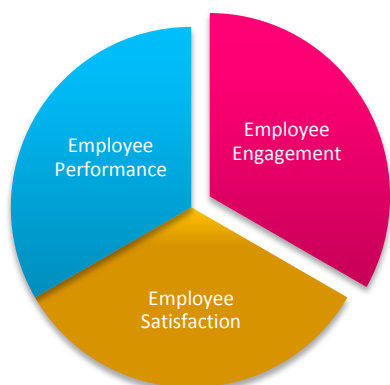


## **Employee Engagement and Effective Communication**

The council's People Strategy establishes the importance of regular and meaningful engagement with employees in ensuring that the council is regarded as a great place to work and where people:

- make a difference
- feel valued and rewarded
- feel supported and committed
- are encouraged to be flexible and innovative
- are able to embrace change
- feel confident and capable



The council recognises the part that good two-way communication and effective day to day leadership and management play in engaging with and motivating the workforce.

To ensure that core communication standards and arrangements are in place throughout the council, a structured employee communication and feedback schedule based on the following three over-arching themes has been developed:

- **Council Culture and Values**
- **Supportive Leadership**
- **Consistent Communication Standards**

The schedule is set out in the attached appendices and should be regarded as a core framework to supplement normal day to day good leadership and management practice.

### **Council Culture and Values**

The council's culture and values are important because they define what kind of organisation we strive to be. They represent a commitment to abide by a set of principles that guide employees in the way they work, the decisions they make and how they behave towards others in the course of their duties.

The values are:

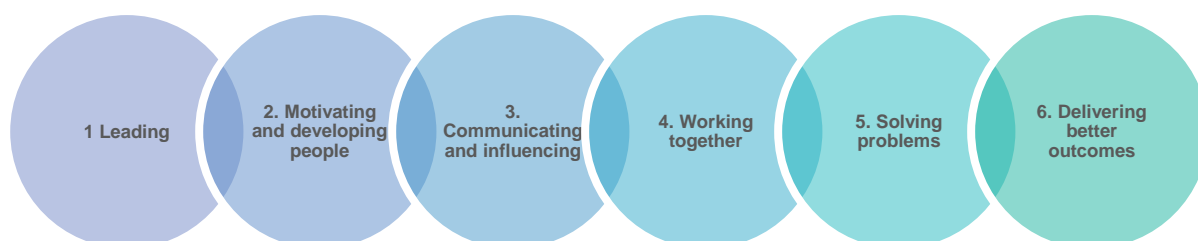
- Focusing on our customers' needs
- Being honest, open and accountable
- Providing equality of opportunity
- Developing employees
- Making the best use of our resources
- Working with other organisations

The council aims to develop a supportive culture that reflects the values above and provides a healthy and supportive working environment for all employees.

### **Supportive Leadership**

The council places great importance on developing supportive leadership skills throughout the organisation. Supportive leadership places an emphasis on developing and building capacity at all levels in the council to improve services and performance through effective employee engagement, support and continuous improvement.

The key supportive leadership skills are:



These reflect the leadership and management style being developed across the council and form the basis on which leadership and management performance is assessed and developed.

## Consistent Communication Standards

There are key standards and practices that will apply to all council employees to ensure that information is managed appropriately and that our colleagues have the right information at the right time.



### Required Communication Standards for all Employees

- **Actively support and participate in all communication processes and activity**
- **Provide accurate and timely information**
- **Provide information in the way that meets peoples' needs**
- **Support open, two-way dialogue within the council**
- **Evaluate the effectiveness of my communication as part of my annual performance review**
- **Share good practice amongst my peers and colleagues**

## Mandatory Communication Processes

There are a range of communication processes available to managers and employees that ensure information sharing and an effective two-way dialogue between colleagues (see appendix 1).

The mandatory processes that all services must observe are outlined below.

Mandatory Communication Processes		
Corporate processes	Description	Minimum Frequency
Management team meetings	Scheduled meetings held between the Head of Service and service managers to discuss key issues and updates	Fortnightly
Team meetings	Scheduled meetings held between the service manager/team leaders/team coordinators and employees to discuss operational issues and updates	Monthly
One-to-Ones	Scheduled and ad hoc meetings held between a line manager and employee to allocate work, monitor progress, discuss issues relating to performance and support needs	Monthly
Employee performance reviews	Scheduled and meetings held between a line manager and employee to discuss work progress, issues relating to performance and development and support needs	Annually – with six-monthly progress meeting

## Appendix 1: Employee Engagement Schedule

**Mandatory process** ✓ Standard communication route ✓\* Standard communication route for remote staff

Corporate processes	Purpose	Examples	Minimum Frequency	Employee Level Targeted	Communication Route				
					Face to face	Telephone	Email	Internet	Written
Management team meetings (mandatory process)	1. Communicate updates on key strategic and operational issues 2. Monitor implementation of appropriate plans and actions 3. Provide a forum for a two-way dialogue and support between colleagues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Executive and Corporate Management teams</li> <li>■ Corporate, Housing and Operational Services Directorate management team</li> <li>■ Social Policy Management team</li> </ul>	Monthly	Management structure (senior officers and managers)	✓				
Team meetings (mandatory process)	1. Communicate updates on key service issues 2. Monitor implementation of appropriate plans and actions 3. Provide a forum for a two-way dialogue and support between colleagues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ HR Services team meeting</li> <li>■ Corporate, Housing and Operational</li> </ul>	Monthly	Services (WLAM units) and teams	✓				
One-to-Ones (mandatory process)	1. To allocate work and monitor progress 2. Discuss issues relating to performance 3. Provide a forum for support and discussion between line manager and direct report		Monthly	Individual employee	✓	✓*			

Corporate processes	Purpose	Examples	Minimum Frequency	Employee Level Targeted	Communication Route				
					Face to face	Telephone	Email	Internet	Written
Employee performance reviews  (mandatory process)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formal review of work performance and progress on work plans</li> <li>Review of targeted development and performance outcomes</li> <li>Discussion on support requirements</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PRPDP</li> <li>Appraisal</li> <li>CPD</li> </ul>	Annual – with six-monthly progress meeting	Individual employee	✓				✓
Workplace briefings	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Structured cascade of information relating to key council and/or service decisions affecting employees and service provision.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delivering Better Outcomes briefings</li> <li>Management Plan briefing</li> <li>Manager briefings</li> </ul>	As required	Services (WLAM units) and teams	✓		✓		✓
Email	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate updates and key messages</li> <li>Share information and documents</li> <li>Provide confidential and/or sensitive information to a select audience</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>eNewsletters</li> </ul>	As required	Depend on nature of content - all employees or individual employee			✓		
Online content	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to online services and information</li> <li>Communication of plans, policies and events</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>West Lothian Council website</li> <li>WLC intranet</li> <li>Mytoolkit.net</li> </ul>	As required	All employees with access to internet/ intranet				✓	
Employee Newsletters	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate key information to a wide range of people</li> <li>An alternative source and format to provide information</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inside News</li> <li>West Lothian Bulletin</li> <li>Word on the Street</li> </ul>	According to agreed pre-determined cycles	All employees			✓	✓	✓

Corporate processes	Purpose	Examples	Minimum Frequency	Employee Level Targeted	Communication Route				
					Face to face	Telephone	Email	Internet	Written
Publications	1. Communicate key information to a wide range of people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Leaflets</li> <li>■ Payslip inserts</li> <li>■ Posters</li> </ul>	As required	All employees			✓	✓	✓
Employee Surveys <i>(mandatory process)</i>	1. Improve understanding of employees' needs, in relation to their management and development 2. Identify improvements for appropriate intervention/action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Annual employee survey (representative sample)</li> <li>■ Active Health at Work survey</li> </ul>	Annual	Individual employee	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Focus Groups	1. Improve understanding of employees' needs, in relation to their management and development 2. Consult with representative groups of employees on particular issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Policy development focus groups</li> <li>■ PRPDP review focus groups</li> </ul>	As required	Groups of employees	✓				

## **Appendix 2: Example of SMT Agenda and Action Note**

Data Label: INTERNAL



**West Lothian**  
Council

*Name* Services Management Team Meeting

### **Agenda**

*Date – Month – Year – Time*

*Venue*

1. Matters arising from previous minute
2. Update from senior management team meeting (*EMT, CMT, etc*)
3. Service/Team Updates
4. Health & Safety
5. Compliance
6. AOCB
7. DONM

Name Services Management Team Meeting

**Action Note**

*Date – Month – Year*

Present: Name, Name, Name, etc

Apologies: Name, etc

The items for action and the allocation of that action are listed below.

Item	Title	Action	Responsible Officer	Completion Date
1.	Matters Arising			
2.	Update from senior management team meeting ( <i>EMT, CMT, etc</i> )			
3.	Service/Team Updates			
4.	Health & Safety			
5.	Compliance			
6.	AOCB			
7.	DONM			