

council's current workforce profile, future workforce requirements and how it will manage change and communicate with its workforce.

- The council has introduced several Information Technology (IT) systems and digital developments that have delivered workforce benefits and increased productivity, for example, the council has used Robotic Process Automation (RPA) to upgrade its Customer Relationship Management system, this has automated repetitive tasks, and streamlined workflows leading to improved processing times, increased productivity and reduced administrative tasks for council staff.
- The council recognises the benefits of agile working and accommodates flexible working arrangements. The council updated its flexible working policy in February 2024, and to support its approach each council post has been categorised as being suitable for one of the following work styles, fixed working, hybrid working, homeworking and mobile working.
- The council continues to face recruitment and retention challenges with staff, and its proximity to Edinburgh and Glasgow can make it difficult to compete with private organisations to attract and recruit professional staff. The council has developed several solutions to deal with gaps in resources and difficulties in recruiting for posts.
- The council has set targets to monitor and report on progress against the four outcomes in its People Strategy 2023-2028 which are progressed under the direction of the HR programme board. An annual update on progress will be reported to the Corporate Policy and Resources Policy Development Panel and published on the council website. The council has extensive workforce data reporting to the Corporate Management Team (CMT), Executive Management Team (EMT) and the Corporate Policy and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel (PDSP), which is made up of Elected Members.

**84.** The audit recommendations made in this report, with the management responses, are included in [Appendix 1](#) of this report.

## **Follow up of Best Value thematic recommendations from previous years**

**85.** The thematic work for 2022/23 required auditors to carry out an overview of the effectiveness of council leadership (officers and elected members) in developing new local strategic priorities following the elections in May 2022. West Lothian Council provided an update on our recommendations and these can be found in [Appendix 1](#).