

# Communities of Interest Committee

## Minutes of the 5th Regular Meeting (Paleochori, 26 June 2024) / Q2 2024

### Basics:

Date / Time:	Wednesday 26 June 2024, time 17.00, duration ~4 hours
Place:	Paleochori, Hellas Gold Community Office
Subject:	5th Regular Meeting of the Communities of Interest Committee

### Participants:

Nr	Name	Title	Gender	Election	Present	Comments
<b>A Local Society</b>						
1	LC Representative	Stratoniki – President of LC	M	YES	YES	
2	MC Representative	Aristotle Vice Mayor – Member of MC	M	YES	YES	
3	LC Representative	Arnea – President of LC	F	YES	YES	
4	MC Representative	Member of MC – President of Municipality's Education Committee	F	YES	YES	
5	Local Association Representative	Arnea – Professionals' Association	M	YES	YES	
6	LC Representative	Varvara – President of LC	M	YES	YES	
7	MC Representative	Aristotle Vice Mayor – Member of MC	F	YES	NO	
8	MC Representative	Member of MC – President of AXTADA	F	YES	NO	
9	LC Representative	Neochori – President of LC	M	YES	YES	
10	Local Association Representative	Megali Panagia – President of Cultural / Women's Association	F	YES	YES	
11	LC Representative	Megali Panagia – President of LC	M	YES	NO	
12	LC Representative	Paleochori – Member of LC	F	YES	YES	Representative of LC
13	LC Representative	Olympiada – President of LC	M	YES	YES	
14	LC Representative	Stratoni – President of Women's Association	F	YES	YES	Representative of LC President
15	LC Representative	Stagira – President of LC	A	YES	NO	
<b>B Hellas Gold</b>						
1	CSR dpt Representative	Hellas Gold - CSR dpt	M	-	YES	
2	CSR dpt Representative	Hellas Gold - CSR dpt	M	-	YES	
3	CSR dpt Representative	Hellas Gold - CSR dpt	M	-	YES	
4	CSR dpt Representative	Hellas Gold - CSR dpt	F	-	YES	
5	Procurement dpt Representative	Hellas Gold - Procurement dpt	M	-	YES	Ad hoc participation
6	HR dpt Representative	Hellas Gold - HR dpt	F	-	YES	Ad hoc participation

C	Organisation - Coordination					
1	Pavlos Atheneos	Sympraxis	M	-	YES	

It is clarified that representatives of the City Council and the Presidents of the local Communities emerged after the Local Government elections of October 2023.

The representatives of the Associations are members of the Board of the respective association and have been elected following an internal election process.

It is clarified that Ms. Despina Palpani, representative until recently of the President of Paleochori village, has decided to to withdraw due to personal and family issues. Following a decision of the President, Mr. Katsiarmas, she was replaced by the elected member of the local council, Mr Dimitris Tzioutzoumis.

(Listed in alphabetical order by category)

- From the Local Society, 11 out of 15 members were present.
- From the CSR Department of Hellenic Gold, all 4 members were present.
- In addition, 2 members from the Procurement and Personnel Departments participated on an ad hoc basis.
- Organisation and coordination by an executive of Sympraxis.

## General comments:

- Most Commission members were present or represented. Participation rate 73%.
- The meeting was held in a very good atmosphere, it was productive, and the participation of all members was active and constructive.
- Not all subjects on the agenda were discussed, as the first ones took longer than expected. The subjects not discussed were carried over to the next meeting of the Commission.
- The next meeting is scheduled through September 2024.

## Meeting Agenda:

1. Presentation of Community Investment Plan (CIP) & Investment Strategy (not discussed, carried over to the next meeting)
2. Grievance Mechanism: Statistics, communication channels, effectiveness, etc. (not discussed, carried over to the next meeting)
3. Election of new representatives of Professional / Women's / Cultural Associations - Expansion / Additions of new members (discussed 3rd)
4. Supporting Parallel Development / Local Entrepreneurship - SIROLI Listening Tour: update on the purpose of the visit, opportunities & expected outcomes (not discussed, carried over to the next meeting)
5. Human Resources Department: Recruitment processes, available jobs, statistics, etc. (discussed 2nd)
6. Procurement Department: Development of local vendors, bidding procedures for contractor/supplier contracts (compliance and audit by HG), etc. (discussed 1st)

3 of the 6 topics were discussed and the order of discussion was different due to availability and weight: 6,5,3 (topics 1,2 and 4 were carried over to the next meeting).

## Minutes of the meeting:

### 1. Procurement Department: Development of local vendors, bidding procedures for contractor/supplier contracts (compliance and audit by HG)

- The representative of the Procurement Department of Hellas Gold (responsible for Stratoni, excluding Skouries project) presented in detail the way the procurement and evaluation of contractors, materials and services is carried out by the company, the relevant procedures, policies, criteria, etc.
- He also referred to the obligations and commitments of the company's contractors.
- He emphasized that each contractor or supplier must adhere to specific environmental, social and Health & Safety standards, in accordance with the company's policies.
- He also confirmed that every effort is made to ensure the maximum percentage of local partners.
- The presentation used at the meeting, with all the detailed information, will be distributed electronically to the committee's members for easier study. Also, Hellas Gold welcomes any questions or requests for clarification.

### Notes and comments:

#### 1.1 Suppliers' register

- The Committee members raised the need to improve supplier information on procurement notices and to invite all local suppliers to submit tenders.
- Discussion revealed that the company's local supplier lists need updating, which affects proper communication. The representative of the Procurement Department advised that this issue has been identified and in order to address it, a special supplier registration form has been created by the company. Each prospective supplier will have to enter their details in this form in order for them to be entered into the Procurement Department's database and used in the future for the correct updating of notices.
- The link to the above form is provided through the presentation that will be distributed after the meeting. However, for the convenience of local communities, it was also decided to create a special letter containing the information, along with an electronic link and QR code leading to this form. This letter will be sent to members of the Committee and to all Professional Associations operating in the area of interest. Committee members were asked to support by circulating this letter to any interested parties.

#### 1.2 Material failure - failure to meet specifications

- Members of the Committee, who are also employees of the EC, reported cases of procurement of materials that did not meet specifications, with the result that the materials purchased turned out to be unsuitable.
- The importance of the evaluation of materials by the workers using them was also stressed.
- The representative of the Procurement department explained that the specifications are defined and checked by the relevant department of the company ordering and receiving the material. In the event that the specifications of the material delivered do

not match those of the order, the department must inform the Purchasing Department to make the appropriate arrangements.

- In any case, this matter is an internal company procedure and does not involve local communities.

### **1.3 Skouries project contractors**

- Questions and comments were raised regarding the contractors at Skouries.
- The representative of the Procurement Department clarified again that his department does not have responsibility for the Skouries project, it is handled by another department that was not present at this meeting.
- Committee members requested that a corresponding representative be present at the next meeting. It was noted that an effort will be made to have a representative from the Skouries project present at a future meeting of the Commission.

## **2. Human Resources Department: Recruitment procedures, available jobs, workforce statistics, etc.**

- The representative of the HR Department of Hellenic Gold (responsible for the selection and recruitment of personnel for the company) presented in detail how the process of search, evaluation and selection of personnel up to recruitment is carried out. All relevant procedures, policies and criteria were presented and discussed at length.
- It was clarified that the procedures presented relate to recruitment by Hellas Gold (HG) itself, but not those carried out by the company's contractors. It was also stressed that efforts are being made to establish specific criteria to be followed by contractors.
- Reference was made to the employee (of HG & contractors) grievance reporting procedures and whistleblowing procedures of HG. The importance of these and the controls for employee grievance reporting by contractors' employees were discussed at length.
- The presentation used at the meeting, with all the detailed information, will be distributed electronically to the Committee's members for easier study. Also, Hellas Gold welcomes any questions or requests for clarification.

### **Notes and comments:**

#### **2.1 Improper or illegal actions by contractors in relation to staff**

- Cases of contractors not properly paying workers' wages, not properly declaring workers and their working hours, etc. were reported by Committee members.
- Company representatives responded that any action or policy that is contrary to law or company policies is reprehensible and will be dealt with immediately. It was clarified that when evaluating bids for a contract, in addition to the evaluation of the financial bid, an evaluation of social performance, environmental performance and health and safety performance is carried out. In addition, it was pointed out that spot checks of contractors on labor issues are carried out.
- The importance of the Employee Internal Reporting Mechanism was re-emphasized, where any employee, whether belonging to Hellas Gold or any contractor and supplier, can make a complaint and trigger an immediate audit.

- It was also clarified again that the complaining employee is protected by the company's policies, has no reason to fear retaliation, and there is always the possibility of filing an anonymous complaint.

## **2.2 Future recruitment at Skouries**

- Committee members raised the need for proper preparation for the recruitment of personnel at Skouries, once the construction phase is completed.
- The representative of the Personnel Department explained that the recruitment plan is already being planned. Reference was also made to the training plan, with the aim that when the time comes for recruitment there will be staff available with the appropriate training.

## **2.3 Aggregated list of available vacancies at Hellas Gold and contractors**

- The Committee members praised the Company's new approach to regular updates on available jobs at Hellas Gold, which is carried out through the cooperation of the CSR and HR departments.
- In addition, the possibility of aggregated access to available contractor positions was suggested by the Committee members.
- The representative of the Human Resources Department replied that the possibility of aggregating the available positions, possibly on a common platform, or at least aggregating the relevant contractor contacts responsible for recruitment, is already being considered.

## **2.4 Recruitment of people with disabilities**

- Members of the Committee suggested that the emphasis should be on the recruitment of people with disabilities / vulnerable groups, as required by the relevant legislation.
- The representative of the Personnel Department replied that there is already a relevant criterion in evaluation and that, in general, every effort is being made in this direction.
- A representative of the CSR Department of the Company asked the members of the Committee, if they know a person with disabilities in their community, to encourage them to visit the Community Centre in Paleochori or to get them in contact with the CSR Department staff by phone, so that they can receive assistance and information about the possibilities of support.
- On this occasion, it was mentioned that in case of persons from vulnerable groups who wish to do so, there is a possibility to contact exclusively a female representative of the company.
- The Committee members mentioned a case of a disabled person from the area of interest, who was supported by the company at the request of the local community. For this, they expressed thanks and congratulations to the company and requested the continuation of this policy.

## **2.5 Locality criterion for employees, 90/10 quota**

- Members of the Committee raised the need for the locality criterion in recruitment to be respected, both by the company and its contractors.
- On the other hand, concern was raised by members about the difficulty of finding sufficient and qualified staff locally. As an indication, the lack of both scientific staff and

specialists locally (plumbers, electricians, welders, etc.) was mentioned, which inevitably leads to non-fulfilment of the quota.

- In order to exploit all the recruitment opportunities locally, the representatives of the CSR department of the company asked the Committee members to remind all interested parties of the possibility to be informed about the available jobs through the company's website and in person at the Community Centre in Paleochori.
- In addition, they advised that there is now a permanent display at the Paleochori Centre's showcase displaying this information, along with a QR code for easy access by mobile phone.

## **2.6 General impression, conclusions**

- In general, Committee members were positive about the company's recruitment procedures and criteria as presented.
- Some points for improvement were still identified, which were recorded, and the Personnel and Procurement departments are already working on them.
- A key issue appears to be the management of labor issues by contractors rather than by the company itself. It was clarified that the company is making every effort to ensure that its policies and current legislation are adhered to and is continually looking for ways to facilitate and make this work more effective. It also has and utilizes mechanisms to monitor and evaluate labor issues through periodic inspections, which are accompanied by a corresponding action plan.

## **3. Election of new representatives of Professional / Women's / Cultural Associations - Expansion / additions of new members**

- In accordance with the Communities of Interest Committee rules of procedure, local Association representatives will need to be replaced by the next meeting of the Committee (local Association participation is scheduled on a rotating basis, every six months). Thus, it was agreed that in place of the representatives of the Arnaia Professionals' Association and the Megali Panagia Culture and Women's Association, the representatives of the Megali Panagia Professionals' Association and the Stratoni Women's Association will participate for the next six months.
- In addition, it was agreed to add an additional member to the Committee, who will represent vulnerable social groups. The company's efforts to recognize additional vulnerable social groups operating in the area were highlighted. Following this effort, two associations in the process of being established and one already established were recognized. It was therefore suggested that the already established association should participate until the establishment of the others is completed. It was agreed that a representative of the Paleochori Youth Association should participate. Finally, it was agreed to add as a new member the Special Advisor to the Mayor of Aristotle.
- The above new members will participate in the next meeting in September 2024.

### General remarks and comments made outside the agenda:

- There was extensive reference by Committee members to the terms of the Collective Labour Agreement (CBA) under discussion.
- The members of the Commission mentioned the adverse effects of the proposed changes on the pressure, psychology and performance of workers, on the risks of accidents and on the quality of life of workers and their families.
- They stressed the direct link between the extended shifts and the local economy and development (impact on the operation of local businesses) and the local society itself, and whether they lead to the alienation of members of the communities from each other.
- They also stressed the importance of the company's agreement with employees in maintaining a positive climate between the company and the local community, as well as social peace and prosperity.
- The company members noted that the Collective Labour Agreement (CBA) is currently under negotiation and the details of the discussions are not known. For this reason, they could not express an opinion on its outcome, stressing their wish for a successful outcome for both sides.

### Next steps (until the next meeting):

	Task	Time	Responsible
1	Send the minutes of the meeting and supporting material (presentations, data, etc.) to the Committee members.	July 2024	Sympraxis, Hellas Gold
2	Send the special letter regarding the registration of suppliers in the company's special database to the members of the Committee and the Professional Associations of the area of interest.	July 2024	Sympraxis, Hellas Gold
3	Study material, record comments/observations.	Upon receipt	Committee members
4	Inform communities, contact with local stakeholders, Local Councils. Discussion, recording public views. Liaise with HC representatives where appropriate.	By next meeting	Committee members
5	Communicate information on procurement procedures and supplier registration to all stakeholders in each Community.	Ongoing	Committee members
6	Communicate information on company recruitment to all stakeholders in each Community.	Ongoing	Committee members
7	Communicate information to persons with disabilities and members of vulnerable groups in each Community on how to contact the company's CSR department.	Ongoing	Committee members
8	Inform and encourage employees and community members to make use of the Reporting System.	Ongoing	Committee members
9	Update on the procurement and management of Skouries project contractors.	Next meeting?	Hellas Gold - Procurement
10	Intensification of contractor audits (supplies, personnel), continuation of search for more effective control methods.	Ongoing	Hellas Gold - Procurement - HR dpt
11	Update on the progress of a possible new system (e.g. platform) to announce available jobs from contractors.	As soon as there is a relevant development	Hellas Gold - HR dpt
12	Submit proposed items for discussion at the next meeting.	Until the next meeting	Committee members
13	Compile and develop proposed agenda for next meeting.	August-Sept. 2024	Sympraxis, Hellas Gold
14	Contact members, finalize time & place of next meeting, invitation, agenda.	August-Sept. 2024	Sympraxis, Hellas Gold
15	Implementation of next meeting.	September 2024	Sympraxis, Hellas Gold