



Manager People and Culture

Toowoomba Regional Council
Success Profile | May 2026

Introduction

Thank you for your interest in the **Manager People and Culture** selection process.

OnTalent is thrilled to be leading the process of this appointment on behalf of **Toowoomba Regional Council**. This briefing pack provides you with information regarding the organisation, the role and requirements.

Once you have reviewed this material, and if you haven't already, please [visit](#) for details on how to apply.

I look forward to working with you through this process and invite you to contact me directly at anytime on 07 3305 5800.

Natasha Olsson-Seeto
Chief Executive
OnTalent

Job Advertisement

Manager People and Culture

Toowoomba is a region of rich tradition and bold ambition. As Australia's second largest inland city, it continues to evolve as a vibrant service hub for South West Queensland and North West New South Wales. With strong population growth, significant infrastructure investment and a diverse economic base spanning agriculture, energy, health and education, Toowoomba Regional Council is focused on shaping a thriving, liveable and future-ready community.

Toowoomba Regional Council employs approximately 1,600 people and serves a growing population of more than 178,000 residents. At the heart of its success is a commitment to strong leadership, a positive organisational culture and delivering high quality services to the community.

Reporting to the General Manager Corporate Services, the Manager People and Culture leads the delivery of contemporary, high-quality human resources services across Council. This is a pivotal leadership role, responsible for ensuring strong governance, compliance and best practice across the full employee lifecycle, while also shaping a culture that enables performance, capability and engagement.

You will lead a multi-disciplinary team across employee relations, talent and retention, learning and organisational development, and business improvement. Partnering closely with the Executive Leadership Team and senior leaders, you will provide trusted, strategic advice and drive initiatives that enhance the employee experience and support Council's broader organisational objectives.

This role will suit a dynamic, service-centric and values-led people leader who brings both operational depth and strategic perspective. You will be comfortable navigating complexity, managing risk and leading through change, while maintaining a strong focus on culture, capability, and continuous improvement.

To be successful, you will bring:

- Extensive experience leading and building human resources functions within a complex organisation, ideally within local government or the public sector
- Contemporary approach to the use of systems, technology and innovative approaches to people and culture engagement
- Deep expertise in industrial and employment legislation, workforce strategy and contemporary HR practices
- Proven capability in managing complex employee relations matters and providing high-level advice to senior stakeholders
- A strong track record of building leadership capability, driving cultural outcomes and leading organisational change
- Highly developed communication and stakeholder engagement skills, with the ability to influence at executive level

Tertiary qualifications in human resources, organisational psychology or a related discipline are expected, with postgraduate qualifications or professional certification highly regarded.

This is an opportunity to play a key role in shaping the future of a large and diverse regional organisation, contributing to a culture that supports both its people and the community it serves. For a confidential discussion, please contact Natasha Olsson-Seeto or Jevon Seah on 07 3305 5800.

To apply and for further information, please visit <https://www.ontalent.com.au/trc/>

About Us

Nestled on the crest of the Great Dividing Range, this region is a haven for foodies, nature lovers, history buffs, and culture enthusiasts alike. At its heart lies Toowoomba, Australia's second-largest inland city, known as the 'Garden City' for its stunning floral displays and lush parks. Yet, the region's beauty extends far beyond the city limits, with a tapestry of rolling hills, quaint towns like Cabarlah, Cambooya, and Crows Nest, and breathtaking landscapes that invite exploration.

Located about 90 minutes west of Brisbane, Toowoomba is easily accessible yet retains its unique charm, making it an ideal destination for those seeking both urban excitement and rural tranquility.

The Toowoomba Region's story is one of transformation and growth, deeply intertwined with the spirit of Queensland Country. From its humble beginnings as a pastoral settlement in the early 19th century, it has blossomed into a thriving regional hub. Key figures like Allan Cunningham, who explored the area in the early 19th century, played significant roles in its development. Cunningham's discovery of the rich farming and grazing lands of the Darling Downs in 1827 marked the beginning of European interest in the region.



Our Region

In 2008, the Toowoomba Region was established as a local government area, amalgamating several smaller local government authorities. This move aimed to create a more unified and efficient administration for the growing region. Today, the Toowoomba Region proudly showcases its heritage through beautifully preserved architecture, fascinating museums, and vibrant cultural festivals. As you explore the charming streets of Toowoomba and the picturesque countryside, you'll encounter a rich tapestry of history and modernity. From the grand old buildings that tell tales of yesteryears to the lively events that celebrate the present, every corner of Queensland Country invites you to discover its unique story.



Our Vision, Mission and Values

Vision

A vibrant Toowoomba Region: built on Rich Traditions, thriving with Bold Ambitions.

Mission

Delivering sustainable, quality services with a community focus, where our people enjoy their work, are empowered to undertake their roles, and are valued for their contributions.

Values

- Honesty:** We are open, honest and fair
- Accountability:** We are responsible for our actions and behaviour
- Respect:** We respect the dignity, beliefs and abilities of everyone
- Teamwork:** We work collaboratively
- Safety & wellbeing:** We prioritise health, safety and wellbeing

Council Goals



PEOPLE

Council promotes a vibrant, safe, healthy, and engaged Region, creating opportunities for people to connect and belong. We are proud of our unique and diverse communities.



PLACE

Council plans, builds, and maintains the infrastructure needed to sustainably support lifestyle and growth. We value our environments, our natural assets, and our rich agricultural land. Council promotes sustainable and innovative place management practices.



PROSPERITY

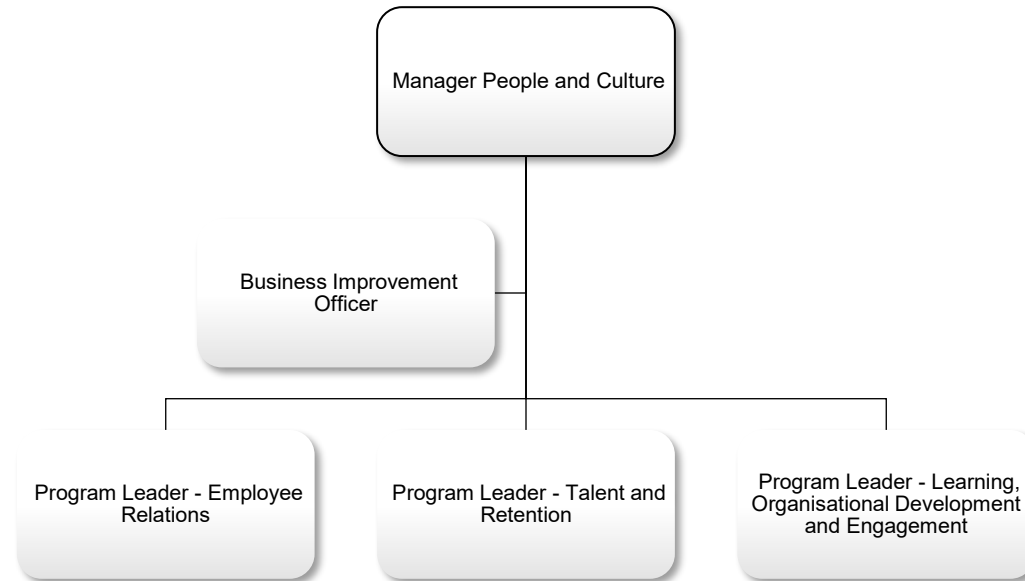
Our Region has a strong and diverse economy. Thriving businesses and industries attract and retain employment opportunities.



PERFORMANCE

Our Council delivers sustainable, quality services with a community focus, where our people enjoy their work, are empowered to undertake their roles, and are valued for their contributions.

Organisational Structure



Total team size: 31

CEO and General Managers



Chief Executive Officer – Sal Petrocchio OAM

Sal Petrocchio OAM GAICD is a highly respected leader with over thirty years of experience in transport, infrastructure and regulatory reform. From 2014 to 2025, Sal served as Chief Executive Officer of the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) where he transformed the organisation into a trusted, innovative, and customer-focussed national regulator. His leadership delivered major, complex reforms, including harmonising compliance frameworks, introducing digital solutions like the NHVR portal, and driving safety and productivity improvements across Australia’s heavy vehicle industry. In July 2025, Sal commenced his role as Chief Executive Officer of Toowoomba Regional Council, applying his strategic vision and collaborative leadership approach. His focus is on fostering economic growth, enhancing community engagement and customer experience, and delivering sustainable infrastructure for one of Queensland’s most vibrant regions. Sal’s career is defined by his commitment to innovation, stakeholder collaboration, building strong organisational cultures and award-winning customer service. At the heart of Sal’s leadership philosophy is the belief that high performance comes from empowered, supported people to strengthen organisational resilience and deliver results that matter. His contributions have earned him national recognition, including the Order of Australia Medal and positioned him as a thought leader in transport and regional governance.



Interim General Manager Infrastructure Services – Marie Gales

Marie is highly regarded across the sector and has received multiple awards recognising her leadership in transport and infrastructure. She has consistently delivered innovation and operational excellence and her contributions through various board and committee roles continue to influence industry-wide practice and policy. Marie is also known for her inclusive leadership style, strong advocacy for mentally safe workplaces and her willingness to challenge established processes to drive meaningful improvement. With extensive experience in both local government and the private sector, Marie brings strategic insight and a strong operational perspective that will support the continued growth and performance of the Infrastructure Services Group.



General Manager Environment and Community Services – Nick Hauser

Nick Hauser has more than twenty years’ experience in local government, joining Toowoomba Regional Council in 2008 as Manager of the Parks and Recreation Branch before being appointed General Manager of the Environment and Community Services Group in 2014. He oversees a broad portfolio including parks and recreation; libraries and cultural services; environmental and regulatory services; community development, facilities and tourism; and property services. Nick was educated in Toowoomba and holds a Bachelor of Business from Griffith University. He enjoys spending time with his family and is currently enjoying a golden era of rugby league as an avid supporter of the Penrith Panthers.

CEO and General Managers



General Manager Planning and Development Services – Ed Johnson

Ed joins Toowoomba Regional Council after serving as Director of Planning, Growth & Sustainability at Cairns Regional Council. With significant experience in urban and regional planning, he has led major initiatives across public and private sectors throughout Queensland. With a keen eye for collaboration and innovation between government and the development community, Ed is known for bridging the gap between policy and action. Ed is passionate about building upon evidence-based policy that is underpinned by community engagement to deliver meaningful change and community understanding to the opportunities and challenges that growth brings to regions. Focused on customer experience, technical excellence and people engagement, Ed leads the Planning & Development Group.



General Manager Corporate Services – Ann-Marie Johnston

Ann Marie was appointed General Manager Corporate Services in May 2022 following an extensive career in financial management across industries including manufacturing, insurance, transport, education, engineering, agribusiness and arts management. A Fellow of CPA Australia and a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD), she brings strong governance, financial leadership and strategic management capability to the organisation. Ann Marie is passionate about digital transformation that delivers real and meaningful outcomes. She has led significant organisational initiatives including the Digital Enabling Transformation program, the development of Council's first Customer Experience Strategy, and the introduction of Council's first Graduate Accounting Program. Her leadership has supported improvements in corporate governance, organisational performance and regional economic outcomes, including strengthened local procurement. A committed advocate for inclusive and diverse workplaces, Ann Marie supports programs that foster age and gender diversity, believing that teams are strongest when they reflect the communities they serve. She has championed women's leadership and workforce development initiatives across Council. Born in South Australia and raised in Ireland, Ann Marie completed a Bachelor of Commerce at James Cook University in Townsville. She has lived in Toowoomba for many years and has two grown-up daughters who also reside locally with their young families.



General Manager Water and Waste Services – Jaek Passier

Jaek brings extensive local government experience and over 20 years in the water and wastewater industry. Jaek started his career in 2004 with Toowoomba City Council before working at Cassowary Coast Regional Council as a water engineer. Jaek returned to Toowoomba Regional Council in 2013 as Principal Engineer and then, Manager, Strategic Water Planning and Capital Delivery. Jaek was appointed as General Manager of the Water and Waste Services Group in May 2024. Jaek holds a Bachelor of Engineering (Hons) majoring in Mechatronics and is a Registered Professional Engineer of Queensland (RPEQ) and is on the National Professional Engineers Register (NPER). In his spare time, Jaek enjoys spending time with his wife at their home in Goombungee. He's also an internationally accredited Volleyball Referee and travels extensively to support national and international competitions.

Manager People and Culture

The Manager People and Culture is a senior leadership role responsible for delivering strategic and operational human resource services across Council. The position ensures best-practice HR policies, compliance with legislative and industrial frameworks and alignment with organisational goals. Working closely with executive and organisational leaders, the role drives initiatives that enhance employee experience, build organisational capability and foster a high-performance, values-driven culture. It combines strategic oversight with hands-on leadership of the People and Culture function, including workforce planning, employee relations, learning and development and change management. Success in the role requires strong stakeholder engagement, commercial and public sector acumen and the ability to lead continuous improvement initiatives that support sustainable organisational performance.

Key responsibilities:

- Lead and manage the People and Culture function to deliver high-quality HR services
- Provide strategic HR advice to executives on workforce, culture and risk
- Ensure compliance with industrial relations, legislation and governance frameworks
- Drive organisational culture, engagement and employee experience initiatives
- Oversee workforce planning, talent management and capability development
- Manage budgets, reporting and operational performance of the branch
- Build strong stakeholder relationships and lead change and continuous improvement initiatives

Key Challenges

- Operating within a complex, politically and publicly accountable environment
- Managing a diverse, geographically dispersed workforce
- Balancing compliance obligations with a progressive people strategy
- Leading change while maintaining operational stability and service delivery



 [Position Description: Manager People and Culture](#)



Our Ideal Candidate

The ideal candidate is a seasoned People and Culture leader with a strong track record of delivering both strategic and operational HR outcomes in complex environments. You bring deep expertise across the full employee lifecycle, with particular strength in industrial relations, organisational development and leading high-performing teams. Your experience may come from local government, the broader public sector or similarly regulated environments where balancing compliance, risk and performance is critical.

You are a trusted advisor to senior leaders, known for your ability to influence, challenge and partner effectively at an executive level. Combining commercial judgement with strong knowledge of employment legislation and contemporary HR practice, you navigate complex people matters with confidence and integrity.

An authentic and values-led leader, you foster inclusive, psychologically safe environments and build capability within your team and across the organisation. You are comfortable leading change, driving continuous improvement and translating strategy into practical outcomes that enhance culture, engagement and organisational performance.

Our Process

At OnTalent, we specialise in partnering with purpose driven organisations to identify and secure exceptional leadership and we are pleased to be working with Toowoomba Regional Council on this recruitment project.

Our approach is deliberate, strategic and people centred. Every step of our process is designed to ensure alignment between candidate capability and organisational purpose. From understanding the culture and objectives of our clients to engaging and assessing talent in a considered and thorough way, we don't cut corners.

We are deeply committed to creating inclusive and equitable recruitment experiences. Our process is built to reduce bias and support diverse representation at all stages. We will work closely with you to ensure we are able to create an inclusive, fair and accessible pathway for you throughout the process. We encourage all candidates to discuss their individual circumstances with our team at any time.

Our recruitment process is built to deliver results that last.



OnTalent Commitment

OnTalent is committed to providing exceptional levels of service to our clients and candidates alike.

Our commitment is to 'Connect People and Purpose' and we take this seriously.

Our core service standards for this project will include:

- All candidate calls returned on the same day.
- All client requests actioned in the same day.
- All applicants to be given an outcome within five working days.
- All interviewed candidates to be given verbal feedback.
- All reports to be tailored and accurate and delivered on time.
- Interviews coordinated so that candidate's privacy is a priority with no candidates seen by other candidates.
- All candidates to be prepared and briefed for panel interviews.
- All panel members fully briefed prior to interviews as to format, questions, and candidate profiles.



If you have questions about this role, please reach out to one of the team below.
We welcome your application via the apply button on the OnTalent [Website](#).

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