

homeworking. A suitable council location will be identified in the contract of employment as their contractual work base.

- **Homeworking** - Employees in posts categorised as suitable for homeworking may work the majority of their contracted hours at home, with less frequent attendance in the office than hybrid workers. They will not be required to work from home but may take the opportunity to work from home.
- **Mobile working** - Employees in posts categorised as suitable for mobile working will spend much of their weekly contracted hours out in the community, returning to the workplace or homeworking as necessary to complete required admin tasks or plan work.

42. The council has advised that each of the four workstyle categories provide relevant council staff with some opportunity for home working. Employees must complete a homeworking risk assessment when applying to work from home. This is then assessed by their line manager who will decide on suitability for home working.

43. The council has not completed a formal assessment of the benefits of its approach to flexible working. However, council services have a range of performance indicators in place to monitor performance, service quality and adherence to service standards. Individual service performance is scrutinised at the West Lothian Assessment Model (WLAM) panels chaired by the council's Chief Executive and reported to the council's Performance Committee. Quarterly service performance is reported to each Policy, Development and Scrutiny Panel. The council has a biennial employee survey, with the next one due in Autumn 2024, and some of the questions will be used to seek feedback from staff on the council's flexible working arrangements.

The council recognises the importance of employee engagement, which it has incorporated into its People Strategy

44. The People Strategy 2023-2028 established the importance of regular and meaningful engagement with employees. As part of this, it published an employee engagement guide which includes an employee engagement schedule detailing the types and frequency of engagement.

The employee survey only had a response rate of 26 per cent and the council is focusing on activities to improve participation rates for the employee survey in 2024

45. The council last completed an employee survey in September 2022, with the next one due to place in Autumn 2024. The employee survey only had a response rate of 26 per cent, which is lower than the 50 per cent achieved for the 2018 survey and the target of 75 per cent that the council had set for 2022.

46. The 2020 survey was postponed due to the pandemic and the council has advised that the results of the 2022 survey are reflective of anecdotal feedback of staff survey fatigue following regular 'pulse surveys' throughout the pandemic. The council is undertaking further work to improve participation rates