

Hybrid Working at LLDC

Presentation to Strategic EMT

s40 – Workplace Experience Manager

20/3/2023



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Success in a hybrid work environment requires employers to move beyond viewing remote of hybrid environments as a temporary or short-term strategy and to treat it as an opportunity.

- George Penn, VP at Gartner

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Hybrid Working at LLDC

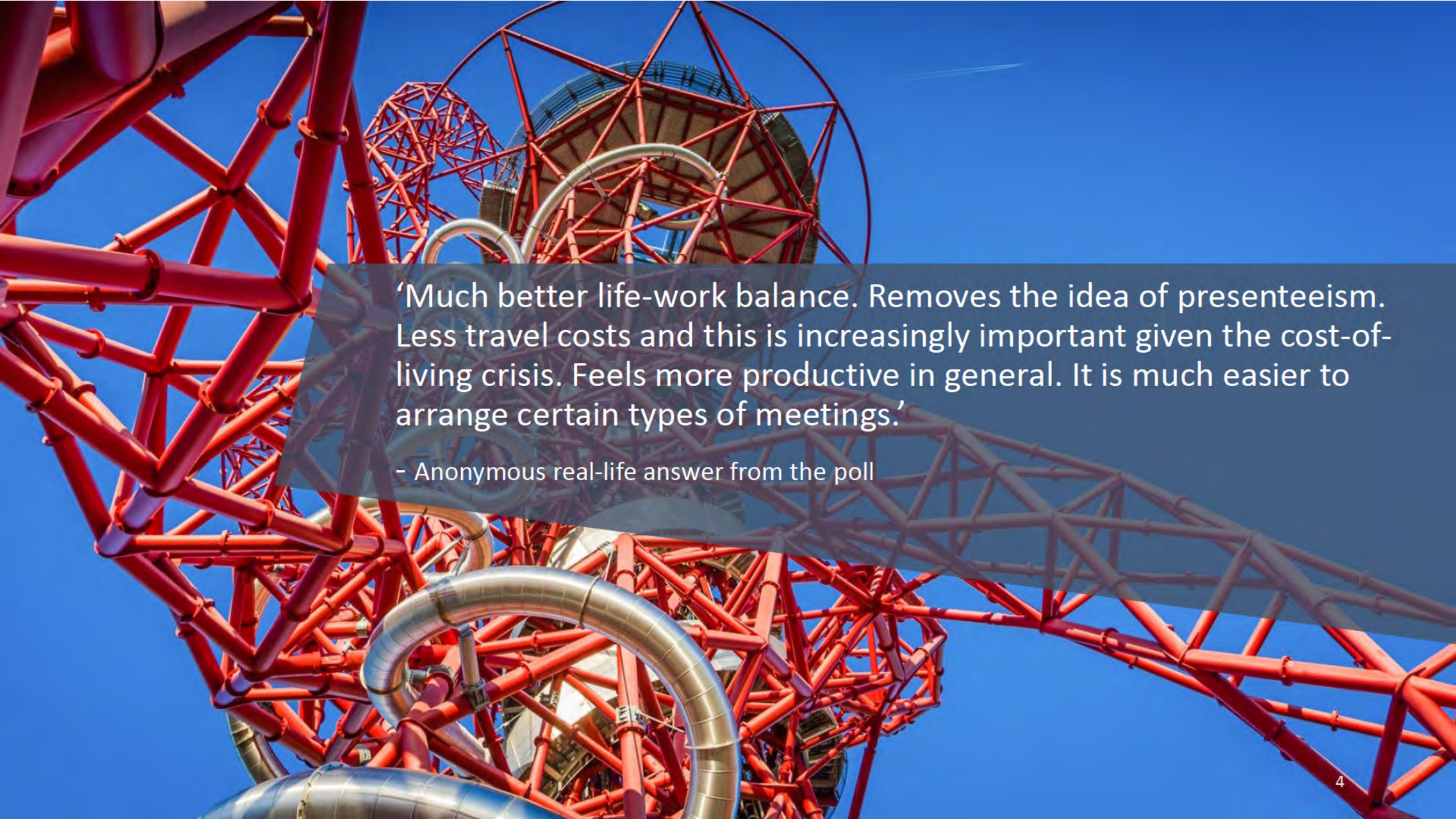
- Following the extended period of remote working as a result of the Covid-19 Pandemic, LLDC moved to a hybrid working model in late 2021. Initially there was some reluctance to come to the office for various reasons, but in April 2022 the organisation moved to a new office space, reducing the number of desks available and updated its guidance on Hybrid Working.
- Current expectation is that LLDC Employees are to work at least 40% of their contracted hours in the office or other park location.

Our employment contracts state

Place of Work Your normal place of work will be the location named above (5ES) but you may from time to time be required to travel or work at different locations for the proper performance of your duties. The Legacy Corporation reserves the right to require you to relocate to any other location within Greater London.

Flexible Working The Legacy Corporation seeks to provide employees with the opportunity to work flexibly in order to maintain a good work life balance and to recognise and appreciate employee's responsibility outside work. Flexible working pattern proposals will be considered, and will be subject to the organisation needs of the Legacy Corporation.

- **Today SEMT are asked to review the results and make a recommendation to EMT on the future of Hybrid Working at LLDC** - The review has been defined following data received from an all colleague poll administered through ParkLife which garnered 64 responses, along with supplementary feedback from POD Partners following discussions with Directorates and broader market research.



‘Much better life-work balance. Removes the idea of presenteeism. Less travel costs and this is increasingly important given the cost-of-living crisis. Feels more productive in general. It is much easier to arrange certain types of meetings.’

- Anonymous real-life answer from the poll

Poll results, directorate feedback and research – the highlights

Q 1- What do you think works well when thinking about hybrid working?

- The overwhelming takeaway from the poll was that people really like hybrid working and want it to continue. There is no desire to return to the 'old way'. External research from Disruptive HR has shown that less than 2% of people dislike hybrid working. In addition, it's well documented that being in the office all the time can lead to loss of talent. When recruiting, remote and hybrid working opens up a wider talent pool.
- It's clear that people enjoy the flexibility afforded to them by working in a hybrid fashion. Work/life balance and wellbeing was mentioned a number of times as a key positive.
- Time and money saved on commuting was a big bonus for many.
- Having a directorate day works well for many teams.
- The IT equipment works well for remote working and many people are now used to this style of working.

Poll results, directorate feedback and research – the highlights

Q 2 - What do you think doesn't work so well when thinking about hybrid working?

- There are mixed opinions on the technology available to us. Some think it works very well and others think it needs upgrading. There could be an element of education needed so our people can get the very best out of the technology available to them.
- Tech on 10th floor doesn't work for hybrid meetings. (Note, this is being upgraded at the end of March)
- There is a disparity in consistency between teams, which is to be expected as LLDC consists of so many different types of roles. Some people suggested that within their team there wasn't much flexibility in which days they were supposed to be in the office. Others say they miss seeing colleagues from other teams.
- Productivity levels in the office are lower with many people on teams meetings which could be done from home.
- There were some requests for more guidance on hybrid working and hybrid meetings. Some people found it was difficult being on a hybrid meeting when working remotely with discussions in the office taking precedence over those on the screen.
- Many think the office is well appointed, but feel more they get more done at home / remote. Some note that coming to the office can be productive in other ways, though travelling in to sit on teams meetings feels counter-productive.

Poll results, directorate feedback and research – the highlights

Q3 - Do you have any suggestion as to how LLDC can better facilitate and support this new way of working?

- The vast majority of people think that the current expectation works well for them. However, outside of this, there are extreme opinions on both sides. Some thinking that LLDC should be a lot more flexible with more remote working, and others believe that attendance in the office should be mandated and tracked. Ideally we need to find a balance between the two, retaining a firm expectation but also empowering managers to make decisions regarding their teams that benefit both LLDC and the employee.
- Many teams have a 'team day' and the second day (if applicable) is fairly relaxed. Some teams report that they don't always know if people will be in which can cause some issues when planning meetings.
- It's reported that people are fairly lax when planning office days, with questions around whether there is a need to be more prescriptive about office attendance.
- Some think LLDC should be clearer on the expectation of people being in the office for a meeting or event - being clear it is not always a choice.
- Making it clear managers and junior staff should be making time to be in the office together.

Points to consider before making recommendation

- EMT's view is that 40% is a minimum requirement. If this is way we move forward, how will it be managed?
- A major benefit to all roles being in the office for at least 40% of the time, is the learning and development opportunities that can be found by mixing with colleagues - particularly for those starting out in their careers or mid career.
- In addition to the above point, our connection to the Park and community we serve should remain at the forefront, therefore fully remote working would not be appropriate.
- LLDC business need should come first, so if an employee is required to attend the office for a specific reason, they should plan accordingly rather than chose their own preference / convenience.
- If we do not insist that people come in to the office at least 40% of the time (outside of those with a flexible working arrangement), resentment could build from those teams who do stick to the 40% towards those teams who don't.
- It's important that managers feel empowered to make decisions regarding their teams, and able to be flexible if this is required.
- It is well documented that high performing teams are built on a foundation of trust, ensuring everyone feels valued and understood. Feeling like attendance is being policed at work erodes this trust and can lead to resentment and ultimately, loss of talent. Having flexibility and autonomy over working hours can be a major factor in someone's overall experience at work and should not be underestimated.

Results

Based on this review, 40% office or Park location attendance is right approach for LLDC.

SEMT to agree and make recommendation to EMT

- Does LLDC need to be more explicit with this requirement and begin to mandate / track what days people come in? Note - We are unable to accurately track office attendance using either technology or other means, any tracking would need to be done locally.

Or

- Does LLDC need take a more flexible approach, allowing people to come in when they feel it has purpose and value? For example, one designated team day per week and any other time to be decided by the employee.
- Should the approach to hybrid working be applicable to everyone (including contractors) or managed locally by directorate – (will this cause resentment?)?

Next Steps

- Recommendation from SEMT to be taken to EMT.
- Communication to the wider business about the results.
- Hybrid Working guiding principles and guidance on what hybrid really means to be reviewed and re-issued. To include guidance on hybrid meetings.
- Upskilling people managers will help ensure effective management of colleagues in a hybrid world. Therefore there should be a Management Forum discussion around how to manage teams, ensure equitable treatment such as avoiding proximity bias, including case studies and knowledge sharing on best practice.
- Keep hybrid working under constant review measuring against business need and employee feedback, whilst ensuring alignment with wider GLA family.