



## Policy and Scope

This report sets out how the directors of Gist Ltd (the “company”)(together the “Board”) and the Board’s senior management team, of which the directors are members (“Senior Leadership Team”) has complied with the requirements of section 172 Companies Act 2006 and how these requirements have impacted their decision making during 2020.

# Gist Ltd Strategic Report for the Year Ended 31 December 2020

**Company number: 00502669**

## **Section 172 Companies Act 2006**

The Board and Senior Leadership Team recognises the importance of stakeholder engagement in delivering the long-term and sustainable success of the company. When making decisions, particularly of a strategic nature, the directors have regard to the likely long-term impact of those decisions and also their responsibilities and duties to stakeholders.

The company’s key stakeholders are its ultimate parent company, Linde Plc, its employees, customers, suppliers, the communities in which it operates and the environment. Views of stakeholders are gathered by the Senior Leadership Team and fed back to inform the decisions made in Senior Leadership Team meetings. The stakeholders are impacted by, or benefit from, decisions made by the Board and Senior Leadership Team in different ways.

Board and Senior Leadership Team members receive training on their duties and this is refreshed on an ongoing basis as necessary.

The following section outlines how the company engages with, and has regard to, each of its stakeholder groups and the key decisions made during 2020.

### **Linde Plc**

We maintain regular dialogue with our ultimate parent company, Linde Plc, through regular meetings and monthly reporting to ensure that the company and its operations remain aligned with the Linde plc group strategy and to inform on all aspects of the company’s performance, delivery of strategy, material initiatives and company news.

### **Employees**

People are our most important asset within Gist. Our employees are key to our vision of working in long-term partnership with our customers to develop and transform their supply chain, and to delivering a consistent, high quality robust service delivery.

The strategic priorities of the Senior Leadership Team during 2020 were strongly influenced by the Covid-19 pandemic (“Covid”). This included the health, wellbeing and safety of employees and their families, customers and the local community. In line with Government advice, employees were instructed and equipped to work from home and, where, for the majority of our employees based at site this was not possible, the Company employed social distancing and other comprehensive health and safety measures.

Covid-19 support policies were introduced, including self-isolation pay, furlough for those extremely vulnerable employees and access to mental health support.

During 2020, as part of Gist's transformation programme, a full review of services provided by our central support functions and ways of working was initiated, to ensure responsibilities, structure and headcount were aligned to support the company's long term business priorities. Affected employees received comprehensive communication and support, before, during and after the consultation period. Feedback and questions through the consultation process, influenced the Senior Leadership Team's post consultation considerations and shaped the final outcome around the provision and structure of central services within Gist.

The Senior Leadership Team's ongoing priorities across the workforce, including those on permanent contracts, temporary contracts and agency staff include:

- Ensuring all the workforce within Gist have the skills, knowledge and training to perform their roles safely and effectively
- Embedding Gist's 'ways of working', culture, vision and values throughout the organisation
- Ensuring all key positions are filled with the best person for the job

The safety of Gist's employees (and other stakeholders) are reviewed as a standing item at each Senior Leadership meeting, with a rolling safety program targeting attitude, behaviours and specific risk workstreams.

The Senior Leadership Team regularly communicates with and engages its employees through regular briefings, internal company wide emails, regular newsletters, website updates, social media and circulation of printed material for site notice boards. During 2020, a new electronic media platform was introduced into the organisation, allowing use of corporate wide and site specific news and messages to be shared across all sites.

The annual anonymous employee survey was undertaken during 2020 to allow employees to provide feedback and suggestions for improvement. The survey was tailored around Covid to assess colleagues' well-being, support and understanding of Covid protocols. The results of the survey enabled the Senior Leadership Team to take targeted local and companywide action where required, taking into consideration suggestions from the survey.

Regular visits from the Senior Management Team, ensure that employees are provided with the opportunity to ask questions, and understand how their role influences the success of the business and for the Senior Management Team to offer their support. During Covid lockdown periods, visits between the sites were limited to essential travel only. Instead, direction and support continued to be provided through regular calls and alternative methods of on-line communication.

Both recruitment, and performance management across Gist have been developed around a set of critical performance requirements, that are linked to the Gist standard and vision. All job descriptions, interview packs, periodic performance reviews and key performance indications are based around these and ensure a consistent approach to recruitment and performance management, and a high calibre of people within the company.

The Senior Leadership Team believes cultural change is supported by the 'tone at the top', and as such, new vision and values were developed during the latter half of 2020 and formally launched to the organisation in early 2021. Workshops were held with employee working groups during 2020, initially to assist in the development, and subsequently, to validate Gist's new vision and values.

Cultural change activities, such as behavioural safety workstreams were also initiated during 2020 and are underpinned by the new values.

### **Customers**

Our customers include major UK Food Retailers, Food Suppliers and Food Services and are primarily in the food industry. They rely on Gist to run all or part of their complete supply chain, and our expertise and supplier partnerships allow us to meet these needs.

Members of the Senior Leadership Team are in regular communication and meetings with key customers and to ensure that their views and plans are reflected and fed into the planning and decision making process.

### **Suppliers**

Communications, including electronic meetings, with key suppliers are ongoing, to review performance and ensure there is a fair value proposition for both parties.

### **Pension Scheme Trustees**

Meetings are held with the trustees of our pension scheme. On a periodic basis, directors annually brief the trustees on the company prospects and performance. During 2020, the company communicated regularly with the Gist Limited Pension Scheme (GLPS) trustee, as part of the GLPS and BOCPS merger activity. The company shares, and invites comments from the scheme trustees, where relevant on employee pension related communications.

### **Community**

Gist supports corporate social responsibility programmes and is committed to giving back to the communities in and around the sites we operate, in part through our National Child Road Safety Programme and Community Volunteering programme.

The Gist Road Safety Programme has been running since 2011 and continues to deliver road safety education to local schools across the UK. Our community volunteering programme encourages employees to get involved in a variety of projects, from transforming gardens and outdoor spaces to visiting local schools to provide reading support. During 2020, there were limited opportunities to run our regular programmes due to Covid restrictions. Our local teams provided remote support through the creation of short child road safety videos which are available for use by schools.

Employees at Gist's sites are encouraged to arrange local community activities, and these are frequently reported across the company wide communication channels.

### **Environment**

As a logistics company, over 90% of our emissions are associated with transportation. During 2020, the Senior Leadership Team worked closely with employee working groups, with representatives from engineering, transport and warehousing, to develop an environmental strategy and roadmap, that is expected to be launched across the organisation in early 2021.

Gist has an ongoing priority to pioneer leading environmental initiatives, such as the efficient use and design of vehicles, reducing fuel consumption and emissions. Our Environmental strategy has six focus areas, which includes minimising our emissions and consumption of energy and water, as well as increasing the use of renewable energy.

Gist was an early adopter of Euro 6 vehicles and the use of electric/ hybrid/ dual fuel CNG diesel vehicles.

The Senior Leadership Team has initiated an investment programme at some of the company's older sites during 2019, to replace our warehouse refrigeration systems utilising high Global Warming Potential (GWP) gases with new zero GWP refrigeration systems. These provide a more energy efficient, lower carbon output and result in electricity savings and a reduction in the company's overall environmental impact. This project was successfully completed in early 2020.

***End.***