

APPLICANT PACK

Chief Executive Officer

Mackay Regional Council



RECRUITING FOR:



CONTACT

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Message from the Mayor



Dear Candidate

As Mayor of Mackay Regional Council, I am pleased to welcome your interest in the role of Chief Executive Officer. This is a significant and rewarding opportunity to lead an organisation that is central to the wellbeing and prosperity of our region.

Mackay is a vibrant and forward-looking community with a proud history and an exciting future. As a Council, we are focused on delivering what our community values most—sustainable infrastructure, responsive services and inclusive growth. We are looking for a CEO who shares our commitment to public value, and who can lead with purpose, integrity and clarity.

This role offers the chance to work closely with a newly elected Council and a newly appointed executive team. Our priority is to build a culture of unity, mutual respect and shared vision across the organisation. We are seeking a leader who can bring stability, drive and strong cultural alignment to this task—someone who understands the importance of trust, communication and collaboration at all levels.

As our CEO, you will be a trusted adviser to Council, a champion of our people and a visible and confident voice for the region. We are looking for a leader who can listen deeply, communicate clearly and deliver real outcomes for the people of Mackay.

Thank you for considering this important role. I look forward to welcoming a leader who is ready to contribute to our journey and make a meaningful difference to the Mackay community.

Warm regards,

Cr Greg Williamson
Mayor



[Click to view a welcome video from Mayor Greg Williamson](#)

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We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Owners, the Yuwibara People 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

The Chief Executive Officer is the principal adviser to the Mayor and Councillors and is responsible for leading the delivery of the Council's Corporate and Operational Plans, driving organisational performance and fostering strong and constructive relationships with elected members, government agencies, community stakeholders and regional industries.

Reporting to the Mayor and Council, the CEO will be accountable for:

- Delivering high-quality local government services and infrastructure aligned with Council strategy and community expectations.
- Ensuring transparent, compliant and financially sustainable governance of Council operations.
- Leading strategic planning and transformation initiatives to improve service delivery and organisational efficiency.
- Developing effective partnerships across state and federal governments, regional alliances and the private sector.
- Providing clear, ethical leadership to an experienced executive team and large workforce.

The successful candidate will bring contemporary thinking and experience to support Council's aspirations for a thriving, inclusive and economically resilient region.



The Opportunity

Leading Roles is proud to partner with **Mackay Regional Council** to appoint a high-calibre Chief Executive Officer (CEO) who will lead the organisation through its next phase of strategic growth, infrastructure delivery and community engagement. This role presents an outstanding opportunity for a values-driven and results-oriented executive to shape the economic and social future of one of Queensland's most vibrant and diverse regional communities.

The incoming CEO will join a progressive, financially sound council with a strong organisational culture and a committed, experienced executive leadership team. Mackay is a regional centre of significant economic influence in North Queensland, encompassing a rich natural environment, diverse communities and a robust portfolio of capital projects and community initiatives. The role demands contemporary executive leadership, commercial and governance acumen, and the ability to engage effectively across political, industry and community sectors.



Candidate Profile

Mackay Regional Council is seeking an accomplished and values-driven Chief Executive Officer to lead the organisation through a period of cultural renewal, strategic delivery and organisational alignment. This is a pivotal leadership opportunity for an executive who can bring clarity, stability and ambition to the role, while uniting a newly formed executive team and delivering on the vision of a progressive and community-focused Council.

The ideal candidate will be a highly experienced chief executive or senior executive leader with the confidence, judgement and credibility to lead in a complex local government environment. They will bring sound political instincts, a deep understanding of public value and the capacity to lead with both strategic foresight and operational discipline.

Strategic Leadership and Political Acumen

The incoming CEO will be a trusted adviser to the Mayor and elected members, working in partnership to align strategy, operations and decision-making. They must possess the political sensitivity to navigate competing views, the clarity to communicate complex issues with conviction and the presence to lead with authority and humility in equal measure.

A capacity to 'read the room' in the chamber and shape informed, respectful discussions will be essential to building unity across the elected body and organisation.

Cultural Leadership and Organisational Integration

The CEO will lead a relatively new executive group and must be capable of instilling a high-performance, values-based culture across all levels of the organisation. This includes uniting business areas under shared priorities, building morale and reinforcing a clear, compelling organisational purpose.

The successful candidate will have a demonstrated track record of cultural change, team development and succession planning. They will understand that when the culture is right, the organisation performs—and when the organisation performs, the community is well served.



Candidate Profile continued

Community Focus and Public Value Orientation

A core expectation of the CEO is to lead with a strong outward-facing focus—understanding and responding to the community’s needs, aspirations and concerns. The successful candidate will be an accessible and trusted representative of Council, with the ability to clearly articulate the cost, benefits and impacts of major initiatives and ensure the community feels heard and well-informed.

A commitment to impartiality and fairness, particularly in managing public complaints and concerns, is essential. The CEO must lead with service orientation, professionalism and respect for the diverse needs of Mackay’s residents

Commercial, Financial and Regional Competency

The CEO will bring strong commercial judgement and financial governance capability. They will oversee significant operating and capital budgets, lead long-term financial planning and drive value-for-money service delivery. Importantly, the CEO must understand the structure and drivers of the regional economy and demonstrate the acumen to anticipate and plan for the region’s distinct economic and seasonal cycles.

The successful candidate will bring a forward-thinking approach to resource management, economic risk and infrastructure timing, with an emphasis on long-term sustainability and community benefit.

Infrastructure and Asset Delivery

With a substantial capital program and active state and federal funding partnerships, the CEO must have demonstrated experience in delivering large-scale infrastructure projects and managing asset portfolios. This includes an understanding of sequencing, stakeholder engagement, regulatory alignment and operational readiness.

Experience in managing externally funded projects and intergovernmental relationships will be highly regarded.

Regional Advocacy and External Partnerships

Mackay is a region of strategic significance, and the CEO will play a critical role in representing Council and the community at state, national and regional levels. The CEO must have the ability to influence with credibility, advocate constructively for Council’s priorities and form enduring relationships across government, industry, traditional owner groups and community partners.



Candidate Profile continued

Personal Attributes and Public Sector Values

The successful candidate will model the highest standards of public leadership—bringing integrity, independence, impartiality, knowledge and professionalism to every interaction. They will operate with compassion, fairness and responsiveness, particularly when engaging with the public and staff.

A strong alignment with public service values, including accountability, respect, service and transparency, is essential to this role.

A relevant tertiary qualification in business, public administration, law, engineering or a related discipline is required. Postgraduate qualifications or formal executive leadership development will be highly regarded.

The Mackay Advantage

This role is based in Mackay, a regional city offering a superb lifestyle with access to the Great Barrier Reef, Whitsundays, rainforests and pristine beaches. Mackay offers high-quality education, health and recreational amenities and is a vibrant hub for families, professionals and investors. The Council supports relocation and offers a competitive executive remuneration package under a performance-based contract.

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.



Remuneration

Joining Mackay Regional Council will see you welcomed into a supportive and thriving environment within an experienced and dedicated team. You will be part of a community that values safety and wellbeing, respect, working together, service excellence and integrity. In return for your hard work and dedication, the successful candidate will be rewarded with an attractive TRP negotiable based on your qualifications and experience.

Benefits of the role include:

- Salary: Generous Executive Base Salary
- Relocation assistance: Per Council Policy
- Up to 18% contribution superannuation (conditions apply).
- Study and assistance programs for career development.
- Learning and development opportunities.
- Career advancement opportunities.
- Employee Assistance Program.
- Performance at work, offering discounts at selected businesses in the region, within the state and across the nation.
- Active social clubs.



About Council

Mackay, the “Sugar Capital of Australia”, has driven the nation’s sugar industry for over 150 years, producing more than a third of Australia’s sugar. Beyond agriculture, it’s a gateway to the stunning Whitsundays and boasts a thriving resources sector.

Mackay Regional Council spans 7,622 square kilometres. With a commitment to sustainable development and community well-being, the council plays a vital role in delivering essential services, infrastructure and economic initiatives that support the region’s continued prosperity.

With a population exceeding 126,000 and a labour force of more than 72,000, Mackay is a key economic hub in regional Queensland. The region’s economy generates approximately A\$26.4 billion annually, driven by industries such as mining, agribusiness, tourism, manufacturing, construction and retail. Mackay is home to 25 operating coal mines, a flourishing sugar industry and over 10,000 registered businesses, reinforcing its economic strength and resilience.

The 2024-25 budget includes an operational expenditure of A\$312.72 million and a capital works program valued at A\$130.2 million. Investment in major projects is shaping the future of the region, with signature developments such as the Northern Beaches Community Hub, the Bloomsbury Water Supply Scheme and the Paradise and Webberley Street intersection upgrade contributing to enhanced services and infrastructure. Other key projects include city centre riverside improvements, the Bells Creek Bridge replacement, the expansion of the Resource Centre of Excellence, the next stage of the Pioneer North Bank shared path and the development of the Alsatia Park Playground.

Through strategic planning and investment, Mackay Regional Council continues to strengthen the region’s economic position, enhance infrastructure and support a vibrant and connected community.



Links to Council Information





2024-2029 Corporate Plan Summary

The Mackay Regional Council's Corporate Plan 2024-2029 serves as a strategic framework guiding the region's development and service delivery over the next five years. This plan builds upon the foundation of the previous 2022-2027 Corporate Plan, incorporating minor amendments to better align with the local government election cycle.

Purpose and Vision:

- Purpose: "Create opportunity to thrive."
- Vision: "To become the best region for liveability and livelihood."

Strategic Pillars:

The plan is structured around five key pillars:

1. **Invest and Work:** Focusing on economic development, infrastructure investment and job creation to foster a robust local economy.
2. **Live and Visit:** Enhancing the quality of life for residents and creating attractive experiences for visitors through improved amenities and cultural initiatives.
3. **Community and Environment:** Promoting social cohesion and environmental sustainability by supporting community programs and implementing eco-friendly practices.
4. **Financial Strength:** Ensuring responsible fiscal management to maintain financial stability and the capacity to fund essential services and projects.
5. **Operational Excellence:** Striving for efficiency and effectiveness in council operations to deliver high-quality services to the community.

Key Projects and Initiatives:

The Corporate Plan outlines several significant projects and areas of focus, including:

- **Mackay Waterfront Development:** Continuing the revitalisation of the waterfront area to boost economic activity and enhance public spaces.
- **Pioneer Valley Mountain Bike Trails:** Developing world-class mountain biking trails to attract tourism and promote outdoor recreation.
- **Northern Beaches Community Hub:** Establishing a central facility to provide essential services and community spaces for the Northern Beaches area.

Community Engagement and Feedback:

In September 2024, the draft Corporate Plan was opened for public comment to ensure it reflects the community's aspirations and needs. Feedback collected during this period was considered before the plan's final adoption later in the year.

By aligning the Corporate Plan with the local government election cycle, the council aims to provide newly elected members with adequate time to assess and adjust the strategic direction, ensuring continuity and relevance in governance.

For a comprehensive understanding of the [Corporate Plan 2024-2029](#), including detailed objectives and implementation strategies, stakeholders are encouraged to review the full document available on the council's official website.



Financial Performance and Long-Term Financial Plan

Mackay Regional Council is committed to maintaining strong financial management to support sustainable service delivery and infrastructure investment. The **Long-Term Financial Forecast (LTFF) 2024-2033** provides a structured approach to financial planning, ensuring that the Council remains financially viable while meeting community needs.

Current Financial Position

For the 2023-24 financial year, the Council has budgeted **\$263 million in rates and charges revenue**, increasing to **\$379 million by 2032-33**. Other revenue sources include grants, fees and charges, rental income and investment returns

Council maintains a **positive operating surplus ratio** within the target range of 0% to 10%, ensuring it generates sufficient revenue to cover operational costs while funding capital projects and debt repayments.

Council's cash reserves are projected to remain **above the minimum target** throughout the long-term plan. However, reserves will be drawn down in later years to support infrastructure projects and manage borrowings.

Long-Term Financial Plan

The LTFF outlines a strategy for sustainable growth, including:

- **Revenue Management:** Balancing revenue generation with affordability for ratepayers.
- **Debt Strategy:** Council plans to borrow \$296 million over the next 10 years, primarily for capital projects, ensuring borrowing levels remain manageable.
- **Capital Investment:** A focus on renewing and expanding essential infrastructure, with capital expenditure exceeding depreciation levels over the next decade to support asset growth.

Key Financial Sustainability Metrics

- **Net Financial Liabilities Ratio:** Well within the target, confirming Council's ability to meet financial obligations.
- **Debt Service Cover Ratio:** Indicates strong financial capacity to manage debt repayments.
- **Asset Sustainability Ratio:** Projected to increase, ensuring long-term infrastructure maintenance.

Through disciplined financial management, Mackay Regional Council is positioned to continue delivering high-quality services and infrastructure while maintaining long-term financial sustainability.

Source: "Budget 2023-2024 - Long Term Financial Forecast 2024-33" – prepared by Mackay Regional Council.



Summary of Economic Development Strategy

The Mackay Regional Council’s Economic Development Strategy 2020-2025 outlines a comprehensive framework aimed at fostering sustainable economic growth and diversification within the region. This strategy is built upon the following key components:

Vision:

The strategy envisions the Mackay region as a vibrant, innovative and diverse economy that offers a high quality of life and ample opportunities for investment and employment.

Strategic Pillars:

To achieve this vision, the strategy focuses on four primary pillars:

1. **Advocacy and Leadership:** Positioning the council as a proactive leader in economic development by engaging with stakeholders, influencing policy and advocating for infrastructure and services that support growth.
2. **Investment Attraction:** Promoting the region’s competitive advantages to attract new businesses and industries, thereby expanding the economic base and creating employment opportunities.
3. **Industry Development:** Supporting the growth and diversification of existing industries, including resources, agriculture, tourism and emerging sectors like biofutures and advanced manufacturing.
4. **Workforce and Skills Development:** Collaborating with educational institutions and industry partners to enhance the skills of the local workforce, ensuring it meets the current and future needs of employers.

Key Initiatives:

The strategy outlines several initiatives to drive economic development:

- **Infrastructure Investment:** Prioritising projects that improve connectivity, such as transport and digital infrastructure, to support business operations and attract investment.
- **Business Support Programs:** Offering resources and assistance to local enterprises to enhance their competitiveness and capacity for innovation.
- **Tourism Development:** Leveraging the region’s natural attractions to boost tourism, including the promotion of events and the development of new tourist experiences.
- **Land Use Planning:** Ensuring that planning schemes facilitate sustainable development and provide adequate land for industrial, commercial and residential purposes.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

To assess the effectiveness of the strategy, the council has established performance indicators and will regularly review progress, allowing for adjustments in response to changing economic conditions.

For a detailed understanding of the specific actions and projects under each pillar, stakeholders are encouraged to review the full [Economic Development Strategy 2020-2025](#) document available on the council’s official website.



Organisational Culture and Community Satisfaction Survey Results

Mackay Regional Council is committed to fostering a positive organisational culture and delivering high-quality services to the community. The 2023 Community Perceptions Survey highlights key insights into both employee and community satisfaction.

Employee and Organisational Culture

Council staff play a critical role in delivering services to the community, and maintaining a supportive and engaged workforce is a priority. Satisfaction with Council's customer service remains high, with **77% of respondents satisfied**, resulting in an average rating of **7.3 out of 10**. These results reflect a strong culture of service excellence and responsiveness.

Community Satisfaction

The survey revealed that **68% of residents** were satisfied with Council's overall performance over the past 12 months, with an average rating of **6.4 out of 10**. This rating remains stable, with only a slight decline compared to 2018.

Community satisfaction with cultural services is strong, with the Mackay Entertainment and Convention Centre (8.0), library services (7.9) and Sarina Sugar Shed (7.9) receiving high ratings. However, community festivals and events (7.3) and art galleries and museums (6.8) recorded slightly lower satisfaction.

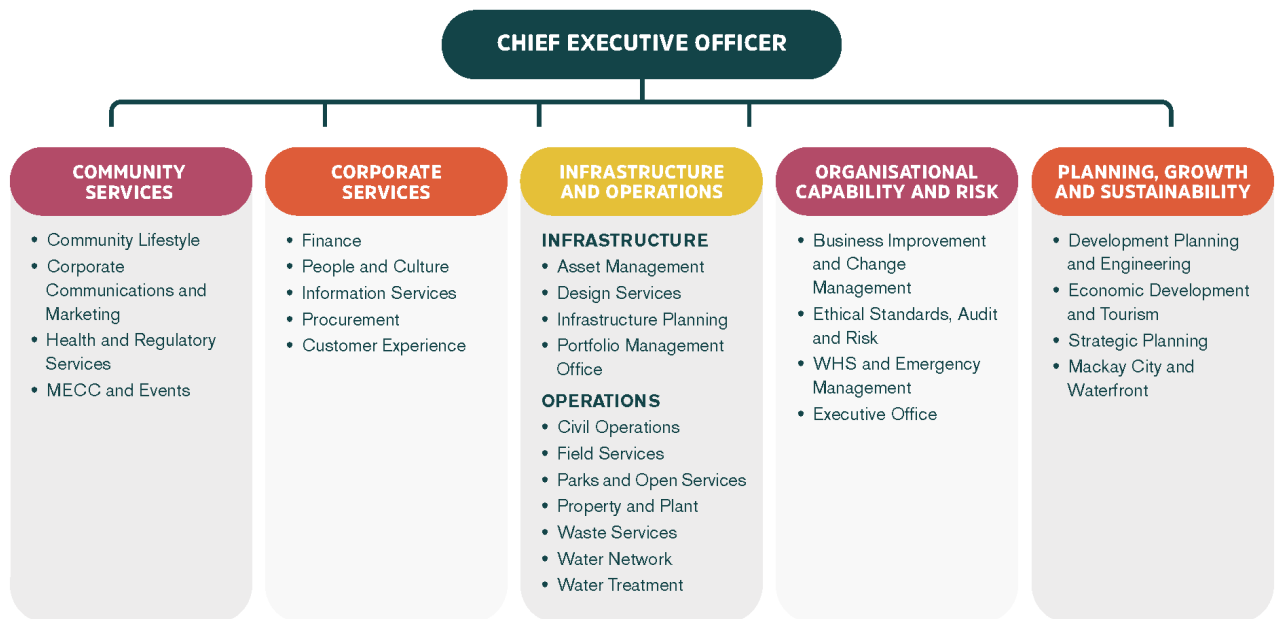
In the social services space, support for multicultural, Indigenous and South Sea Islander groups (7.4) and community sport and recreation groups (7.3) remains strong, while youth services and community centres were rated slightly lower, indicating areas for improvement.

These results provide valuable insights for Council's ongoing efforts to enhance service delivery and maintain a positive workplace culture, ensuring both employees and the community receive the best possible outcomes.

Source: "Community Perceptions Survey 2023 Report" – prepared by Mackay Regional Council.



**CORPORATE
STRUCTURE**





Living in the Region



Housing

Mackay offers a diverse range of housing options, from modern waterfront apartments and suburban family homes to rural properties with ample space. The region boasts a relatively affordable housing market compared to major cities, making it an attractive choice for families, professionals and retirees. With ongoing development and infrastructure investment, residents enjoy well-planned communities, easy access to amenities and a relaxed coastal lifestyle.



Educational Facilities

Mackay offers a strong education network, with a wide selection of public and private primary and high schools providing quality learning opportunities. The region is home to CQUniversity Mackay, which offers a range of undergraduate, postgraduate and vocational courses, supporting career development across various industries. TAFE Queensland also provides hands-on training and apprenticeships, equipping students with practical skills for the workforce.



Healthcare

Mackay provides comprehensive healthcare services, with a network of hospitals, medical centres and specialist clinics ensuring quality care for residents. Mackay Base Hospital is the region's largest public hospital, offering emergency services, surgical care, maternity and specialist treatments. Private healthcare is also well-supported through Mater Private Hospital Mackay, which provides a range of surgical and medical services. Numerous general practitioners, allied health providers and specialist clinics operate throughout the region.



Living in the Region



Shopping & Dining

Mackay offers a diverse shopping and dining scene, blending well-known retail brands with unique local businesses. Caneland Central and Mount Pleasant Centre are the region's major shopping hubs, featuring a mix of national retailers, supermarkets and specialty stores. The city centre and surrounding precincts are home to boutique shops, weekend markets and artisan stores showcasing local produce and crafts. Dining options range from relaxed cafés and waterfront restaurants to vibrant bars and international cuisine, with a strong focus on fresh seafood and regional flavours.



Sports & Recreation

Mackay is a haven for sports and outdoor recreation, offering a wide range of activities for all ages. The region is home to numerous sporting clubs and facilities, catering to football, rugby, cricket, netball, tennis and more. The Mackay Aquatic and Recreation Complex and BB Print Stadium provide state-of-the-art venues for both community and professional sports. Outdoor enthusiasts can explore the region's picturesque parks, walking trails and national parks, while the nearby Whitsunday Islands and Eungella National Park offer world-class fishing, hiking and wildlife experiences.



Getting Around

Getting around the region is easy, thanks to Mackay's well-connected transport network. The city has a reliable public bus service operated by Mackay Transit Coaches, providing transport across key suburbs and business districts. Mackay Airport serves as a major gateway to the region, offering regular domestic flights to Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne, with connections to other destinations. The Bruce Highway and Peak Downs Highway provide direct road access to surrounding towns and major centres, while an extensive network of walking and cycling paths enhances local travel options.

Discover Mackay



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 Candidate Profile on [page 6](#)



Evaluation Process

Leading Roles and Mackay Regional 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. Mackay Regional Council may elect to undertake further interviews as required.

Preferred / shortlisted applicants may be required to undertake psychometric assessments to assist in understanding the working preferences and attributes and potential fit to the role. You will also be required to undergo a criminal history check, VEVO “right to work” check as well as financial probity checks.



Indicative Timeframes



Applications Open

- Week Commencing Monday 12 May 2025



Applications Close

- 5:00 pm Monday 9 June 2025



Initial Assessment

- Week Commencing 9 June 2025



Council Interviews

- Week Commencing 23 June 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



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