

**Mayor Peter Riseley
District Council of Robe
PO Box 1
ROBE SA 5276**

22 August 2016

Dear Mayor Riseley

Re: FINAL REPORT – Chief Executive Officer Annual Performance Review – 1/5 Years

I have pleasure in submitting my final report on the 12 month Performance Review of the Chief Executive Officer for the District Council of Robe, Mr Roger Sweetman.

The Review has been undertaken in accordance with the previously agreed performance criteria with 6 of the 7 Council Members and the Chief Executive Officer willingly participating in the process of which I wish to acknowledge and extend my appreciation.

The Performance Review is an important opportunity to measure the performance of the Chief Executive Officer over the preceding 12 months and to establish Key Performance Indicators for the ensuing 12 months. It also assists Council in assessing their roles and performance for the ultimate benefit of the Community.

I recognise the value of this opportunity in assisting the District Council of Robe throughout this performance assessment and I look forward to continuing our association.

Yours sincerely



John Coombe OAM
Director
John Coombe Consulting

John Coombe OAM

John Coombe Consulting ~ Specialising in Local Government

9 Park Terrace Strathalbyn SA 5255
E: jlccac@hotmail.com
M: 0417 813 570
F: 08 8536 8501
ABN: 93 893 052 173



John Coombe Consulting

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW
CONFIDENTIAL REPORT

1/5 YEARS

**ROGER SWEETMAN
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DISTRICT COUNCIL OF ROBE**

SEPTEMBER 2016

John Coombe OAM

John Coombe Consulting ~ Specialising in Local Government

9 Park Terrace Strathalbyn SA 5255

E: jlccac@hotmail.com

M: 0417 813 570

F: 08 8536 8501

ABN: 93 893 052 173



CONTENTS

- CONTENTS3
- 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY4
- 2 BACKGROUND.....5
- 3 METHODOLOGY6
- 4 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER PERFORMANCE REVIEW SUMMARY.....7
 - 4.1 LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT7
 - 4.2 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT8
 - 4.3 ECONOMIC & FINANCIAL DEVELOPMENT9
 - 4.4 PRESENTATION, PUBLIC RELATIONS & RELATIONSHIPS..... 10
 - 4.5 PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES..... 11
 - 4.6 WORKPLACE HEALTH & SAFETY 11
 - 4.7 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 12
- 5 GENERAL COMMENT 13
- 6 DISCUSSION WITH ADMINISTRATION & FIELD STAFF 14
- 7 DISCUSSION WITH OTHER PERSONS 14
- 8 OBSERVATIONS 15
- 9 EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT 15
- 10 TOTAL EMPLOYMENT COST (TEC) PACKAGE 16
- 11 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR SUGGESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION 16
- 12 RECOMMENDATIONS..... 17
- 13 APPENDIX 1 - SURVEY SUMMARY 18

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Chief Executive Officer of the District Council of Robe, Mr Roger Sweetman, has undertaken his CEO Performance Review in accordance with the requirements as contained within his Employment Agreement. The Council has engaged the services of an independent consultant in John Coombe OAM of John Coombe Consulting to assist council in the performance review process.

A Performance Review Survey was agreed to and distributed to all Elected Members and the Chief Executive Officer to complete and return. One survey was not completed and returned by an elected member. In addition, the consultant undertook interviews and discussions with the Mayor, some Elected Members, the Chief Executive Officer, selected Administration and Field Staff together with other respected persons who could add further value to the process.

Having regard to the survey responses from the Elected Body, the Chief Executive Officer has performed to almost an Outstanding Level: while the Chief Executive Officer believes he has almost performed to a Highly Satisfactory Level (conservative in the consultants' view).

From the interviews with the Administration, Field Staff and other persons, the Chief Executive Officer is held in high esteem for his professional competence, leadership and passion for his council and community.

The consultant will be recommending that the Chief Executive Officer be informed of his successful Annual Performance Review which has been almost at the Outstanding Level; and that Council look forward to this high standard of performance and achievement being maintained and exceeded where possible over the ensuing 12 months and beyond.

The consultant will be recommending that the Chief Executive Officer be informed of his successful Annual Performance Review which has been almost at the Outstanding Level; and that Council look forward to this high standard of performance and achievement being maintained and exceeded where possible over the ensuing 12 months and beyond.

2 BACKGROUND

The District Council of Robe is one of the oldest towns in South Australia and is situated on the southern shores of Guichen Bay.

In 1802, the bay was named after Admiral de Guichen by French explorer and cartographer, Nicholas Baudin.

The town of Robe owes its name to Major Frederick Holt Robe, who was Lieutenant Governor of the Province of South Australia in 1846, the year of Robes' foundation.

The District Council of Robe was proclaimed on 28 October 1869 and comprises an area of 110,576 hectares of prime grazing and cropping land over aquifer, renowned terra rossa over limestone soil, freshwater lakes and estuaries, coastal dunes, rugged cliffs and family beaches. Robe's natural beauty and climate make it an ideal holiday destination.

The residential population of Robe is around 1500 and swells to in excess of 15,000 during the tourist season.

The future of Robe as outlined in the Council Strategic Plan is to build upon the history and culture of the town, to ensure the town and district grows and prospers in a way that celebrates its history while providing services and opportunities into the future.

THE DISTRICT COUNCIL OF ROBE A COUNCIL THAT LISTENS TO ITS COMMUNITY



3 METHODOLOGY

The Elected Body of the District Council of Robe is responsible for the appointment of the Chief Executive Officer.

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the appointment and performance assessment of all other council employees within the Budget and Annual Business Plan of the District Council of Robe.

The agreed structure of the Performance Review was designed to ensure transparency and inclusiveness against the CEO's Employment Agreement and Position Description.

A meeting with Council was held from which a survey document was agreed to and distributed to Elected Members and the CEO to enable an accurate measurement of the CEO's performance. Some Elected Members have expressed a view that the survey document was too detailed; this can be subject to discussions and amendments in the lead up to the next CEO Performance Review.

It is pointed out that the survey content did have regard to the CEO's Employment Agreement and Position Description and any departure from this process will have to be by mutual agreement.

A draft copy of the consultant's report was presented to the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer inviting comments on content and accuracy; with the final report presented to the Mayor for distribution to the Elected Members and the Chief Executive Officer.

The consultant will speak to the report at a Council Meeting on 13 September 2016 when a confidential meeting will be held with Elected Members in the first instance to openly discuss the process, report and recommendations.

The Chief Executive Officer will then be invited to join the meeting to make comment on the Performance Review Report and respond to any questions from Council and the consultant.

The Chief Executive Officer has willingly provided support and information as requested.

It will be recommended the report remain confidential.

Further, that a Community Communique be distributed via a press release highlighting the Council's achievements over the last twelve months, incorporating the successful performance and leadership provided from the Chief Executive Officer and his team.

The consultant has met with some administration and field staff to discuss their views on the leadership and performance of the Chief Executive Officer. Comments have also been invited from other persons to gain a concise and overall appreciation of the status of the Chief Executive Officer within the organisation, community and local government.

Confidentiality has been respected.

4 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER PERFORMANCE REVIEW SUMMARY

Under each of the subheadings the average of the Elected Members scores and that of the Chief Executive Officer will be presented together with any comments. Appendix 1 will list the individual ratings.

4.1 LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT

The Elected Members average for this section of the survey was **4.31** with the Key Performance Indicator average being **3.93** which overall means the CEO has performed to a highly satisfactory level (**4.12**)

Comments from Members:

- Council may need to review its performance against strategic management plans at more often intervals.
- The CEO and staff are working to ensure the assets and resources of council are properly managed and maintained.
- There were some expressions of surprise that the Enterprise Agreement was signed off without Councils' knowledge and comment.
- The CEO always has the council's areas future development as a priority and is a proactive person.
- The office of the CEO is open to the public at all times and the response is always prompt.
- Asset management, control and maintenance is a high priority.
- The CEO is vigilant in running a well organised office.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Consultation may be wide but it is sometimes not as effective as it could be e.g. walking trails and beach access.
- It appears the principles of good human resource management are being adhered to.
- The CEO provides the appropriate amount of information to allow elected members to make informed and concise decisions.
- Community consultation could be improved by procuring a community development or engagement officer.
- The CEO assures a work environment that recruits, retains and supports staff.
- The CEO leads, controls and takes full responsibility for council's operations and decisions.
- Comment for consideration: How can the council best communicate to its ratepayers when 60% are absentee owners.

4.2 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Elected Members average for this section of the survey was **4.04** with KPI's being **3.52** which overall means the CEO has performed at the higher end of a satisfactory level (**3.78**).

Comments from Members:

- The CEO always appears to be involved in community affairs.
- Council have had criticism in the past concerning tenders but this appears to being better managed. It is now transparent and fair.
- The CEO is Proactive in seeking grants and regularly engaging groups in promoting the local area.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Tourism promotion comes primarily from tourism operators.
- More awareness from community stakeholders of council's plans.

4.3 ECONOMIC & FINANCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The Elected Members average for this section of the survey was 3.95 with the KPIs' being 3.88 which means the CEO has performed almost to a highly satisfactory level (3.92).

Comments from Members:

- The CEO is hampered at times by the hesitancy of some councillors to fund and resource preliminary work for "project ready" items.
- The CEO is constantly vigilant for external funding opportunities.
- Robe is indifferent in obtaining grants and outside funding. An expression was received to have the CEO more active in this field.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Improvements made in adopting a more disciplined approach in managing council's finances. There is a legacy of overspending on projects e.g. marina entrance.
- Council is still unsuccessful in obtaining grants although this is at times external to council's control.
- With the adoption of the asset management plan high level cost efficient asset management will be achieved.
- The CEO is constantly comparing actual costs to budget.
- The CEO carefully monitors projects to ensure it does not exceed budget and to inform council members of problems as they arise.
- A contrary view was the CEO rarely informs council of budget changes due to overruns.
- The CEO manages council's tight budget very well – with the assistance from the deputy.

4.4 PRESENTATION, PUBLIC RELATIONS & RELATIONSHIPS

The Elected Members average for this section of the survey was **4.54** with the KPI's being **4.21** which means the CEO has exceeded the highly satisfactory level (**4.38**).

Comments from Members:

- The CEO has very good relationships with staff and Elected Members.
- Works as a team member with staff and Elected Members.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Council needs to communicate its role and let the community know in advance of its planned activities.

4.5 PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

The Elected Members average for this section of the survey was **4.23** which means the CEO has exceeded the highly satisfactory level.

Comments from Members:

- The CEO has good working relationships with unions and workplace representatives.
- Attention to detail can be lacking at times, while another view was the CEO is diligent to detail and pursues quality in accomplishing tasks. A further view was that members are not always given all necessary information and not always correct information.
- The CEO is a very encouraging and supportive executive manager and is available anytime and is genuinely interested in any ideas Elected Members suggest.
- The CEO enables co-workers to grow and succeed through feedback, instruction and encouragement.
- The CEO respects and maintains confidentiality and adheres to a set of care values that are represented in decisions and actions.

4.6 WORKPLACE HEALTH & SAFETY

The Elected Members average for this section of the survey was **4.78** which means the CEO has exceeded the highly satisfactory level.

Comments from Members:

- The CEO is very mindful of his responsibilities under Workplace Health & Safety.

4.7 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

This question sought members and the CEO's view on what three (3) KPI's he should be measured against over the next twelve (12) months.

Comments from Members:

- Adhere to the council Tender Policy.
- Forward planning / strategic planning.
- Cost containment / cost saving initiatives.
- Community consultation, development and well-being. Keeping the community well informed, encouraging development which compliments the character & heritage of Robe. Providing relevant services and facilities and support to improve the communities well-being.
- Master Plan 20/40, ensure the 20/40 master plan is implemented.
- Climate change and environmental sustainability. Support awareness and activities that effect climate change and encourage the community to better manage the environment.
- Financial management and adhering to budgeted goals.
- Promotion of council business and grant applications.
- Maintain and promote good field work practices (increased productivity from outside workforce).

There were comments from two (2) members who said they had not seen the CEO's Employment Agreement.

It is the consultants understanding all elected members were provided with an opportunity to obtain a copy of the CEO's contract.

Comments from the CEO:

- Develop and implement a communication strategy that enables council to communicate with all its community members (including non-resident and rural) using all available technologies.
- Facilitate the commemoration of the towns Chinese history in a manner that is respectful and maximises the economic advantages of Robes unique historical connection with China.
- Complete and commence implementing Council's Beach Access Strategy.

Consultant Comments:

The adoption of Key Performance Indicators is to enable the CEO to achieve outcomes relevant to identified council priorities. It is well recognised that measurements against KPIs' requires the use of the SMART methodology: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely.

The establishment of KPIs' should be mutually agreed to ensure maximum commitment and effort.

Having considered the comments from Elected Members and having regard to survey responses, the following KPIs' are suggested for discussion and agreement from all parties.

- There appears to be a dis-connect with how council engages and consults with absentee property owners. Given the high percentage the council has in this category a valid and pertinent KPI for the CEO to address.
- The consultant is not privileged as to the significance of the Chinese relationship with the District Council of Robe however supports the KPI as suggested by the CEO.
- A review of the Organisational Structure to identify where changes need to be made and where resources need to be allocated to achieve financial and cost benefit outcomes to council's operations and service delivery.
- Review the Council agenda structure and content.

5 GENERAL COMMENT

The following General Comments were received from Elected Members in no order of priority:

- The CEO needs to ensure that elected members are supplied with all facts on various issues as at times this has been lacking e.g. not aware of caravan park to remain unoccupied after cliff collapse.
- The CEO needs to reduce the amount of unnecessary information and attachments which form part of the council agenda.
- The CEO needs to ensure the council priorities align to the various strategic plans.
- Concerns about council not being briefed and informed before sign-off to the latest Enterprise Bargaining Agreement. While it may be a good outcome, it is asked why elected members were not more engaged in the full process.
- The CEO regularly joins in on the council debate and tries to influence the outcome.
- Recommendations are sometimes confusing and are then reversed - not adequately considered.
- Little confidence in the CEO Performance Review process.
- Too many questions in the survey.
- The CEO has done a great job given pressures from within and outside of Council.

ENTERPRISE BARGAINING AGREEMENT QUALIFICATION

The consultant was informed that the CEO received Council's delegated authority to negotiate a new enterprise agreement.

The CEO kept Council informed through workshops on the progress.

6 DISCUSSION WITH ADMINISTRATION & FIELD STAFF

Meetings were held with representatives from the administration and field staff and provided an opportunity to assess the leadership qualities and direction of the Chief Executive Officer.

Confidentiality has been respected.

The persons in discussions with the consultant for the CEO performance review offered a willing and invaluable overview of their perception of Council's status under the Chief Executive Officer's leadership and direction. In no order of priority:

- The CEO is trusted and is good to work with and always makes himself available to provide advice and guidance.
- The CEO is approachable, patient and has an "open door" policy.
- The CEO is involved in his community, is respected and is viewed as a good advocate for council and the community.
- The CEO is viewed as having a good working relationship with the Mayor and Elected Members.
- The CEO is a big picture ideas person.
- The CEO is hard working and contributes good experience and local government knowledge.
- The CEO empowers others, is a team player and gives good positive direction while promoting staff development.
- The CEO encourages change for the right reasons.
- The CEO could be more decisive at times rather than seemingly taking a softer approach.

7 DISCUSSION WITH OTHER PERSONS

Discussions were held with other people in positions of interest, offering opinion on their perception of the Council's effectiveness under the leadership of the Chief Executive Officer.

These views are respected and valued and relate to Finance, Legal, Government and Chief Executive Officer colleagues. In no particular order or priority, the following was offered:

- The knowledge and experience of the Chief Executive Officer has been a huge benefit to the council.
- The CEO is a Strategic Executive and innovative in his thinking.
- The CEO is viewed as providing good quality advice to the council and in turn the community.
- The CEO is working to ensure the council has a sustainable and prosperous future.
- The CEO is always looking at how the council can gain a better advantage through regional partnerships.
- The CEO appears to have a good working relationship with the Mayor and Elected Members.
- The CEO participates and contributes to local and regional affairs and provides good leadership to the Marina Advisory Board.
- There are no issues with the council auditing process and Council is in a good financial position although there is a need to address some accumulated infrastructure work.
- The CEO is passionate and is viewed as a good advocate for Council and the community.
- Open, up front and realistic the CEO is prepared to do the "hard yards".

8 OBSERVATIONS

In considering all of the feedback received through this performance review process there is strong support for what the CEO has been able to do for the Council and in turn the community.

He has brought his wealth of local government knowledge and experience which has helped to re-position Council as a relevant and vibrant community leader.

The challenges and demands have been significant, but it is acknowledged the Chief Executive Officer has provided quality leadership, direction and vision at an important time in the life of the District Council of Robe and the community.

There is no doubt the council will continue to face many challenges, however with the Chief Executive Officer strongly committed the future looks very positive.

Having adopted the Long Term Financial and Asset/Infrastructure Plans, one of the challenges for Council is to invest in the maintenance of its accumulated asset/infrastructure work.

Having raised the bar, the Chief Executive Officer faces the challenge for both himself and Council to ensure it continues to be at the higher end of professional excellence.

9 EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT

The Elected Body and the Chief Executive Officer need to be mindful of the importance to be compliant with the various clauses in the Chief Executive Officer's Employment Agreement. Any Elected Members who have not viewed the agreement should make appointments with the CEO.

The following is a checklist of the relevant clauses of the agreement concerning this review process:

- A review of the Chief Executive Officer's performance will be conducted annually.
- The Chief Executive Officer's Total Employment Cost (TEC) Package is to be reviewed annually and any review shall not result in a decrease in the package.
- The package review will have regard to the agreed criteria upon which the CEO's performance is assessed in accordance with the performance review process, and movements in the annual CPI (all groups Adelaide) and the increase and movement in executive salaries within local government.
- Any variation to the TEC Package must be approved by the Council.

11 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR SUGGESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

The Chief Executive Officer has a comprehensive responsibility to provide leadership and support to the council which extends to the community. The Chief Executive is governed by legislation, an Employment Agreement and Position Description against which he will be performance assessed.

In addition to this, the mutually agreed Key Performance Indicators require the Chief Executive Officer to achieve certain outcomes that he will be measured against.

The consultant refers members to section 4.7 of this report concerning Key Performance Indicators.

Having regard to all responses to the survey, the following are suggested as worthy KPIs', to be agreed on for the ensuing twelve months:

1. Develop and implement a communication strategy that will enable council to communicate and engage with all members of its community, having particular regard to non-resident and rural ratepayers.
2. Develop a plan which will in a timely and financially responsible manner address the backlog maintenance required on council's assets and infrastructure.
3. Undertake a workforce planning study to identify skills and expertise across the organisation thereby ensuring no disadvantage is experienced through staff changes and retirements.

|

|

13 APPENDIX 1 - SURVEY SUMMARY

The following is a summary of the responses received from the Elected Members and Chief Executive Officer to the Performance Review Survey.

	Leadership & Management		Community Development		Economic & Financial Development		Representation, Public Relations & relationships		Personal Attributes		Workplace Health & Safety		Key Performance Indicators		Comments
	Survey	KPI	Survey	KPI	Survey	KPI	Survey	KPI	Survey		Survey				
Councillor 1	3.8	3.4	3.7	3	3.25	3	4	3.75	3.6		4.2				
Councillor 2	3.7	3.6	3.5	4	3.63	3.57	4.25	3.75	3.56		4.67				
Councillor 3	6	5.6	6	4.6	6	6	6	5.5	6		6				
Councillor 4	3.25	3	3	2.33	3.33	2.57	4	3.75	2.71		4.8				
Councillor 5	4.8	4.4	3.75	3.2	3.25	3.71	4.75	4.5	5		5				
Councillor 6	4.3	3.6	4.25	4	4.25	4.43	4.25	4	4.5		4				
COUNCILOR AVERAGES	4.31	3.93	4.04	3.52	3.95	3.88	4.54	4.21	4.23		4.78				
Chief Executive Officer	3.9	3.6	3.75	3.2	3.5	3.71	4	4	4.1		4				