



Applicant Pack

For the position of

Chief Executive Officer



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Acknowledgement of Country

Walawaani (welcome),

Shoalhaven City Council recognises the First Peoples of the Shoalhaven and their ongoing connection to culture and country. We acknowledge

Aboriginal people as the Traditional Owners, Custodians and Lore Keepers of the world's oldest living culture and pay respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

Walawaani njindiwan (safe journey to you all)

This acknowledgment includes Dhurga language. We recognise and understand that there are many diverse languages spoken within the Shoalhaven

Message from the Mayor, Councillor Patricia White

Very sincere thanks for your interest in this vital position and the opportunity to contribute to the leadership of Shoalhaven City Council, as well as work and play in this absolutely magnificent part of the world.

We are a special location on the south coast of New South Wales and if you have been here before you will have been captivated by our coastal and hinterland environment and if new to the City you will experience our welcoming community.

We have a large, talented and committed staff team who are integral to the services and support provided to our community. The Councillor team was recently elected in September 2024, and you will find us supportive, engaged and committed to the City. I am very proud to have been elected Mayor as part of our new Council, and I have been a Shoalhaven City Councillor since 2012.

Because of our geographic size and population we consider ourselves to be one of the important local government areas of NSW. And with that comes the opportunity for a highly competent and experienced leader to be our Chief Executive Officer. If you are a dynamic, strategic and experienced proven leader we want you to join our very committed team of Councillors and staff.

Your career progress and achievements can be facilitated by being part of our exciting future. And, if you bring a family to the City we can provide a lifestyle of economic and social opportunity. It really is an ultimate sea and tree change, complemented by professional and lifestyle advantage.

Our spectacular coastal and rural environments give the Shoalhaven an amazing reputation for quality. This is a beautiful climate, underpinned by a vibrant and diverse economy, with excellent recreational facilities, especially for the golfing, fishing, hiking and surfing enthusiasts.



I encourage you to review this information, speak with our expert recruitment consultant, Stephen Blackadder, and I look forward to seeing your application.



Position Overview

The Chief Executive Officer of the Council has essentially a two (2) part role – to lead the organisation and staff team to deliver service excellence to our community, and to work in partnership with the Mayor and Councillors in their governing body role to develop and implement the policies of the Council.

You will ensure the efficient and effective delivery of key services and projects in line with the Council's strategic objectives and provide high-level advice and support to the Mayor and the Councillors.

The role covers a range of critical areas – including the governance of the organisation, its financial sustainability, exploring innovation in service delivery, and providing excellence in customer service, being aware of national and statewide issues affecting local government, and networking with government and the private sector, to help grow the Shoalhaven and encourage investment in the local economy.

The Chief Executive Officer oversees service delivery, ensuring compliance with legislation and Council policies, while fostering a customer focused culture throughout the staff.

This role requires proven experience in a senior leadership capacity, with visionary direction, strategic thinking, and a focus on continuous improvement. The role is based at our offices in Nowra, which is central to our other towns and villages.

A strong financial acumen is essential in this role as you will be instrumental in ensuring the future financial sustainability of the organisation. You need not be an accountant, but a keen eye for commercial opportunities is expected, to achieve income generation from our assets and facilities, and to ensure the productivity of the organisation is achieved.

Key Responsibilities

The statutory responsibilities of the General Manager (CEO) are outlined in Section 335 of the NSW Local Government Act:

Section 335.

(1) The general manager is generally responsible for the efficient and effective operation of the council's organisation and for ensuring the implementation, without undue delay, of decisions of the council.

(2) The general manager has the following particular functions:

- the day-to-day management of the council
- to exercise such of the functions of the council as are delegated by the council to the general manager
- to appoint staff in accordance with an organisation structure and resources approved by the council
- to direct and dismiss staff
- to implement the council's equal employment opportunity management plan.

(3) The general manager has such other functions as may be conferred or imposed on the general manager by or under this or any other Act.

Total Remuneration Package

The Council has set a range for the position in excess of \$400,000 to reflect those candidates who are highly competent and experienced leaders who might command such a reward for achievements.

The TRP is based on Salary, with the Superannuation Guarantee of 11.5% increasing to 12.0% on 1 July 2025, with full private use of a motor vehicle valued at \$12,500.

Relocation assistance is also available should a long-distance relocation be necessary.



Opportunities and Challenges

There are many exciting and rewarding opportunities and challenges you will find facing the City, and of course in the role, including:

Opportunities:

- **Strategic Influence** – to shape Council functions and contribute to the Strategic Plan.
- **Leadership Development** - lead and collaborate with staff to drive change and improvement.
- **Innovation** - explore and recommend new opportunities for financial sustainability, revenue opportunities, workforce planning and help grow the Council into the future.
- **Financial Sustainability** – to recover the financial position of the Council
- **Nowra CBD development** – over the next 3 to 4 years redevelop the CBD and waterfront precinct
- **Organisational Impact** - influence key areas like infrastructure development, customer service, HR, governance, and finance to ensure effective service delivery.
- **Marketing and promotion** – be aware of the opportunities to grow tourism, investment and general economic growth, including primary industry.

Challenges:

- **Multiple functions** - manage the many activities the Council has responsibility for along with their competing priorities and different stakeholders.
- **Budget and Resource Management** - balance finances and resources while maintaining service quality.
- **Driving Improvement** - lead change initiatives and motivate staff.
- **Compliance and Risk** - ensure ongoing compliance with evolving legislation and manage organisational risk.
- **Economic and Population growth** – explore opportunities to bring investment to the City, to grow jobs.
- **Continue to diversify the economy** – work with the community to adapt to change.
- **Understand the position has to manage and lead many issues** – from investors, business, small business and community expectations.



Candidate Attributes

The Chief Executive Officer will need a blend of qualifications, experience, and skills to effectively lead the organisation and deliver key outcomes.

A **tertiary qualification** will give a guide to the expertise you are likely to bring to the City – whether financial, asset management, civil engineering, town and strategic planning, human resource management, economic development as examples – we are not fixed on a particular expertise – and **equivalent relevant work experience** is also of importance.

At the same time, we expect you will bring a **strong commercial focus** – to not only ensure the future financial sustainability of the Council but to also help navigate with commercial investors in the City projects that add to the lifestyle of our community.

This role will probably suit a leader with a highly developed management and leadership style, and your proven track record will demonstrate your ability to manage diverse teams and drive results across a wide range of functions. **An expertise in managing service delivery, budgets, and financial planning, along with a solid understanding of governance and risk management, will be essential.**

- You should be an **effective communicator**, and an active listener, capable of providing **strategic advice** to the Mayor and Councillors, and **network** with government representatives and politicians to market and promote the City.
- Strong **leadership and people management skills** are crucial, enabling you to motivate teams and achieve high standards of performance – compassionate and supportive.
- You will have **strong relationship and engagement skills**, and we expect you will be out in the community meeting our residents and business owners to identify opportunities for the Council to help. You will be comfortable engaging with our community and be calm and reflective under pressure.
- Your commitment to **continuous improvement and customer service** will be evident in your experience with process optimisation and embedding a **customer-centric culture** within the organisation – **an action and results driven culture**.

- We expect you will bring a **commitment** to helping Shoalhaven City and the organisation grow over the life of your contract and beyond. We are keen for you to become **part of our community – and to live here.**
- You will bring a **strong leadership style** – and with a degree of self-confidence – confident but not with an arrogance – capable of admitting mistakes – and able to provide alternative views and solutions – and enjoy assisting Councillors with their priorities and make good use of their local knowledge.
- You will bring a **commercial minded/outlook** – to be a good budget manager but also an ability to discuss investment with investors and bring a “can-do” attitude to helping investment in the City. We want something to happen....
- We expect you will have the **right motivation** – if you are looking for a title to suit your ego you will not fit. You need to be driven by a passion for team success.
- You will have a **humility** – to understand your own need to grow within a team environment in the same way their team needs to grow.
- You will be a **strategic thinker** - big picture thinkers are needed in a big picture position – to bring a clearly articulated practical vision to see the future and help the Council and the City achieve that future. A visionary, with a plan.
- You will need to be an **exceptional communicator** – who can manage both internal and external communications as part of a cultural policy, not just as a token gesture.
- You will have a **loyalty** – not just to councillors, and to staff but also to the City and our community. Two-Way Loyalty is a genuine attribute. Leaders who are as loyal to their staff receive that same loyalty in return. It is a cultural attribute.
- A focus on **place management** – experience in developing or improving a town planning scheme or the master planning of an area
- A consummate **negotiator** – who can represent and advocate for the City with investors, developers, major service providers, government and other stakeholders
- A **problem solver with conflict resolution skills** – who can manage both internal and external **disputes** – and have demonstrated experience with **crisis management**
- An **articulate networker** – who can have frank and fearless conversations, who has a social mastery and emotional awareness, who can manage relationships and engage with anyone in our community, who sees value in community consultation and can listen – but not to the loudest.
- Someone who can **empower staff** to make decisions – to delegate to the lowest level appropriate – so micro-managers and responsive leaders need not apply.

To understand **key accountabilities** - including the ability to navigate strategic policy setting; to manage change within the organisation; to support the right workplace environment and culture; to give clear oversight to the Executive Team; and to ensure appropriate allocation of capital funds to bring improvements to assets and facilities

Selection Criteria

Essential

1. An understanding of **Local Government** and its regulatory environment - direct local government experience is desirable as is experience outside of local government.
2. Demonstrated experience in creating or contributing to a **highly engaged, high-performance** workforce and Senior Management Team.
3. Proven ability to provide **strategic direction**, to drive a **values-based culture** and to **delegate to staff** to grow their decision-making skills.
4. Strong experience and success managing **organisational finances, including budgetary processes** at a strategic level.
5. **Politically astute**, and an ability to **effectively engage** with elected members and an enquiring and engaged community.
6. An agile and confident **communicator**, a good listener, able to think on their feet, with **proven oral and written** communication skills, with elected members, MPs, regional and state organisations, local community groups and the general public.
7. Proven ability to implement and lead **excellence in customer service**, including experience with customer surveys and developing satisfaction feedback processes.
8. Proven **professional skills** in project management and good governance.
9. Relevant **qualifications and or senior executive experience**.





About Council

Shoalhaven City Council has four (4) councillors elected for each ward, and a popularly elected Mayor (Clr Patricia White) elected in 2024 for the four (4) year term.

As the custodians of a unique environment, the Council is committed to delivering the highest possible quality of services and facilities for residents and visitors including:

- Construction and maintenance of local roads, streets and bridges
- Recycling and waste management
- Planning, Environment and Development
- Maintenance of parks, sporting fields, beaches and pools
- Community facilities such as libraries, theatres and art galleries
- Childcare facilities
- Pet registration and management
- Tourism services
- Strategic planning
- Promotion of economic development

Our Vision

We will work together in the Shoalhaven to foster a safe & attractive community for people to live, work, stay and play; where sustainable growth, development and environmental protection are managed to provide a unique and relaxed lifestyle.

Our Core Values

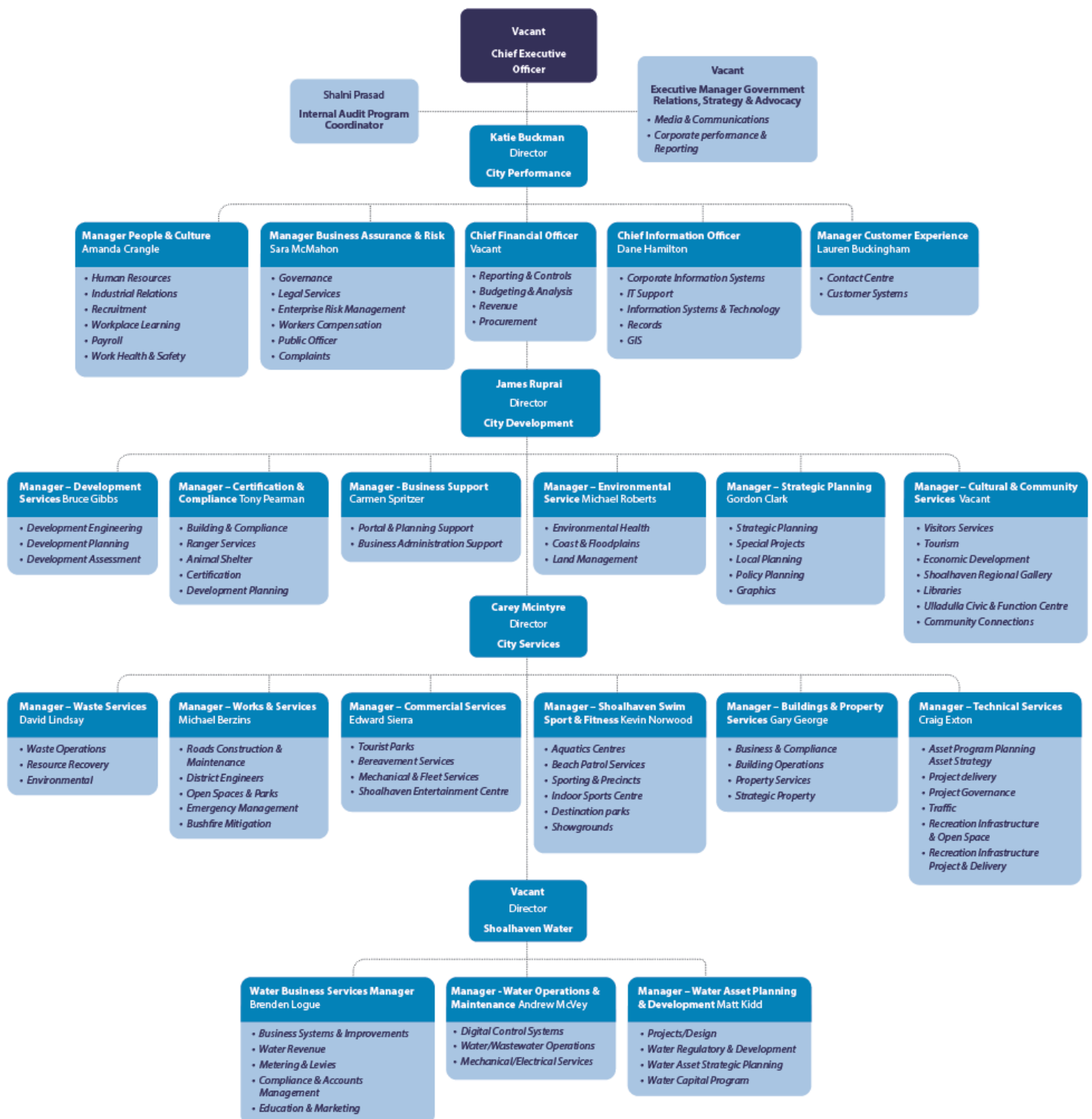
Adaptability – We are ready for change and willing to embrace new situations

Integrity – We are committed to maintain ethics and high standards

Collaboration - We enjoy working together to deliver for our community

Respect – We are mindful of and care about the feelings, wishes and rights of others.

Organisation Chart





Living in the Shoalhaven

Shoalhaven is bordered by the mountains, coastal plains and 100 magnificent beaches, and includes 50 towns and villages.

From Sydney, it's an easy two-hour drive 160 kilometres south, and from Canberra, a two and a half hour drive north of around 200 kilometres.

Water-lovers have so much choice with a wealth of lakes and inlets, great surf beaches, excellent tidal and beach fishing, boating and water sports. Nature enthusiasts can enjoy some excellent bushwalks with an abundance of native flora and fauna to discover. The Shoalhaven's many annual food, wine, arts festivals and events have become popular reasons to getaway. Health and wellbeing abound as Shoalhaven is the home of the Huskisson Triathlon.

With a growing range of fresh produce farmed and harvested locally including seafood, market garden produce, wine, dairy, coffee and olive oil, Shoalhaven is home to Bangalay Dining and Rick Stein's at Bannisters. For those who love a good drop, the region offers 9 cellar doors, 6 breweries and 1 distillery, as well as wine tasting tours for weekenders.

The Shoalhaven's temperate climate is comfortable all year round, with balmy sea breezes to cool in summer and clean crisp air for long country walks in winter.

Community

The Shoalhaven population has a strong sense of community, a desire to help one another, friendly, welcoming and caring. Community involvement in Council and community activities is reflective of the large numbers attending key events being held throughout the year.

Of our population of around 109,895 the median age is 48. 5.5% of the Shoalhaven's population identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. There are 8,281 local businesses in the council area.

Imagine a stress-free lifestyle...

Imagine travelling from home to work in less than 10 minutes - no traffic, no stress. Living in a community big enough to stimulate but small enough to feel part of.

The Shoalhaven is family oriented. Choose between 24 primary and five public secondary schools or one of our 8 private schools, and special services like Noah's Ark for children with additional needs. Medical services are met by public and private hospitals and aged care facilities.

Enjoy a full range of facilities and services:

We have a full range of sporting facilities and a multitude of clubs, gyms and classes to cater for every interest. Catch the latest concert at the Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre or join one of the active cultural groups.

Enjoy the incredible beauty of our National Parks with 70% of the Shoalhaven area made up of natural areas. If your passion is the water, be delighted by our waterways, marine parks and beaches. If your dream is a few acres, live it in the Shoalhaven hinterland.

Spend Sunday morning at a café, have lunch at one of our world-class restaurants and browse unique boutiques. With 49 villages and towns to choose from and 100 beaches, one will be the perfect home for you.

You'll never want to leave.



Recruitment Process and Timeframes

To Apply

1. Please submit your CV/Resume via the SBC website - <https://sbc.net.au/executive-roles/> - in order to access the Information Package and Application Form.
2. Then call Stephen Blackadder on 0412 255 149 for a confidential discussion regarding the role.
3. Complete your responses to the Selection Criteria in the Application Form sent to you when you lodged your CV - it can also be found on the SBC website.

Assessment of Candidates

The Council has appointed a Recruitment Panel to oversee the process and to select candidates for interview with the full Council – comprising Mayor, Cr Patricia White, Deputy Mayor, Cr Peter Wilkins, Assistant Deputy Mayor, Cr Selena Clancy, Councillor Bob Proudfoot, and Captain Paul Hannigan, RAN of HMAS Albatross. Stephen Blackadder of SBC will provide support to the Panel.

Applications Open	Monday 2 June 2025
Initial Conversation Before submitting your application being the responses to the Selection Criteria, you must have a confidential discussion about the role and your suitability with Stephen Blackadder on 0412 255 149. All enquiries will be handled with the utmost confidentiality.	From Tuesday 3 June 2025
Applications Close Your application form with responses to the selection criteria must be sent to stephen@sbc.net.au .	5 pm Monday 23 June 2025
Shortlisting and Hogan Assessments Once applications close, a list of candidates will be selected by the Interview Panel for first online interviews with the selection panel and those selected will undertake a Hogan Leadership Assessment.	From Monday 7 July 2025
Interviews Final interviews with shortlisted candidates will be held in person at Nowra, NSW. We will contact referees before the final interview - but will not be made without your express permission.	First round of Interviews by the Panel – Saturday 9 August 2025 Final list of candidates for interview by the Council – 12 August 2025



Further Information

Shoalhaven City Council



[Annual Report](#)



[Delivery Program Operational Plan 2024-25](#)



[Shoalhaven City Council Website](#)

For any further information regarding the position please contact Stephen Blackadder:

P. 0412 255 149

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Prospective candidates **MUST NOT** contact Shoalhaven City Council unless to seek information that is readily available to members of the public.



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