷

61 Deloitte (2022), 'The skills-based organisation: A new operating model for work and the workforce', https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/insights/articles/us175310_consulting-the-skills-based-org-report/DI_The-skills-based-organization-report.pdf?cid=learn_more_content_click

62 Master Builders Australia (2024), 'Builders pave the way for solving workforce shortages', <https://masterbuilders.com.au/builders-pave-the-way-for-solving-workforce-shortages-2/>
63 Yigitcanlar, T., Corchado Rodriguez, J., Mossberger, K., Cheong, P., & Li, R. Y. M. (2024). Local governments are using AI without clear rules or policies, and the public has no idea. *The Conversation*.
64 Zhang, Y., & Li, Y. (2025). The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Government Digital Service Capacity. *International Review of Economics & Finance*, 104374.
65 Local Government Information Unit (2024), 'AI and the council: Case studies and resources for local government', <https://lgiu.org/blog-article/ai-and-the-council-case-studies-and-resources-for-local-government/>
66 Zhang, Y., & Li, Y. (2025). The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Government Digital Service Capacity. *International Review of Economics & Finance*, 104374.
67 Tony Blair Institute for Global Change (2025), 'Governing in the Age of AI: Reimagining Local Government', <https://institute.global/insights/politics-and-governance/governing-in-the-age-of-ai-reimagining-local-government>

Extrapolating these figures across England and Wales generated an estimated 280 million hours annual time saving and a productivity gain of £8 billion (approximately AUD \$16.6 billion) equivalent to £325 per household annually.⁶⁸

Notwithstanding these benefits, the QUT research noted that less than 16% of the 170 local governments around the world using various AI systems had published their AI policy and that ‘most are deploying powerful AI systems with no publicly available framework for public oversight or accountability’.⁶⁹ This could undermine local governance and how equipped the local government workforce is to address any unintended consequences. The relative novelty of AI uptake in the local government sector also suggests a need to better understand the range of workforce opportunities and potential risks.

5.2 Improve long-term workforce planning

Key finding

Councils continue to grapple with longstanding skills shortages and capacity constraints, which are exacerbated by increasing cost pressures. The cycle of reactive workforce planning hinders a proactive, long-term approach to meeting future needs.

The future local government workforce ...

Embeds both local and regional insights on labour market dynamics and resolves challenges through continuous knowledge sharing.

Victorian local governments have a legislative requirement to develop a workforce plan that specifies the projected staffing requirements for at least the next four years and sets out measures to ensure gender equality, diversity and inclusiveness. Currently, most local governments are developing these plans in isolation.

The development of AI policies and ethical use guidelines is a starting point, combined with initiatives to educate both workforce and the community on how AI is being used, as well as partnerships with industry experts. These can all help to improve AI literacy in the workforce and its safe deployment.

In Australia, recent initiatives to address workforce AI education and support skills development include the Local Government Association of South Australia’s investment in the development of an AI adoption toolkit for South Australian councils, which is expected to be delivered by August 2025.⁷⁰ The Western Australian Local Government Association also commissioned an assessment of the sector’s AI readiness in 2025, with findings to inform future AI related initiatives. Yarra Ranges Shire Council is also developing an AI tool to improve the planning application process.

Strategic workforce planning is premised on several fundamentals: accurate and meaningful workforce data, data linked to strategic planning and legislative requirements, strategic alignment between the timing of service planning and budgeting for role requirements and creating space for sector learning.

Access to reliable and up-to-date data on the local government workforce is key to strategic planning. The Municipal Association of Victoria’s annual Human Resource Benchmarking Survey captures data on workforce demographics, turnover, absenteeism, and skills shortages, among other items. However, there is an opportunity to more consistently tap into this resource, by using the data at the stage of completing a Workplace Gender Audit and a Gender Equality Action Plan as required by the *Gender Equality Act 2020*.⁷¹

Previous research also identifies a patchwork of annual Censuses, led by some state associations, combined with ad hoc data collections (e.g. to profile the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on workforce and skills) and national initiatives (e.g. the Local Government Skills and Workforce Survey, conducted in 2018 and 2022).⁷²

There is an opportunity to standardise national data collection on a selection of agreed metrics to support cross-jurisdictional analysis and insight.

Consultation indicated the potential to improve collaboration across the sector. Councils deeply appreciated the value of peer-to-peer knowledge exchange, however also noted that such instances typically arise by circumstance. Previous efforts to embed a community of practice or similar forums have been piecemeal and hampered by a lack of dedicated capacity to coordinate the sessions, particularly when council-driven and therefore impacted by staff turnover.

Consultation also highlighted a mismatch in the timing of service planning – in some cases taking up to 12 months – and the impacts this has on service delivery and timely recruitment.

Many FTEs are placed on hold, which diminishes job certainty, worker confidence in the recruitment process, and potentially leads to avoidable turnover.

Through this research, there are clear areas of local government workforce that are likely to either increase or decrease in focus. Table 11 provides a starting point for guiding a council’s skills mix, though is not intended to be exhaustive. Other service areas to monitor in terms of workforce impacts include outdoor staff, public health, and maternal and child health services. There are external pressures facing these positions that may require either increased investment and or a change in service delivery.

This analysis could be further developed and repeated across a four-year cycle to support local governments in the development of workforce planning.

Table 11: Summary outlook on service areas

Service	Response
Planning	Increase following planning reforms and requirements on local government to fast-track planning permits.
Building	Increase following planning reforms and increased development, as well as decreasing workforce within and beyond local government.
Organisational development	Increase service reviews, service efficiency and service prioritisation. Increase in support for changing workforce capabilities, including via tailored training delivered in-house.
Governance, risk and corporate services	Increase in financial and partnership models of delivery and focus on improving financial sustainability
Environmental sustainability	Increase in response to climate change, broader government directions and community expectations
Community development	Increase due to increasing community disconnection, mental health and wellbeing, and social isolation
Kindergarten/childcare	Potential decrease due to state government reforms and councils’ ongoing role in service delivery – potentially to a lesser extent in regional and rural councils
Home and community care	Decrease due to commonwealth reforms and councils’ ongoing role in service delivery - potentially to a lesser extent in regional and rural councils
Infrastructure and assets	Increase due to a combination of cost pressures, maintenance backlogs and a need to strengthen infrastructure resilience in the face of more frequent and severe natural disasters.
Economic development	An increasing strategic focus: some economies are experiencing major structural shifts requiring attention to industry diversification and business attraction initiatives, while the focus in other economies is on adapting to population growth and demand for local jobs and services.
Emergency management and disaster recovery	Increase, due to more frequent and severe natural disasters leading councils to undertake climate adaptation planning and develop emergency response plans.

Source: SGS Economics and Planning (2025).

68 Ibid.
69 Yigitcanlar, T., Corchado Rodriguez, J., Mossberger, K., Cheong, P., & Li, R. Y. M. (2024). Local governments are using AI without clear rules or policies, and the public has no idea. *The Conversation*.
70 LGASA (2025), ‘AI adoption toolkit for South Australian councils’, <https://www.lga.sa.gov.au/news-and-events/news/latest-news/2025/ai-adoption-toolkit-for-sa-councils>
71 Municipal Association of Victoria (2020), ‘Local government workplace gender audit pilot project’, https://www.mav.asn.au/___data/assets/pdf_file/0007/35746/MAV-WGA-Final-Report-September-2020.pdf
72 DITRDCA, ALGA, SGS Economics and Planning (2022), ‘2022 Local Government Skills and Workforce Survey: Internal report on future directions for the LG workforce and survey methods’, unpublished.

5.3 Leverage the multi-generational workforce

Key finding

Australia’s workforce is more age diverse than it has ever been. Our multi-generational workforces in the local government and other sectors are the result of an ageing population and a changing Australian retirement context where people are continuing to work later in life and/or exploring more flexible retirement arrangements (e.g. part-time and casual work).

The future local government workforce ...

Builds a cohesive workplace culture which leverages a multi-generational workforce through providing leadership opportunities for the next generation while valuing and actively providing a role for the older workforce through knowledge transfer, innovation, and mentorship.

All too often, the overarching narrative of an ageing workforce misses an opportunity to highlight the benefits of multi-generational interactions. There are many potential benefits for the local government sector’s capacity and innovation when diverse perspectives solve problems together, when experienced workers and newer employees learn from each other, and when a workplace culture is created for people of all stages of life experience.

Currently, LGPro Victoria runs a mentoring program through voluntary participation and is designed for sharing of knowledge, experience, skills and perspectives of the sector more broadly. The program requires participants to schedule check ins and develop regular progress reports and evaluations to ensure positive progress is being made. Mentor testimonials highlighted that this program was a great opportunity to network with leaders and to pay it forward for the support of emerging leaders. Mentees also highlighted the benefits of the program in sharing ‘alternative skills and tools to better communicate and collaborate, time manage and prioritise as well as influence change’.⁷³

Similarly, mentorship programs within a local government can improve exposure of early career employees to the diversity of local government opportunities. Such programs should not only facilitate the transfer of technical skills and local knowledge but also foster leadership and engagement across generations within the sector. The programs should have a specific focus on knowledge retention and include job shadowing and documentation of key processes such that knowledge transfers are streamlined, maintained and accounted for. Well-designed mentorship programs also have mutual benefits to both older and newer employees, given their respective career experiences, digital skillsets and other characteristics that could bridge generational knowledge gaps within the organisation.

5.4 Create experiences, not just employment

Key finding

Today’s workers seek more than a job. Local government is uniquely positioned to provide the opportunities and experiences to build a career grounded in making a positive difference to communities.

The future local government workforce ...

Routinely intersects multiple skill areas, teams, and stakeholder interactions, creating a unique employee experience grounded in local connections and clear links to tangible community outcomes.

It is widely acknowledged that attracting and retaining high quality talent is a challenge in many sectors. Local governments often compete with other sectors on remuneration, with some going outside enterprise agreements and using common law contracts so they can offer better pay, particularly for digital and IT roles, and more flexible working conditions. This is often necessary to address councils’ short-term needs. However, it does little to secure the workforce longer-term, especially if the remuneration gap between the public and private sectors for technology talent grows.⁷⁴ With its emphasis on transactional value between employer and employee, such an approach may also be counterproductive for council in the long run.

Local governments could instead emphasise the experiential aspects of employment. A 2017 survey of 1,500 New South Wales local government employees identified several success factors for employee engagement: flexible working arrangements, employee wellbeing, diversity and inclusion in practice, and opportunities for collaboration.⁷⁵

It noted that 65% of respondents said they would like to advance their careers in local government, however 30% were dissatisfied with the available opportunities or merit system.⁷⁶ When respondents were asked whether they would like to work in another local government during their career, around a third agreed (29%), another third disagreed (31%), and the remaining 40% neither agreed nor disagreed.⁷⁷

This suggests the potential to explore a model of career rotations not just at the council level but across the Victorian local government sector. Feedback from councils noted that council staff leaving for another council was generally regarded as a positive in the current environment of workforce challenges, given that the worker would be staying within the sector talent pool.

Another way to improve the experience of employment is to offer relevant, structured internal training opportunities. The Boroondara City Council has established an Innovation Academy as a way to support employee engagement through continuous learning and opportunities for collaboration. This program is a 12-week in-house training designed to build staff capability in creative problem-solving and innovation. It is in the sixth iteration and provides participants with a structured, repeatable framework to tackle workplace challenges. The program is financially sustainable, requires minimal external investment, and is seen as a scalable and transferable model for other councils. Boroondara City Council has found the program to improve workplace culture by empowering staff to think creatively, collaborate effectively and deliver better outcomes.⁷⁸ Consultation also revealed an appetite for established shared services model. This would provide benefits two-fold: firstly, by allowing staff to work across council groups, providing opportunities for collaboration, and secondly assisting the sector in meeting workforce demand. Skills identified as well suited for shared services including environmental sustainability officers, building surveyors, legal support and payroll services.

74 As reported by focus group participants.
75 University of Technology (2018), ‘Making local government a great place to work’, <https://www.uts.edu.au/globalassets/sites/default/files/2017-09/people-matter-for-local-government.pdf>
76 Ibid.
77 Ibid.
78 LGPro, (2025), ‘LGPro Awards for Excellence’, https://issuu.com/lgprovic/docs/2025_awards_for_excellence_yearbook?fr=sODEwZTg2MDk0NjY

73 LGPro (2024), Mentoring Program, <https://www.lgpro.com/professional-development/management-and-leadership/mentoring-program/become-a-mentor/>

5.5 Boost inclusion and diversity

Key finding

The place-based nature of local governments’ impact means that it is critical for the workforce to reflect the diversity of their communities. This enables more informed decisions, greater visibility over the things that matter to residents and visitors, and a more solid foundation for building trust.

The future local government workforce ...

Embraces diversity in all its forms – age, cultural, gender, ability, professional backgrounds – to shape better policies and programs that meet the needs of everyone in the community.

Workforce diversity may refer to socio-demographic attributes, professional and personal experiences, as well as individual values and beliefs. The case for a diverse local government workforce may be established on several grounds: normative expectations, economic productivity and stronger governance.⁷⁹ A local government workforce that reflects the diversity of its community is equipped to make more informed decisions, more attuned to local matters, and better positioned to build trust in government.

Generally speaking, the Victorian local government sector has made considerable progress on key gender equality measures, owing in part to the *Gender Equality Act* (2020) and the Victorian government’s 2023 Our Equal State Strategy.⁸⁰ Notwithstanding this, uneven patterns of workforce participation by gender persist when data is analysed by employment status (females are under-represented in full-time and apprenticeship roles) and by age (despite ‘record’ female political representation in 2020, there is a ‘missing cohort of women under the age of 45’⁸¹). Councils that choose to exit aged care and kindergarten services could also have an impact on gender balance across the Victorian local government workforce.

In 2021, the Committee for Economic Development of Australia estimated that ‘nearly a quarter of permanent skilled migrants are working in a job beneath their skill level.’⁸² In 2024, a Deloitte Access Economics report for Settlement Services International estimated this to be the case for 44% of permanent migrants in Australia, and that an annual \$9 billion in economic activity could be achieved by leveraging the full potential of migrants’ skills.⁸³

Data from the 2021 Australian Bureau of Statistics shows that 56% of permanent migrants in Australia live in Greater Sydney and Greater Melbourne.⁸⁴ Victoria is home to 28.2% of all permanent migrants to Australia on a skilled visa stream (26.4% of all skilled migrants in the 30+ local government areas that make up Greater Melbourne, 1.8% of all skilled migrants in Rest of Victoria).⁸⁵

There is an opportunity to scale existing models of local governments supporting a dual focus on the safe resettlement of migrant residents and improving workforce capacity.

Banyule City Council has led an initiative focusing on community inclusion through its ‘inclusive employment for local residents’ program. This program aims to support local residents who face barriers to employment by offering a 6-month job opportunity with council for a role that is tailored to individual’s area of interest, goals, strengths and ability.⁸⁶ To be eligible for the program, participants must be a Banyule resident, face barriers to suitable and meaningful employment and be a member of one of the following community groups: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, culturally and linguistically diverse people, people living with disability, young people (age 16–25). In 2024–25, there are 15 roles on offer which range across community development, city development and corporate services.

Glen Eira City Council has also led several initiatives focusing on community inclusion and workplace diversity. This includes the EmployAbility Glen Eira project, which aims to deliver successful and sustainable employment outcomes for people living with a disability and vulnerable youth living in Glen Eira.⁸⁷

Participation in the program is free for individual job seekers living in Glen Eira, who are connected with a career coach over three sessions to develop a ‘personalised profile of strengths, capabilities, interests and aspirations’.⁸⁸

Employers of any size and sector are also encouraged to participate and benefit from access to wider pool of potential employees and support from the program team.⁸⁹ As at 30 June 2024, there have been 20 participants in the strengths-based counselling program.⁹⁰

5.6 Enhance the sector’s profile as an employer of choice

Key finding

The local government sector is not widely viewed as an employer of choice. There is a need to enhance and better communicate local government’s profile, its role, and the opportunities arising from a career in the sector.

The future local government workforce ...

Is recognised as providing lifelong employment opportunities that can make a difference to local people in the local community.

The local government sector could do more to enhance the story of its mission and impact. More consistently highlighting the sector’s work to a wider audience on the things that matter to all Australians – affordable housing, climate action, safe places to live, learning opportunities, inter-generational equity, and connection with friends and families – is key to demonstrating local governments’ place-based mission and attracting a new generation of workers.

Recently, the United Kingdom Government funded a national recruitment campaign for local government with the intention of attracting new talent and increasing the sectors capacity. The campaign was published as ‘Make a Difference, Work for your Local Council’ and aimed to enhance the good work councils are doing which have direct and lasting impact on residents’ lives.

During this work, a toolkit was produced for councils to adapt material to their local area in the intention of boosting local recruitment efforts through participation in the national campaign. The toolkit contained social media content, posters, videos, banner stands and logos and guidance on how to use the materials. The effect of the campaign was a 9% year-on-year increase in applications and a reported more positive perception of local councils as an employer.⁹¹

Campaigns to attract skilled workers to a region, while not specifically targeted to the local government workforce, nonetheless have impacts on the overall regional talent pool. Over time, this can increase the depth and diversity of the local labour market. In 2024, Gladstone Regional Council in Queensland launched its liveability campaign labelled ‘Glad you made it’. The campaign features high profile locals such as NRL players to showcase what they love about the region while highlighting the long-term economic opportunities available. The campaign was a multi-year commitment established through partnerships with industry peak bodies including Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The campaign also highlighted success stories from residents who had recently moved and how the region has enhanced their lifestyle, business success and employment opportunities.

This enhanced sector profile should also draw on previous opportunities outlined in this Paper such as the ability to move within the organisation to build a lifelong career, move between local governments across Victoria, the diversity employees and the apply your skills in different ways.

79 Carson, A., Mikolajczak, G., & Ruppanner, L. (2021). The missing cohort: women in local government. *Australasian Parliamentary Review*, 36(2), 70–90. <https://www.aspg.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/The-Missing-Cohort.pdf>

80 Refer to analysis in Chapter 2.

81 Carson, A., Mikolajczak, G., & Ruppanner, L. (2021). The missing cohort: women in local government. *Australasian Parliamentary Review*, 36(2), 70–90. <https://www.aspg.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/The-Missing-Cohort.pdf>

82 Committee for Economic Development of Australia, ‘A good match: Optimising Australia’s permanent skilled migration’, (2021), <https://www.ceda.com.au/Admin/getmedia/150315bf-cceb-4536-862d1a3054197cd7/CEDA-Migration-report-26-March-2021-final.pdf>.

83 Deloitte (2024), ‘Billion Dollar Benefit’, https://www.billiondollarbenefit.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Billion_Dollar_Benefit_2024_Report.pdf

84 ABS (2021), ‘Permanent migrants in Australia’, <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/people-and-communities/permanent-migrants-australia/latest-release>

85 Ibid.

86 Banyule City Council (2025), ‘Inclusive employment for local residents’, <https://www.banyule.vic.gov.au/About-us/Careers/Inclusive-employment-for-local-residents>

87 Glen Eira City Council (2025), ‘A Community for All Abilities’, <https://www.gleneira.vic.gov.au/services/disability-and-accessibility/a-community-for-all-abilities>

88 Glen Eira City Council (not dated), ‘EmployAbility Glen Eira: Information for people with disabilities and vulnerable youth’, https://www.gleneira.vic.gov.au/media/vdnmlst4/ge_employability-ge_brochure-for-participants_fa-32.pdf

89 Glen Eira City Council (not dated), ‘EmployAbility Glen Eira: A unique employment opportunity’, https://www.gleneira.vic.gov.au/media/kwkdwmsx/ge_employability-ge_brochure-for-employer_fa-6.pdf

90 Glen Eira City Council (2024), ‘Annual Report 2023–24’, <https://www.gleneira.vic.gov.au/media/hfrdnbb4/gecc-annual-report-2023-2024.pdf>

91 Local Government Association (2024), A national recruitment campaign for local government, <https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/national-recruitment-campaign-local-government#:~:text=and%20district%20councils%3F-,The%20Make%20a%20difference%2C%20work%20for%20your%20local%20council,doing%20locally%20to%20attract%20talent>.

Appendices

Appendix A: Consultation

Appendix B: Council groupings

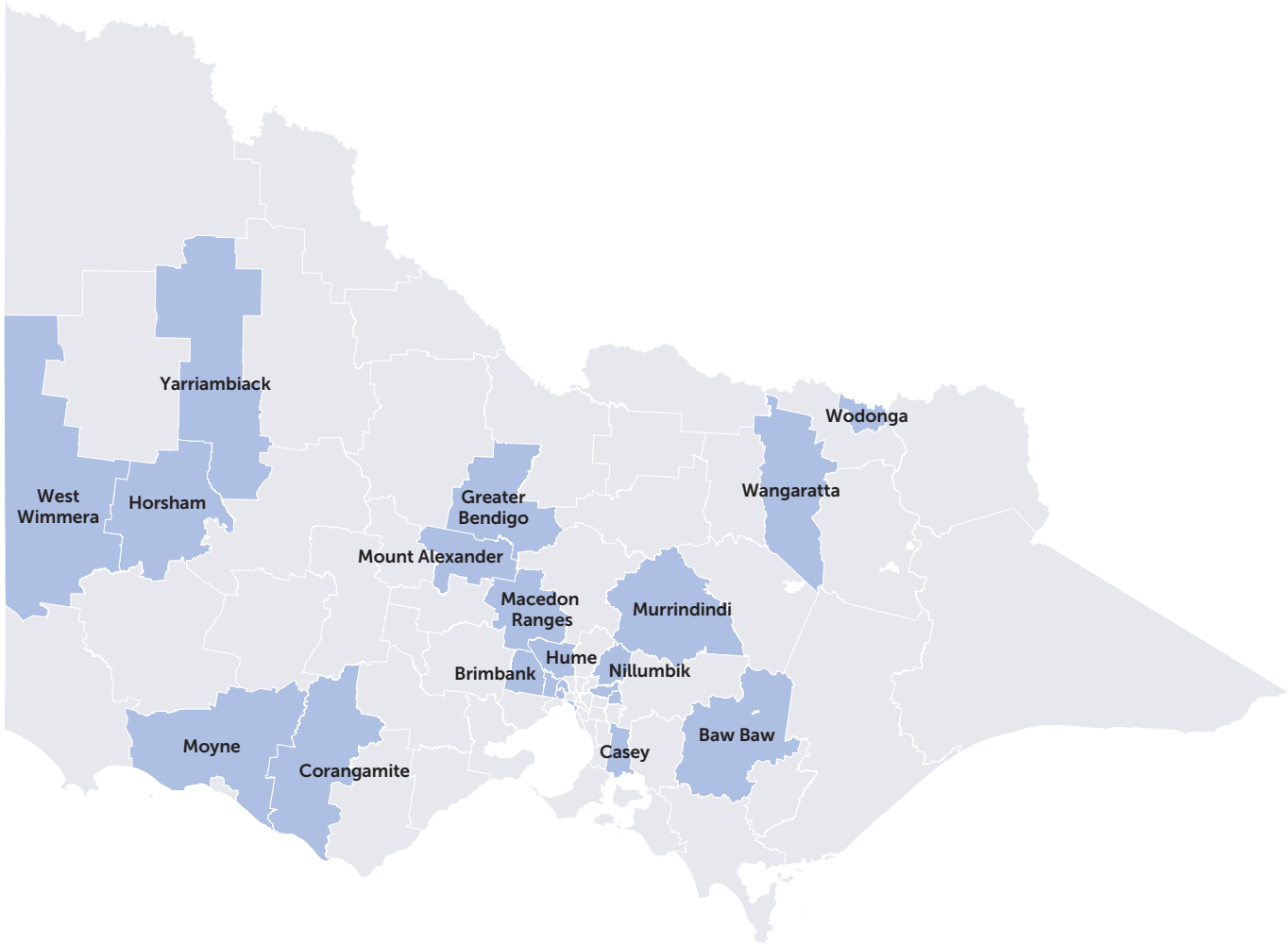
Appendix C: VLGGC function descriptions

Appendix D: Council FTEs by service area

Appendix A: Consultation

We thank the representatives from the following councils who shared their insights at a focus group discussion between 13 and 14 May 2025.

- Baw Baw Shire Council
 - Brimbank City Council
 - Casey City Council
 - Corangamite Shire Council
 - Greater Bendigo City Council
 - Horsham Rural City Council
 - Hume City Council
 - Macedon Ranges Shire Council
 - Manningham City Council
 - Maribyrnong City Council
 - Maroondah City Council
- Melton City Council
 - Moonee Valley City Council
 - Mount Alexander Shire Council
 - Moyne Shire Council
 - Murrindindi Shire Council
 - Nillumbik Shire Council
 - Port Phillip City Council
 - Wangaratta Rural City Council
 - West Wimmera Shire Council
 - Wodonga City Council
 - Yarriambiack Shire Council



Appendix B: Council groupings

The following concordance is loosely based on New South Wales’ taxonomy of the ACLG’s 22 categories into five broad categories: Metropolitan, Regional Town/City, Metropolitan Fringe, Rural, and Large Rural.⁹²

As this resulted in one Victorian council (West Wimmera) being classified Rural compared to 23 councils being classified Large Rural, these 24 councils were merged as a single group to ensure a more even distribution across groups.

Classification	Councils
Metropolitan	Banyule (C)
	Bayside (C)
	Boroondara (C)
	Brimbank (C)
	Casey (C)
	Darebin (C)
	Frankston (C)
	Glen Eira (C)
	Greater Dandenong (C)
	Hobsons Bay (C)
	Kingston (C)
	Knox (C)
	Manningham (C)
	Maribyrnong (C)
	Maroondah (C)
	Melbourne (C)

Classification	Councils
Metropolitan (continued)	Monash (C)
	Moonee Valley (C)
	Moreland (C)* From 26 Sept 2022, Moreland City Council changed name to Merri-bek City Council.
	Port Phillip (C)
	Stonnington (C)
	Whitehorse (C)
	Yarra (C)
Regional Town/City	Ballarat (C)
	Baw Baw (S)
	Campaspe (S)
	Colac Otway (S)
	East Gippsland (S)
	Greater Bendigo (C)
	Greater Geelong (C)
	Greater Shepparton (C)

Classification	Councils
Regional Town/City (continued)	Latrobe (C)
	Macedon Ranges (S)
	Mildura (RC)
	Mitchell (S)
	Moirā (S)
	Moorabool (S)
	South Gippsland (S)
	Swan Hill (RC)
	Wangaratta (RC)
	Warrnambool (C)
	Wellington (S)
	Wodonga (C)
Metropolitan Fringe	Bass Coast (S)
	Cardinia (S)
	Hume (C)
	Melton (S)
	Mornington Peninsula (S)
	Nillumbik (S)
	Queenscliffe (B)
	Whittlesea (C)
	Wyndham (C)
	Yarra Ranges (S)
Rural	Alpine (S)
	Ararat (RC)
	Benalla (RC)
	Buloke (S)
	Central Goldfields (S)
	Corangamite (S)

Classification	Councils
Rural (continued)	Gannawarra (S)
	Glenelg (S)
	Golden Plains (S)
	Hepburn (S)
	Hindmarsh (S)
	Horsham (RC)
	Indigo (S)
	Loddon (S)
	Mansfield (S)
	Mount Alexander (S)
	Moynes (S)
	Murrindindi (S)
	Northern Grampians (S)
	Pyrenees (S)
	Southern Grampians (S)
	Strathbogie (S)
	Surf Coast (S)
	Towong (S)
	West Wimmera (S)
	Yarriambiack (S)

92 NSW Office of Local Government (2020), ‘Australian Classification of Local Governments and OLG Group Members’, <https://www.yourcouncil.nsw.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Australian-Classification-of-Local-Government-and-OLG-group-numbers.pdf>

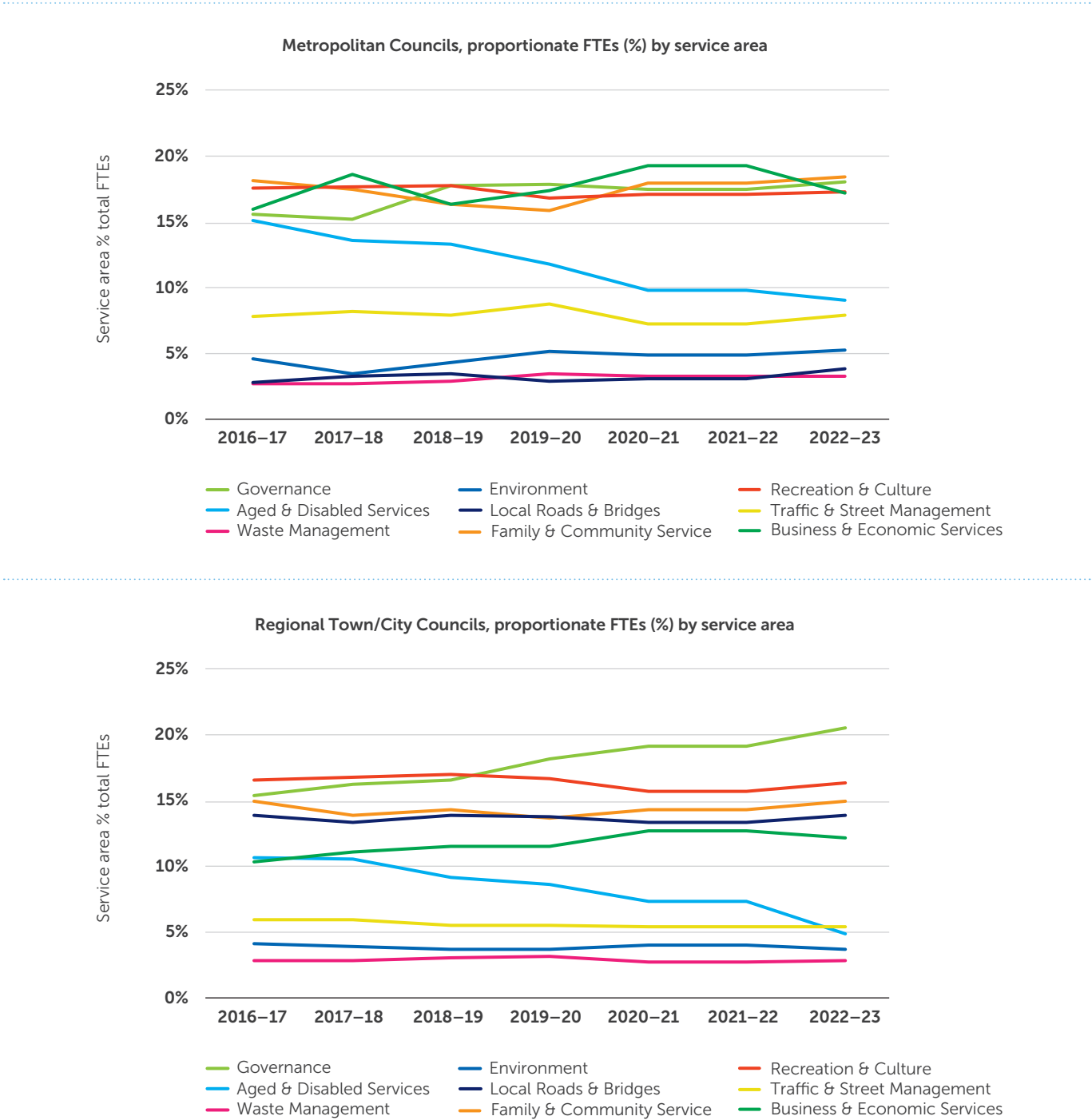
Appendix C: VLGGC function descriptions

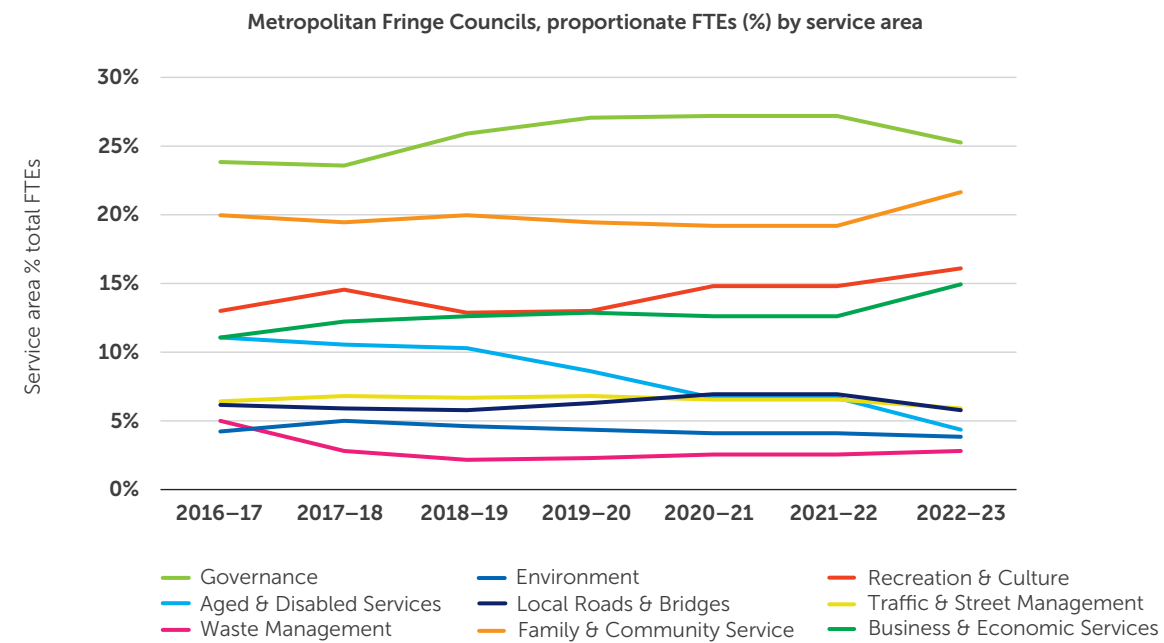
Service area	Included functions
Governance	Council operations, public order and safety (e.g. local laws and enforcement, compliance, litter, health inspections, health licences, pest eradication), financial and fiscal affairs, natural disaster relief, general operations, general administration.
Family & Community Services	Families and children (e.g. play centres, creches and day nurseries, home care), community health services, community welfare services, education, community housing, administration and support relating to this function area.
Aged & Disabled Services	Residential care services, community care services, facilities (e.g. senior citizens centres), administration, operation, management and support relating to this function area.
Recreation & Culture	Sports grounds and facilities, parks and reserves, waterways, lake and beaches, art galleries, museums and cultural heritage, performing arts centres, libraries, public centres and halls, programs, administration, operation, management and support relating to this function area.
Waste Management	Residential general waste, residential recycled waste, commercial waste, administration, operation, management and support relating to this function area.
Traffic & Street Management	Footpaths, kerbs and channel, traffic control, parking fines, parking facilities, street enhancements, street lighting, street cleaning, administration, operation, management and support relating to this function area (including traffic and school crossings supervision, traffic surveys and strategies, car park permits and fees).
Environment	Protection of biodiversity and habitat, fire protection, drainage, agricultural services, sewerage, waste water management, decontamination of soil, administration, operation, management and support relating to this function area.
Business & Economic Services	Community development and planning (including town planning), building control, tourism and area promotion, community amenities, non-road transport, markets and saleyards, other economic affairs, business undertakings (property), administration, operation, management and support relating to this function area.
Local Roads & Bridges	Local roads and bridges works (e.g. roads and bridges under council control, bicycle lanes, joint road works with other councils, road openings, grants loans and subsidies related to this function area including Roads to Recovery Grants), excluding private streets, expenditure on footpaths, kerbs and channels and on-street parking areas, rail trails, and road grants paid through the VLGGC.

Source: VLGGC (2023), '2022–23 Questionnaire Manual', https://www.localgovernment.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0025/207475/2022-23-VLGGC-Manual.docx

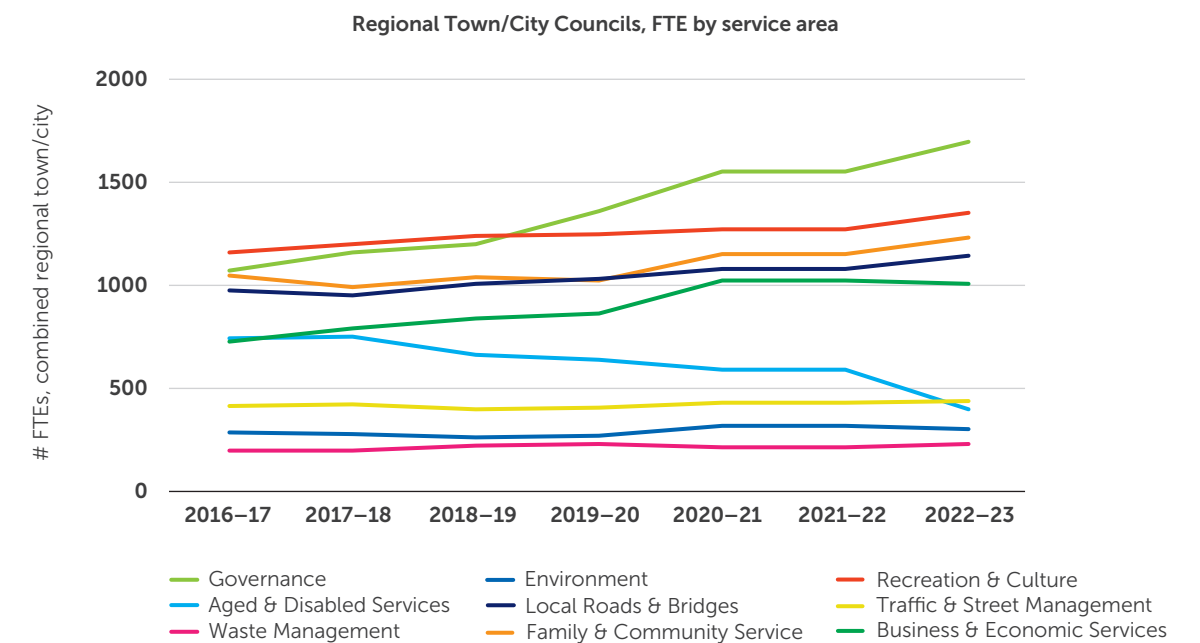
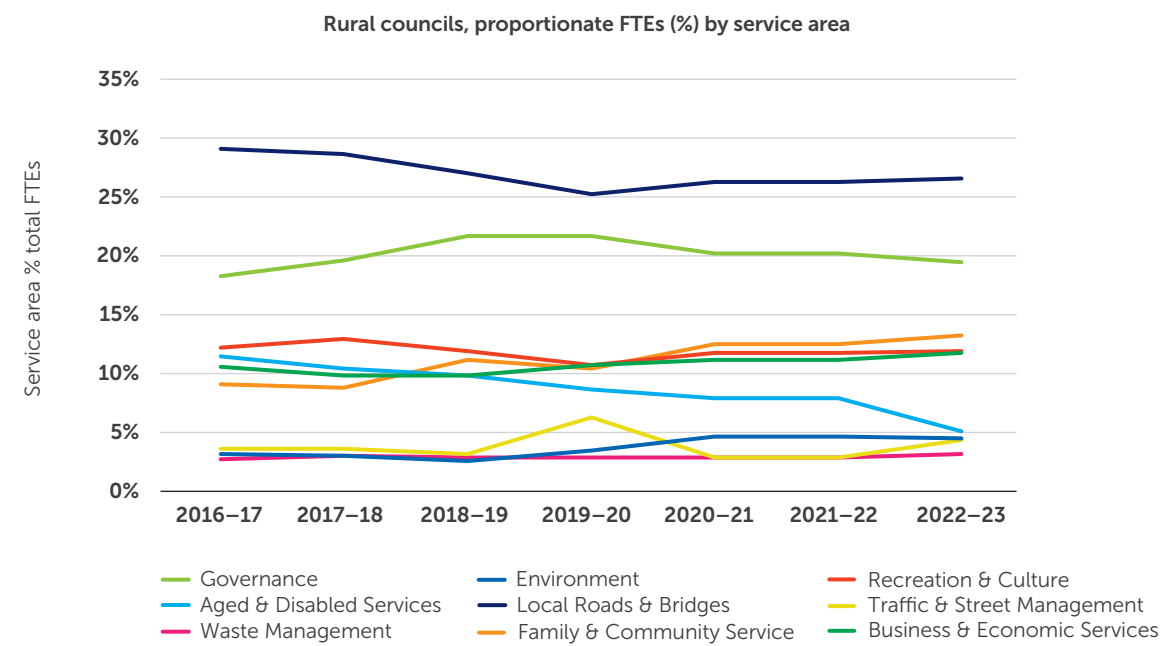
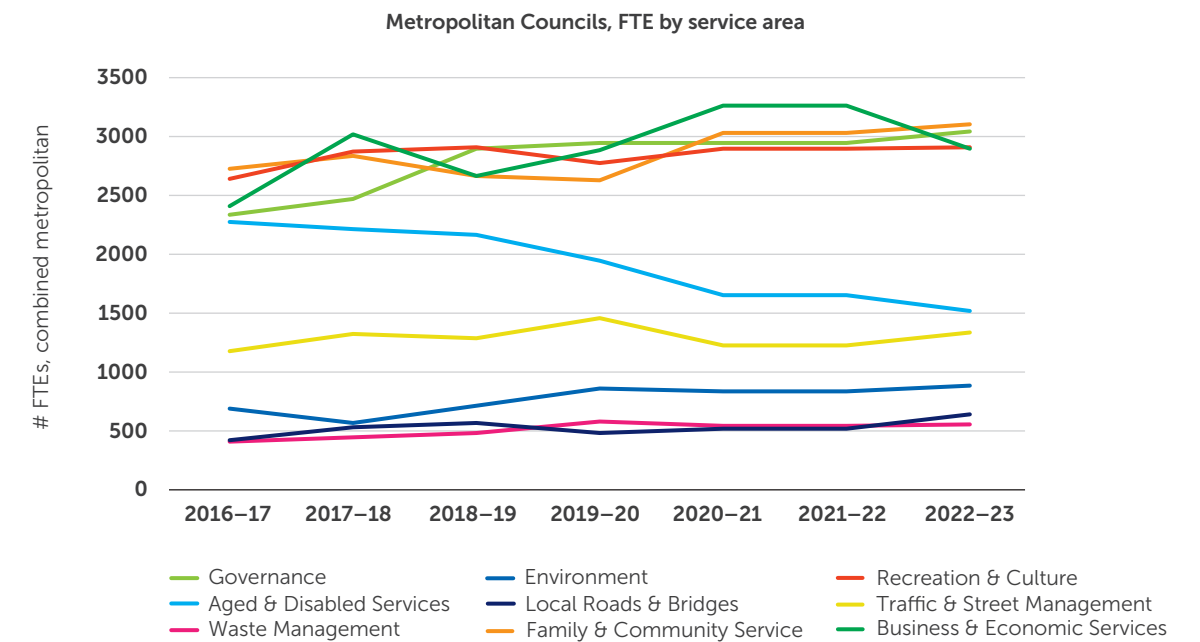
Appendix D: Council FTEs by service area

FTE by service area as a proportion of total FTE





FTE by service area and council group

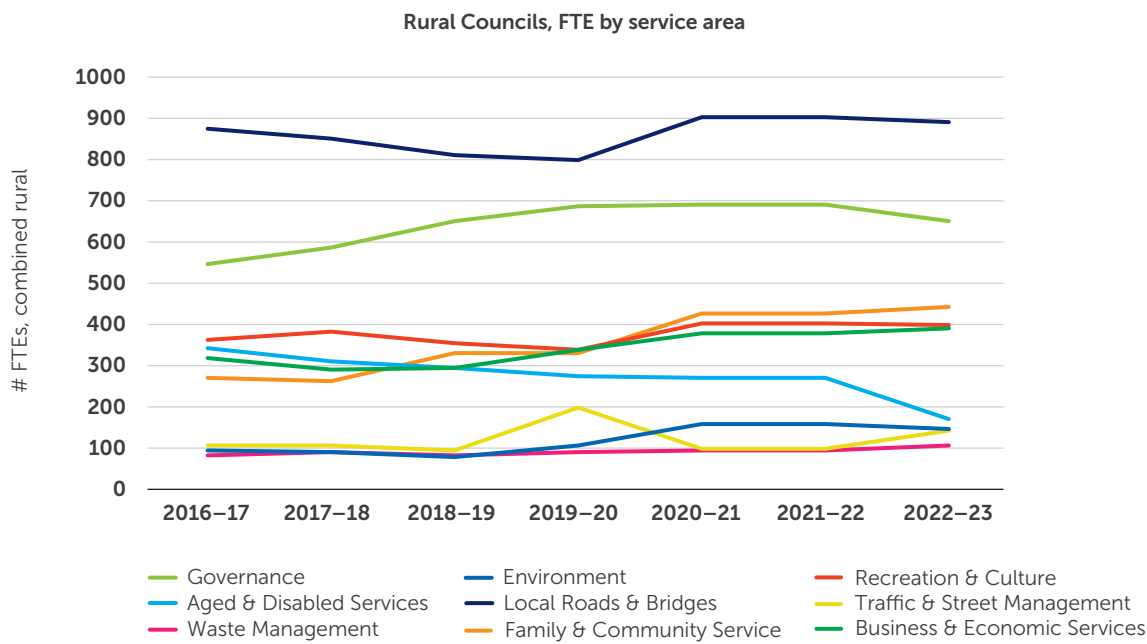
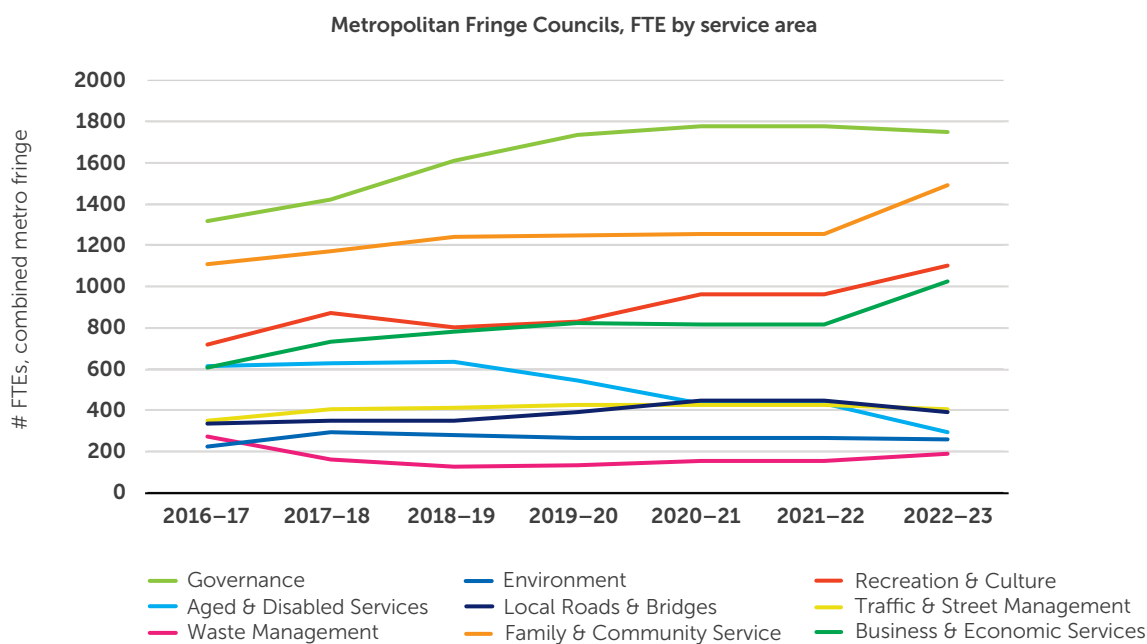


About LGPro

LGPro is the member association and leading voice for people working in local government in Victoria, providing leadership, professional development and representation in the pursuit of excellence.



Join the member association for Victoria’s local government workforce at [LGPro.com](https://www.lgpro.com)



Notes

