

APPLICANT PACK

General Manager

Narrabri Shire Council



RECRUITING FOR:



CONTACT

Mark Ogston
Chief Executive
Leading Roles

☎ 0407 674 412

Message from the Mayor



Dear Applicant

Thank you for your interest in the role of General Manager with Narrabri Shire Council.

On behalf of the Council and community, I am delighted that you are considering joining us in shaping the future of our Shire.

Narrabri is a vibrant and diverse region in northern New South Wales, recognised for its rich agricultural heritage, growing resources sector and strategic location as a transport and logistics hub. Our Shire is poised for significant growth, and we are committed to delivering on our vision of becoming a regional powerhouse. To achieve this, we seek a dynamic and visionary leader to guide our organisation and community through the opportunities and challenges ahead.

As General Manager, you will play a pivotal role in driving the strategic direction of the Council and ensuring the delivery of high-quality services to our residents. This position offers a unique opportunity to lead a dedicated team, advocate for vital infrastructure and funding and build partnerships that support sustainable growth. With the support of a progressive and engaged Council, you will have the platform to make a lasting impact.

We are seeking an exceptional leader who is not only skilled in strategic management and operational excellence but also deeply committed to fostering collaboration, accountability and innovation. Your ability to inspire trust and deliver tangible outcomes will be critical to your success in this role.

We look forward to receiving your application and learning more about the vision and leadership you can bring to Narrabri Shire Council.

Sincerely,

Cr Darrell Tiemens
Mayor



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We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Owners, the Gamilaraay/Gamilaroi/Gomeroy/Kamilaroi Nation and their Elders as the custodians of the land and waters, on which we work, live and play. We pay respects to the broader First Nations community and to Elders, past, present and emerging and acknowledge their continuing culture and contribution to the life of the region.



The Role

Leading Roles is seeking the next General Manager for the Narrabri Shire Council. The General Manager will lead a dynamic organisation that has a mandate from the Mayor and Council to position the Shire as a regional powerhouse in northern New South Wales.

The General Manager will drive strategic initiatives that align with the Council's vision for sustainable growth, managing organisational performance and fostering a culture of accountability and innovation.

The General Manager will be a key advocate for the community, working with the Mayor and Council to secure vital infrastructure funding and building strong partnerships with government and external stakeholders.

Internally, the General Manager will provide decisive leadership, supporting the Council and staff in achieving operational excellence while maintaining transparency and collaboration.

This role requires a visionary leader with strategic acumen, resilience and the ability to navigate complex challenges while delivering lasting benefits for the Shire and its community.



Position Context

CORPORATE STRATEGY

The General Manager will drive the Council's vision of establishing Narrabri Shire as the regional hub of north-western New South Wales. This role requires strategic oversight to align community aspirations with sustainable growth, leveraging the Shire's geographical and economic strengths in agriculture, resources, and logistics.

The successful candidate must refine and execute existing strategic plans while remaining adaptive to emerging opportunities and challenges in the region.

ORGANISATIONAL ALIGNMENT

The General Manager must unify the organisation under a clear, shared vision while maintaining momentum on existing progress.

Over recent years, leadership has strengthened staff engagement, improved workplace culture, and restored confidence in the organisation. The role now requires steady, proactive leadership to build on this foundation rather than overhaul it.

Success in this role depends on strong leadership—driven, results-focused, and willing to challenge norms where needed. The GM must work closely with staff, refining operations rather than redefining them, and fostering a culture of accountability and continuous improvement.

Energy, adaptability, and genuine community investment are essential. The Council expects their GM to live and participate in the community, understanding local challenges firsthand.

In the context of an inflationary economy and a fixed-to-declining revenue outlook, the organisation must respond, ensuring financial discipline while maintaining service delivery.

TEAM AND PROCESSES

The General Manager will lead the executive team to ensure strong, cohesive leadership and a high-performing organisational culture.

The role requires a critical review of existing processes, identifying efficiencies, and exploring alternative service delivery models to reduce costs without compromising quality. A key priority is improving project delivery by embedding disciplined project management, clear performance measures, and targeted improvements in underperforming areas, particularly infrastructure and asset management.

Building trust across all levels of staff, fostering accountability, and setting high standards will be essential to driving operational improvements and achieving long-term service delivery goals.



EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

The General Manager's strategic, proactive approach to stakeholder engagement will be key to advancing Narrabri's position as a leading regional centre.

The GM must be a strong advocate and skilled in building partnerships across all levels, from state and federal agencies to private investors and regional stakeholders. Securing funding for key infrastructure projects, including road and water network upgrades, will be a priority, alongside representing the Shire's interests in negotiations and regional forums.

Re-engaging with mining, mineral extraction and clean energy resources interests to secure fairer and better financial outcomes for the Shire will be critical. Maintaining a balanced and diversified economy across agriculture, coal, gas, solar, logistics and scientific services will support long-term economic stability.

Effective collaboration with the Mayor and Council is essential, ensuring a trusted working relationship that strengthens advocacy efforts.

INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

The General Manager will work closely with the elected Council, providing clear, strategic advice and fostering a constructive, trust-based relationship to support informed decision-making.

The Mayor and Council are seeking a GM who maintains transparency and open communication, ensuring alignment between the organisation and Council priorities.

Equally, the Council are proud of their organisation and are seeking a GM who values strong engagement with staff. The GM must cultivate a workplace culture that values input, encourages collaboration, and empowers employees at all levels. Delegation should be effective and meaningful, ensuring decisions are made at the lowest appropriate level, with customer service the ultimate focus.

PERSONAL WORKING NORMS

The General Manager must demonstrate integrity, resilience and strategic foresight, leading with transparency and accountability. Strong communication skills, coupled with a pragmatic and decisive leadership style, are essential.

The role requires adaptability, a focus on innovation and a commitment to best practices, ensuring the organisation can navigate complex political and operational challenges effectively. This is a position for a leader who thrives in demanding environments and is fully invested in the long-term success of the Shire and its community.



Strategic Projects

The General Manager is responsible for delivering key strategic projects that support community and economic development. This includes enhancing tourism, managing financial sustainability, diversifying revenue and improving infrastructure. The role also involves strengthening community engagement, supporting youth retention and ensuring effective governance. A practical, forward-thinking approach will be essential to addressing these priorities while maintaining financial stability and supporting long-term growth.

Tourism and Community Development

The General Manager will play a crucial role in increasing the overall appeal of the town and Shire to visitors.

Enriching the community's public spaces with public art such as silo painting and sculptures will enhance community engagement and tourism potential. Developments of initiatives like festivals and sporting events to attract visitors and encourage longer stays, building on existing strong community engagement practices.

The General Manager will be a key leader in the Council's drive to improve connectivity during negotiations with airlines expanding flights and destinations.



Financial Planning and Asset Management

Strategic financial planning will be key, ensuring progress on the 10-year Long-Term Financial Plan while maintaining a relatively low debt level and overseeing significant assets under management valued at under \$5 million. Addressing infrastructure pressures, particularly in road maintenance and asset management, is a priority, as well as progressing key projects in Boggabri and Wee Waa while mitigating rising costs.

Economic Development and Revenue Diversification

Diversifying revenue streams will be essential, given the decline in federal and state funding. The General Manager must actively re-engage with mining interests to negotiate better financial outcomes for the Shire. Additionally, improved returns from renewable energy projects, including four existing solar initiatives, should be pursued. Maintaining a diversified economy that balances agriculture, coal, gas, solar, and scientific services will ensure long-term sustainability. A proactive, business-friendly mindset must be cultivated within the organisation, particularly by strengthening the Business Development and Economic Development teams to capture more opportunities.

Infrastructure and Urban Growth

Preserving regional capital status will require strategic investment in critical infrastructure, including water, sewerage, and treatment systems, to support urban expansion, particularly in developments such as Narrabri South. Ensuring the long-term viability of the community will require careful planning and infrastructure improvements.



Education and Youth Retention

Efforts to retain young people in the community must also be prioritised, including leadership programs and exploring a potential satellite university campus aligned with scientific capabilities. This will ensure a skilled workforce remains in the region, contributing to its ongoing prosperity.

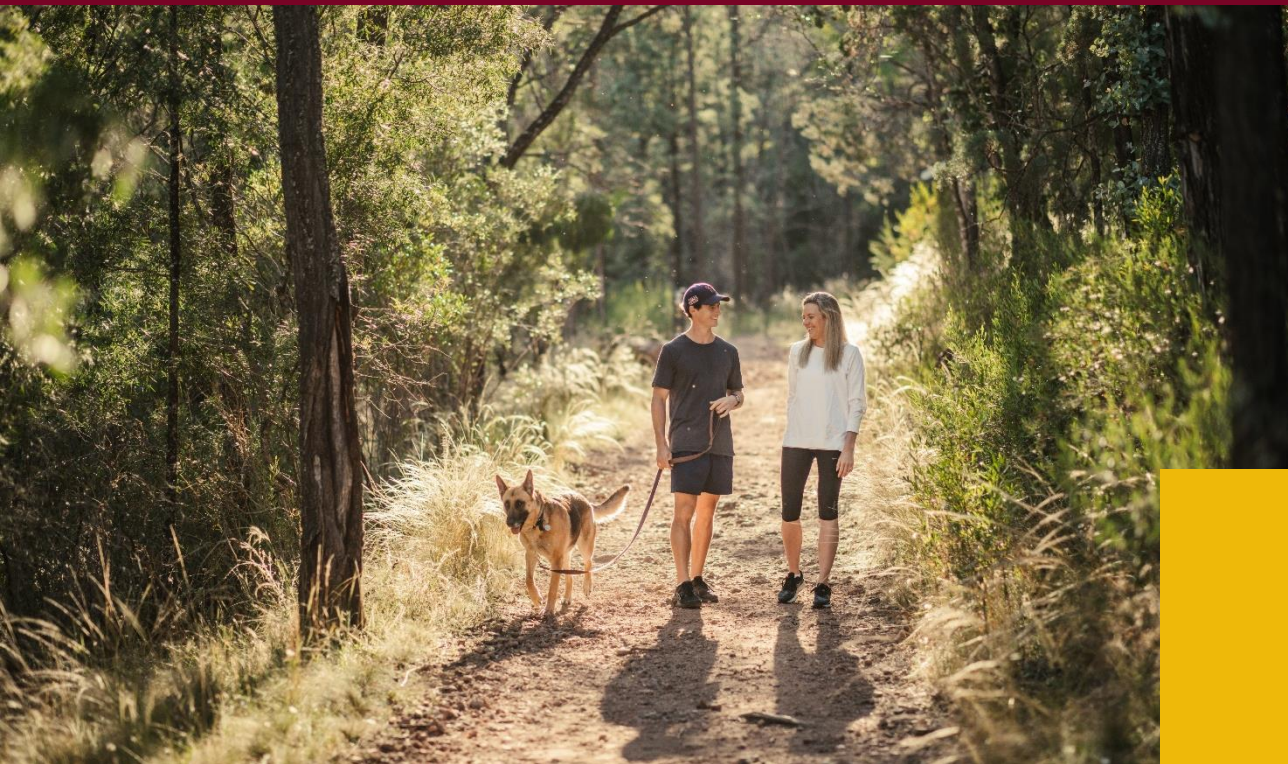
Governance and Community Engagement

Finally, improving the Council's communication strategy is essential, shifting from simply informing the community to meaningful consultation and engagement. Effective governance and transparency will enhance public trust and support for Council initiatives.

Summary

The General Manager will be responsible for delivering strategic priorities, strengthening stakeholder relationships, and ensuring sustainable development with pragmatic and decisive leadership.

This role is an opportunity to drive Narrabri Shire's growth, leading a capable organisation through both opportunities and challenges.



Application Criteria

Strategic Leadership Experience

- Demonstrated success in leading organisational strategy and driving sustainable growth in a complex operational environment.

Stakeholder Engagement Skills

- Proven ability to build and maintain strong relationships with government agencies, community groups and private sector stakeholders to achieve shared objectives.

Operational and Financial Acumen

- Experience in overseeing organisational performance, including financial management, infrastructure projects and operational efficiency.

Team Leadership and Cultural Alignment

- A track record of fostering cohesive executive teams, promoting collaboration and building a culture of accountability and innovation.

Adaptability and Resilience

- Demonstrated ability to navigate complex political, economic and operational challenges with strategic foresight and decisive leadership.

***Note:** You must be an Australian Citizen or hold the appropriate visa to work in Australia to apply for this role. Leading Roles will undertake checks to confirm your right to work in Australia at the offer stage.*

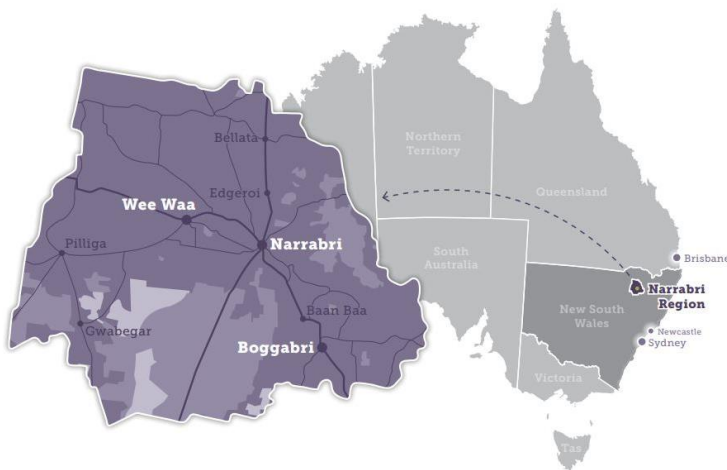


About Council

Narrabri Shire Council was awarded the 2018 AR Bluett Memorial Award in recognition of being the most progressive Council in the State. The AR Bluett Memorial Award is “the greatest accolade a council can achieve” and “the pinnacle of local government achievement”.

Narrabri Shire Council serves a vibrant community of 12,703 people (ABS 2021) across a vast area of 13,031 square kilometers in northwestern New South Wales. The Shire encompasses major towns such as Narrabri, Boggabri, Wee Waa, and Pilliga, alongside smaller villages and rural communities.

The region’s economy thrives on mining, which contributes 62.3% of its \$5.671 billion economic output, as well as agriculture, manufacturing and renewable energy. The Boggabri area alone generates \$2.5 billion annually. With a Gross Regional Product of \$3.544 billion, Narrabri Shire represents a significant portion of the Northern Inland region’s economic activity.



Council employs over 227 staff to manage an extensive portfolio of infrastructure and services, including 2,344 kilometers of roads, 60 bridges, 44 public buildings, three libraries, three aquatic facilities and 221 hectares of open space. Additionally, the Shire boasts 352,674 hectares of national parks and forestry, contributing to its natural beauty and recreational opportunities.

Financially, the Council has reduced its outstanding loans from \$4 million in 2021/2022 to \$2.88 million in 2023/2024 and achieved a robust cash position of \$68.6 million. Over the past three years, Council has invested \$61.7 million in capital works to enhance the Shire’s infrastructure and services.

Guided by its mission to foster a strong and vibrant regional growth centre, Narrabri Shire Council is led by a Mayor and eight councillors dedicated to delivering a high-quality living environment for its community.

Links to Council Information





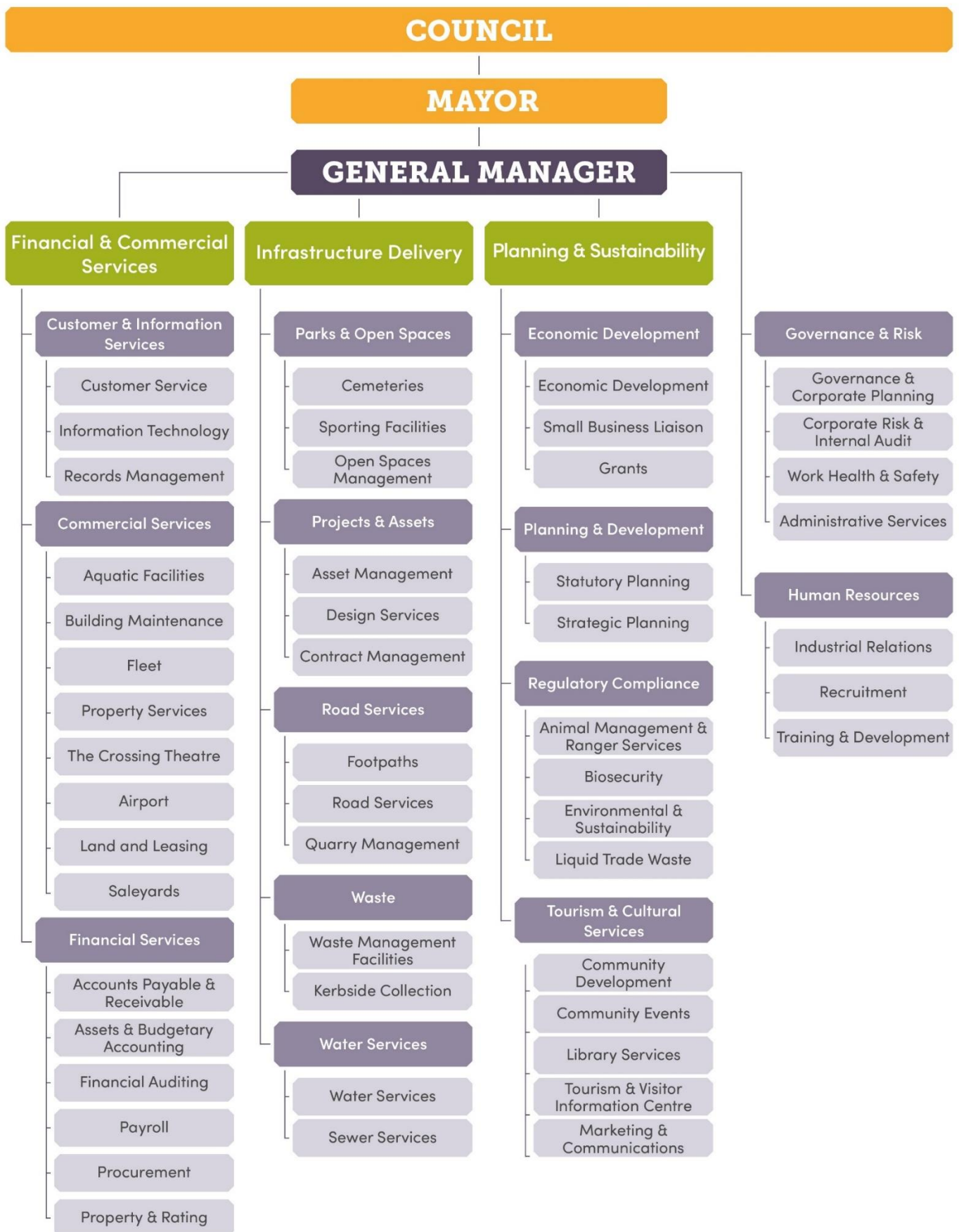
Council Values

Wellbeing	Recognising safety, health and wellbeing as a priority for all, especially our staff.
Integrity	Ensuring transparency and honesty in all activities.
Leadership	Provide guidance and direction to our community and our people.
Community Focus	Delivering prompt, courteous, collaborative and helpful service, while empowering and responding to the community's changing needs.
Accountability	Accepting our responsibility for the provision of quality services and information to ensure transparency and honesty in all our activities.
Respect	Treating everyone fairly with courtesy, dignity, empathy.
Excellence	Providing services, programs and information which consistently meet and exceed standards.

Vision

“The Narrabri Shire will continue to be a strong and vibrant regional economic growth centre providing a quality living environment for the entire community.”

Organisational Structure





Living in the Region



Housing

Narrabri Shire offers a range of affordable housing options, including modern family homes, rural properties and rental accommodations. The region's towns and villages provide diverse living environments, from vibrant urban centres to peaceful rural settings. With a relatively low cost of living compared to metropolitan areas, Narrabri Shire is an attractive choice for individuals and families seeking quality housing and a relaxed lifestyle in a welcoming community.



Educational Facilities

Narrabri Shire provides excellent educational opportunities with a total of 12 schools, including primary and secondary schools across its towns and villages. The Shire is home to both public and private schooling options, ensuring families have access to quality education. For tertiary education, the region offers access to a TAFE NSW campus in Narrabri, delivering a range of vocational training and skill-building courses. Additionally, universities in nearby regional centres, such as the University of New England in Armidale, offer further study options within a few hours' drive.



Healthcare

Narrabri Shire is well-equipped with healthcare facilities to meet the needs of its community. The Narrabri District Hospital provides essential medical services, including emergency care, inpatient services and maternity care. Additional medical centres in Narrabri, Wee Waa and Boggabri offer access to general practitioners, allied health professionals and specialist services. The Shire also has aged care facilities and pharmacies, ensuring comprehensive healthcare coverage. For more advanced medical needs, larger hospitals in Tamworth and other regional centres are within a few hours' drive.



Living in the Region



Shopping & Dining

Narrabri Shire offers a variety of shopping and dining experiences, blending the convenience of modern retail with the charm of local businesses. Shoppers can find everything from supermarkets and specialty stores to boutiques and artisan markets in towns like Narrabri, Wee Waa and Boggabri. Dining options range from cosy cafés and bakeries to pubs, family-friendly restaurants and takeaways. The region is also known for its local produce and farmers' markets, offering fresh, high-quality ingredients and a true taste of the community.



Sports & Recreation

Narrabri Shire boasts a vibrant sporting culture with a wide range of clubs and facilities catering to all ages and interests. Residents can enjoy team sports such as rugby, cricket, soccer, netball and tennis, as well as individual pursuits like golf, swimming and athletics. The region features modern sporting complexes, aquatic centres and community gyms, providing excellent facilities for fitness and competition.

For outdoor enthusiasts, Narrabri Shire is a gateway to stunning natural wonders, including the iconic Mount Kaputar National Park, Sawn Rocks and the Pilliga Forest, offering hiking, camping, birdwatching and scenic drives.



Getting Around

The Narrabri Airport offers direct flights to Sydney, providing convenient connections for business and leisure travellers. Additionally, Tamworth Regional Airport, located a few hours away, offers further flight options. For road travel, the Newell Highway runs through the Shire, linking Narrabri to major cities and regional centres.

Within the Shire, public transport options include local bus services and community transport is available for residents requiring additional support. The towns and villages are also well-served by taxi services, making it easy to move around the region.

Discover your potential with Narrabri Shire Council



Recruitment Process and Timeframes



How To Apply?

Please submit your application via the Leading Roles website. Please upload:

- Your CV
- A covering letter addressing the Application Criteria



Evaluation Process

Leading Roles and Narrabri Shire Council will determine a shortlist of suitable applicants based on desktop review of applications and initial interviews with a select group of applicants.

Applicants that have been shortlisted will be advised and asked to attend an interview with the interview panel. Narrabri Shire Council may elect to undertake further interviews as required.

Preferred applicants will be required to undertake psychometric assessments to assist in understanding the working preferences and attributes and potential fit to the role.



Indicative Timeframes



Applications Open

- Week Commencing Monday 3 February 2025



Applications Close

- 5:00 pm Monday 3 March 2025



Initial Assessment

- Week Commencing 3 March 2025



Council Interviews

- Week Commencing 10 March 2025

*Note these timeframes are indicative only and may change subject to the outcomes of the recruitment process, council staff and candidate availability.

Privacy Information

Leading Roles is collecting your personal information in accordance with the Information Privacy Act for the purpose of assessing your skills and experience against the position requirements. The information you provide in your application will only be used by employees of Leading Roles. Your information will be provided to authorised Council Officers, including Human Resources and the relevant selection panel members. It will not be given to any other person or agency unless you have given us permission, or we are required by law.



What Happens Next?

At Leading Roles, we prioritise candidate care and engagement throughout the recruitment journey. The process typically takes 6 to 8 weeks, from submission of your application, and we strive to keep you informed with regular updates.

While feedback may not be immediate, we assure you that we will contact you with updates and relevant information as soon as possible. The schedule below indicates when you will hear from us. Thank you for your understanding as we carefully manage a high volume of applicants and coordinate with client schedules.

Stage	What to Expect
Week 1-3 Application Stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application Acknowledgment: Prompt acknowledgement of your application.
Week 4 Initial Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant Review: We work closely with our clients to determine longlisted applicants that match the requirements for the role. • Video Conference Interviews: Initial interviews with longlisted applicants. • Feedback: Shortlisted applicants agreed with client. Feedback provided to applicants.
Week 5 & 6 Client Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation: Shortlisted candidates receive a briefing prior to client interview. • Panel Interviews: Consultants facilitate client interviews, at the discretion of the client, online or in-person. • Feedback: Post-interview feedback provided to candidates.
Week 5 & 6 Verification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checks: Simple online verification, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Reference Checks ◦ Criminal History and Right to Work Checks ◦ Psychometric Assessments (if requested by client)
Week 6 Offer & Negotiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiation: Consultant to support salary negotiations. • Engagement: Direct candidate engagement with the Council for contract questions and onboarding.
Week 6 to 8 Project Finalisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future Opportunities: If unsuccessful, with your permission, you'll be added to our Talent Pool for future opportunities.
Post Placement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check-in: Regular check-ins throughout the first year.



MARK OGSTON

Chief Executive



Mark founded Leading Roles in 2012 to provide specialist assistance in recruitment and human resource related projects for councils and he is a passionate advocate for the development and performance of the local government sector.

Mark leads all our client engagement, the Leading Roles recruitment team and undertakes executive level recruitment projects for the company.

Client Rating



Candidate Rating



CONTACT

☎ 0407 674 412

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