



# PERFORMANCE EVALUATION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF AKHALTSIKHE IN 2020

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## INTRODUCTION:

Transparency International Georgia assessed the activities carried out by the City Council of Akhaltsikhe municipality (Hereinafter Akhaltsikhe City Council) in 2020.

The report is based on the information requested and received from the City Council as well as the information published on the official web-site of the City Council, and on observations of our organization.

The research covers the period of 2020.

Transparency International Georgia [evaluated](#) Akhaltsikhe City Council's performance in 2020 as well. The study covered the period from November 2017 to 2019.

## CHAPTER 1. MAIN FINDINGS

- Akhaltsikhe City Council exercised a weak oversight of the executive body and the legal entities founded by the municipality. The City Council, in most cases, formally controlled the activities of the officials and certain agencies accountable to it;
- The City Council or its factions/commissions have not hosted the representatives of the executive body for discussion of any type of issues;
- The City Council of Akhaltsikhe has not identified a single case of the conflict of interests, incompatible activities, violation of the Rules of Procedure of the City Hall and the norms of ethics;
- In 2020, the City Council held 14 sessions and discussed 78 topics given in the agenda. 64 issues passed through voting and all of them were adopted without any changes;
- Five standing commissions of the City Hall held 36 sessions and discussed 65 issues, including 62 issues that were brought in for voting and the members of the City Council adopted all of them unanimously, excluding one. A single issue, which was refused by the commission and was returned to the City Hall addressed the establishment of a new N(N)LE (Non-Profit Non-Commercial Legal Entity). However, this topic was brought back by Mayor of Akhaltsikhe at the last extraordinary session at the end of the year (without discussing it at the sessions of commissions and bureau) and the members of the City Council adopted it unanimously, while not asking a single question regarding it;
- 21 out of 33 members of Akhaltsikhe City Council have not exercised the right to speech at any sessions of the City Council. They have not provided their thoughts and have not provided reports, either;
- 5 out of 18 public officials of Akhaltsikhe City Council have submitted incomplete asset declarations;
- None of five active factions operating at the City Council have submitted initiatives. A total of GEL 178,934.4 was expended for the activities of factions.

- In 2020, the Gender Equality Council has not carried out the analysis of the legal acts nor has it provided the expertise on the draft legal acts. It has not elaborated the monitoring and evaluation system for ensuring gender equality and has not prepared propositions and recommendations as well;
- During the research period, the members of the City Council were absent 136 times during 14 sessions of the City Council, out of which 126 absences were without a valid reason. The members of the City Council were absent 122 times during 36 sittings of the commissions, including only 2 absences - with a valid reason;
- A total of GEL 636,711.02 was allocated for the expenses of Akhaltsikhe City Council. GEL 555,098.77 was spent on the remunerations;
- The City Council consumed 36,045.87 litres of fuel in a single year with a total value of GEL 64,681.26. The largest portion of it was spent by the Chairman of the City Council - 4,739.68 litres (with a total value of GEL 8,052.32).

## CHAPTER 2. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE CITY COUNCIL OF AKHALTSIKHE

The City Council of Akhaltsikhe is the representative body of Akhaltsikhe Municipality, which exercises the powers determined by the Local Self-Government Code in Akhaltsikhe Municipality. The City Council also exercises control on the activities of the executive body and its officials within the limits established by law and carries out other powers determined by the Constitution of Georgia, other legislative acts, and the Rules of Procedure of the City Council.

The City Council of Akhaltsikhe has 33 members, 18 of whom were elected in local single-mandate majoritarian electoral districts, while 15 were elected through the proportional system.

The opposition parties have a total of 5 members at the City Council, including 3 from European Georgia and 2 from the United National Movement. All five of them were elected through the proportional system.

There are only 7 women among members of the Municipal Council. Among the female members of the Council, 5 are the public officials.

The City Council has the authority to create commissions for the purpose of preparing issues for the City Council, facilitating the implementation of decisions, and exercising control on the structural units of the City Hall and legal entities established by the City Council.

The City Council of Akhaltsikhe has created the following 5 commissions for the duration of its term of office:

1. Commission on Legal, Mandate and Ethics Issues - Chairman - Vladimer Kurtanidze;
2. Commission on Finance-Budget Issues - Chairwoman - Manana Baliashvili;
3. Commission on Social, Culture, Education, Sport and Youth Affairs - Chairman - Ambartsum Baboian;
4. Commission on Property Management, Natural Resources and Agricultural Issues - Chairman - Besik Gogsadze;
5. Commission on Spatial-Territorial Planning and Infrastructure Issues - Chairman - Vasil Sisvadze.

There are 5 factions in the City Council:

<b>Faction</b>	<b>Chairperson</b>
Georgian Dream Democratic Georgia - Akhaltsikhe	Giorgi Gvaramadze
Developed Akhaltsikhe	Irina Gelashvili
Georgian Dream - Conservatives	Arutun Agababian
Georgian Dream - Industrials	Giorgi Beroshvili
Georgian Dream - Akhaltsikhe	Samvel Oveian

Each chairperson of every faction has a deputy chairperson, while the Chairperson of Georgian Dream Democratic Georgia - Akhaltsikhe faction has 2 deputy chairpersons.

In total, [18](#) of the 33 members of the Municipal Council of Akhaltsikhe are public officials.

### ***Sessions of the City Council:***

During the reporting period, 14 sessions of the City Council and 10 sessions of the Bureau have been held. None of the sessions were cancelled due to the lack of quorum. 4 out of 14 sessions of the City Council were extraordinary sessions.

In 2020, the City Council discussed 78 topics in accordance with the agenda and adopted 27 draft resolutions and 37 draft orders. Therefore, 64 issues have been brought forward for voting, while 14 issues have been taken into consideration. The Mayor of Akhaltsikhe, Zaza Melikidze, was the author of 26 draft resolutions, while the Commission on Legal, Mandate and Ethics Issues authored 1 draft resolution. The majority of the City Council supported all 64 issues.

The deputies [established](#) Akhaltsikhe Service Group N(N)LE unanimously. Despite the fact that the Legal Commission did not support this topic prior to bringing it forward at the session of the City Council and returned it back to the City Hall. The functions of municipal company - Ketilmotskoba LTD, which has been operating since 2017, was duplicated by establishing the new N(N)LE. Moreover, there is one more legal entity, Service LTD, with the same working profile. Despite these facts, the deputies voted in favor of establishing this new N(N)LE unanimously without asking a question on what three legal entities with the same working profile should do in the municipality.

21 out of 33 members of the City Council have [never provided their thoughts](#) and have not asked a question either.

Only 6 members of the City Council provided a report to the City Council, while 28 of them have never exercised this right during the whole year.

During one year, [only 4](#) out of 64 issues brought forward for voting at the City Hall were voted against by two members of the City Council from the ruling party: Manana Baliashvili voted against transferring the property to specific individuals by lease, while Ambartsum Baboian voted against the adoption of the municipality's privatization list and the privatization of a specific territory near the artificial lake, because of low price.

Akhaltzikhe City Council has forwarded 4 legal acts to the legal oversight body for the preparation of conclusions, the members of the City Council shared the remarks in all cases.

## CHAPTER 3. CHANGES MADE IN THE CITY COUNCIL OF AKHALTSIKHE

On May 22, 2020, one of the factions of the City Council - Georgian Dream - Greens, whose chairwoman was Tamar Gogoladze, [was dissolved](#). Two members of the faction, Archil Uchidze and Mkrtych Ginosian submitted their statements on leaving the faction. A faction could not continue to operate with a single member, according to the legislation.

On August 25, a new faction, Georgian Dream - Akhalsikhe [was created](#). Samvel Oveian was appointed as its chairman, while Archil Uchidze was appointed as his deputy. With creation of a new faction, an additional public official was added to the City Council of Akhalsikhe, because the abolished faction did not have the position of a deputy chairperson.

It should be noted that the Chairwoman of the dissolved faction, Tamar Gogoladze, was distinguished by her critical tone towards the Mayor of Akhalsikhe, Zaza Melikidze. Following the publishing of [a research](#) by Transparency International Georgia on alleged corruption activities of the Mayor of Akhalsikhe, Tamar Gogoladze was the only member of the City Council, who [protested](#) the above mentioned fact out loud during the sessions of the City Council and Commissions. She [declared](#) no confidence in the Mayor and considered the Audit of the executive body to be necessary.

Changes were made in one more faction at the City Council of Akhalsikhe: European Georgia - Movement for Freedom [changed](#) its name to Developed Akhalsikhe on November 12.

# CHAPTER 4. ACTIVITIES OF COMMISSIONS AND FACTIONS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

## Activities of the commissions of the City Council:

During the reporting period, five standing commissions of Akhaltsikhe City Council held 36 sessions. None of the sessions were cancelled due to the lack of quorum.

Number of Sessions of Commissions of the City Council				
Commission on Legal, Mandate, Procedure and Ethics Issues	Commission on Spatial-Territorial Planning and Infrastructure Issues	Commission on Finance and Budget Issues	Commission on Social Issues	Commission on Property Management and Natural Resources Issues
9 Sessions	8 Sessions	9 Sessions	4 Sessions	6 Sessions

65 issues have been brought forward for consideration on every session in total. Three of them were presented as a notice. 62 issues were put to a vote and 61 were adopted unanimously, however, the Finance and Budget Issues Commission made changes in one of these issues that addressed the draft budget of 2021 and 2021-2024 priorities.

The establishment of Akhaltsikhe Service Group N(N)LE was the only issue that was not adopted as in its initial form that was brought forward at the session of the Legal Issues [Commission](#). To the questions asked by the members of the commission: how would they differentiate the same functions of two legal entities with identical working profile (between Akhaltsikhe Service Group N(N)LE and Ketilmotskoba LTD), or why did they indicate the administrative building of Akhaltsikhe as an address of this new N(N) LE, where there is no available working space in any of its rooms, neither Eva Ivelashvili, the head of the Administrative Department of Akhaltsikhe City Hall, nor Guram Melikidze, the Deputy Mayor and Zaza Melikidze himself, the Mayor of Akhaltsikhe were able to provide the answers. Upon the request of the Mayor, the issue was not put to vote and returned back to the City Hall. However, this issue was brought forward by the Mayor at the last session of the year without discussing it at the bureau and the City Hall approved it unanimously.

Among five commissions, it was solely the Legal Issues Commission that presented a single draft legal act to the City Council. It should be noted that the Legal Issues Commission is the only commission at the City Council who has invited a specialist for the duration of the City Council's current term.

In total, all five commissions have prepared 57 conclusions on the compliance of the draft legal acts with the legislation that have to be taken into consideration by the City Hall.



Number of conclusions prepared by commissions on compliance of draft legal acts with the legislation				
Commission on Legal, Mandate, Procedure and Ethics Issues	Commission on Spatial-Territorial Planning and Infrastructure Issues	Commission on Finance and Budget Issues	Commission on Social Issues	Commission on Property Management and Natural Resources Issues
16	9	11	6	15

**Activities of the factions of the City Council:**

None of the five factions of the City Council of Akhaltsikhe have initiated an issue in 2020. They provided only two proposals: Arutun Agababian, the Chairman of the Georgian Dream - Conservatives faction, addressed the Commission on Spatial-Territorial Planning and Infrastructure on giving the stadium located in Ivrita the name of [Archil Tatunashvili](#) and the Chairman of the Georgian Dream - Industrials, Beka Jakeli, addressed the Commission on Spatial-Territorial Planning and Infrastructure on giving the Akhaltsikhe - Akhalkalaki highway the name of [Beka Jakeli](#).

Considering the minimum activity carried out by the factions, the expenditures incurred by Akhaltsikhe Municipality on its functioning – which amounted to GEL 178, 934.4 in total – are disproportionately large, specifically:

Expenditure on activities of the factions	
Telephone Communication	GEL 2 100.82
Cost of Fuel	GEL 27 228.32
Remuneration	GEL 149 605. 26

# CHAPTER 5. MONITORING OF THE BODIES ACCOUNTABLE TO THE CITY COUNCIL

According to the Local Self-Government Code, the city council has the powers to monitor the activities of the municipality's executive bodies and of their officials and to hear and evaluate their reports, and the mayor is accountable to the municipal council of the municipality and to the population.

The Mayor of Akhaltsikhe presented the report to the City Council on his activities of 2020 on December 14. The Head of the Finance-Budget Department of the City Hall, Gela Lomidze, presented the report on execution of the third quarter of the 2020 budget during the same [session](#). Both reports have been positively shared by the City Council.

The City Council sent [6 notices](#) to the City Hall during the review of the 2020 budget. Among other requests, the City Council asked for the reduction of articles addressing expenditures of the City Hall and the keep-up of roads. [According to](#) the information provided by the City Council, the City Hall partially shared the notices sent by the members of the City Council.

6 changes were made in the 2020 budget in total. The Mayor of Akhaltsikhe has authored all six of them;

The City Council, commissions or factions have not invited the representatives of the executive body for discussing any issues;

None of the members of the City Council have approached the officials of the executive body with a question;

The City Council has not called for the vote of no confidence of the Mayor. The City Council has not identified any type of misconduct, conflict of interests, incompatible activities within the work of the Mayor of Akhaltsikhe, including the process of state procurements;

**[A research](#) published by Transparency International Georgia in May 2020 proves the opposite, according to which, the brother and sister-in-law of the Mayor of Akhaltsikhe win the tenders of Akhaltsikhe Municipality and its N(N)LEs without competition.**

The City Council has not identified violations in the activities of specific departments of the City Hall and N(N)LEs, **despite the fact that Transparency International Georgia wrote about the [incompatible activities](#) and nepotism in the activities of the Director of Social Health Centre N(N)LE in August 2020 and about the [illegal construction](#) of a petrol station by a former official of the Georgian Dream in Akhaltsikhe in April 2020.**

## Chapter 6. Incomplete Asset Declarations

Incomplete asset declarations of the public officials are an important challenge at the City Council of Akhaltsikhe. 5 (Vladimer Gogoladze, Arutun Agababian, Ambartsum Baboian, Sambel Oveian and Vasil Sisvadze) out of 18 public officials (Chairman of the City Council, Deputy Chairman of the City Council, Chairperson of commissions, Chairpersons of the factions and Deputy Chairpersons of the factions) submitted incomplete asset declarations.

**It should be taken into account that Transparency International Georgia has no capacity to check the status of companies mentioned in the research, because this type of information belongs to the tax secret.**

***Requirement of legislation:***

According to the Law on Conflict of Interest and Corruption in Public Institutions, an official is obliged to fill out an asset declaration completely within two months after his/her appointment to the office, indicate information about his/her and his/her family members' property and economic interests, transfer the management rights of his/her stakes in business entities to another person, and resign from the position of the head (director) of the business entity within 10 days after being appointed to the office.

See the detailed information on violations in the asset declarations submitted by the public officials of Akhaltsikhe municipality [here](#).

## CHAPTER 6. INVOLVEMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL IN THE COUNCIL'S ACTIVITIES

The Rules of Procedure of the City Council of Akhaltsikhe does not specify what kind of absence from a session by a member of the City Council should be considered as absence without a valid reason. The Rules of Procedure rely on a provision of the Local self-Government Code, according to which the powers of a member of a city council is to be prematurely terminated if he/she has not participated, without a valid reason, in the work of the city council for 6 consecutive months. In other cases, the relevant commission is not obliged to ask the member of the City Council to specify the reason for being absent or to discuss whether the absence was with or without a valid reason.

Regarding the members of the city council who are absent because of the vacation or the business trips, the lists indicate: On a Vacation, On a Business Trip, In a Self-Isolation, therefore, we should assume that in remaining cases, the absent should be considered to be without a valid reason.

### ***Participation in sessions of the City Council:***

Members of the City Council [were absent](#) from the Council's sessions 136 times, including 10 absences without a valid reason.

A member of the City Council from the Georgian Dream, Tigran Melkonian, was absent 13 times out of 14 sessions held during one year. He is followed by Emanuel Pozoian, a member of the City Council from European Georgia with 10 absences and another member of Georgian Dream faction, Nodar Talakhadze, with 10 absences.

The members of the City Council from the Georgian Dream - Gela Nozadze, Vladimer Kurtanidze and Petros Vartanian have not been absent from a single session.

### ***Participation in sessions of the commissions of the City Council:***

There have been 122 absences in total on 36 sessions, including only 2 absences without a valid reason. Besik Gogsadze, the Chairman of the Commission on Property Management, Natural Resources and Agriculture Issues and Gela Nozadze, a member of the Commission on Finance and Budget Issues, were on a vacation.

During the reporting period, there were 18 absences during 8 sessions of **the Commission on Spatial-Territorial Planning and Infrastructure Issues**. A member of the Georgian Dream, Samvel Oveian, is leading in the number of absences, while Vasil Sisvadze and Petros Vartanian have not missed any session.

**The Commission on Finance and Budget Issues** held 9 sessions. A member of the United National Movement, Koba Sandroshvili missed the most - 9 sessions, while Manana Baliashvili, Zoia Baliashvili and Vasil Sisvadze have not missed a single session.

There have been 19 absences during 6 sessions of **the Commission on Property Management, Natural Resources and Agriculture Commission**. Koba Sandroshvili holds the leading position here as well with 6 absences, while Vladimer Kurtanidze has not missed a single session.

There have been 22 absences during 9 sessions held by **the Commission on Mandate, Procedural, Legal and Ethics Issues**. Giorgi Beroshvili, a member of the Georgian Dream is leading with 7 absences, while Vladimer Kurtanidze, Gela Nozadze, Zaal Beridze and Simon Gelashvili have not missed any sessions.

There have been 18 absences during 4 sessions of **the Commission on Social Affairs, Culture, Education, Sports and Youth Issues**. Koba Gelashvili, a member of the Georgian Dream and Irina Gelashvili, a member of European Georgia, are the leaders with 4-4 absences. Ambartsum Baboian, Tamar Gogoladze and Paitsar Minasian have not missed any session.

## CHAPTER 7. CITIZEN'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE CITY COUNCIL'S ACTIVITIES

None of the citizens have attended the sessions of the City Council held in 2020. In recent years, the public discussions of draft budgets were exceptions, however, the 2021 budget [was adopted](#) the way that no one, other than the members of the City Council have attended it. Obviously, the reason was the Covid 19 pandemic, but the City Council was able to use one of several applications for ensuring the involvement of citizens, or they could've gone live on Facebook, however, they did not use any instrument in this regard.

During the whole year, the City Council properly announced only 6 out of 14 sessions in accordance with the law. According to the information provided by the City Council, the announcement of remaining sessions was impossible due to the issues that required urgent discussion.

The City Council of Akhaltsikhe [has not adopted](#) the form of petition, which is one of the most important mechanisms for citizen involvement. [Petition](#) is a part of the Get Involved in Local Self-Governance section of the web-site of Akhaltsikhe municipality, however, that particular page is out of service.

For ensuring the citizen involvement in the process of implementation of the local self-governance, Akhaltsikhe City Council has adopted the following legal acts:

- Decree N52 of September 7, 2020, On adoption of the rule of holding a public meeting with voters and delivering the reports on activities done by the Mayor of Akhaltsikhe and the members of the City Council of Akhaltsikhe and on the form of a report used by a member of the City Council of Akhaltsikhe;
- Decree N44 of June 11, 2018, On adoption of the rule of awarding the title of honorary citizen of Akhaltsikhe Municipality.

In 2020, as a result of the citizens' involvement, the resources [were allocated](#) from the municipal budget for constructing a training ground and a summerhouse in Abi settlement, Akhaltsikhe.

It should be noted that on November 12, 2020, for the first time during the term of the City Council of 2017 convocation, the record of proceedings of the general assembly of the settlement [was discussed](#). The locals have requested the construction of a Culture Centre with their own resources on the plot of land owned by the municipality and allocation of its keep-up costs from the budget.

## CHAPTER 8. ACTIVITY OF THE GENDER EQUALITY COUNCIL

In 2020, the Gender Equality Council of the Akhaltsikhe City Council:

- Has not analyzed the draft legal acts;
- Has not provided an expertise on the draft legal acts;
- Has not elaborated the oversight and evaluation system for ensuring gender equality;
- Has not submitted a report at the City Council, nor has it created proposals and recommendations to the City Council or to the Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia.

No statement has been submitted to the Gender Equality Council on the violation of gender equality.

The Gender Equality Council [presented](#) the report to the City Council in December 2020, according to which, “the council has created a methodology of processing the gender-related data in the municipality. It has studied the employees of the municipal LTDs and N(N)LEs statistically and has counted the number of municipality’s population in the gender scope (women; men). The council has also provided gender statistics of the village gatherings and draft proposals that took place in 2019-2020”.

## CHAPTER 9. EXPENDITURES OF THE CITY COUNCIL

### Remuneration:

In 2020, the total expenditures made by the City Council of Akhaltsikhe amounted to GEL 636,711.02. GEL 555,098.77 was spent on remunerations, including GEL 421,214.56 was spent on salaries of the public officials of the City Council and the members of staff.

The Local Self-Government Code provides the possibility of reimbursement of costs incurred for those members of the City Council who are not officials and, accordingly, do not receive remuneration. The total amount of these reimbursements for 17 members of the City Council of Akhaltsikhe equaled GEL 133,884.21 in 2020.

<b>Total expenditures on remuneration in the City Council and its Staff in 2020</b>	
11 employees of the staff	GEL 113 809.30
18 officials of the City Council	GEL 307 405.26
17 members of the City Council	GEL 133 884.21
<b>Sum</b>	<b>555 098.77</b>

The City Council of Akhaltsikhe has not issued rewards/bonuses in 2020.

### Remuneration of the public officials of the City Council

<b>Name and Surname</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Remuneration</b>
Gela Nozadze	Chairman of the City Council	GEL 42 000
Ioseb Kapanadze	Deputy Chairman of the City Council	GEL 25 800
Vladimer Kurtanidze	Chairman of the Commission on Mandate, Procedural, Legal and Ethics Issues	GEL 18 000
Manana Baliashvili	Chairwoman of the Commission on Finance and Budget Issues	GEL 18 000
Vasil Sisvadze	Chairman of the Commission on Spatial-Territorial Planning and Infrastructure Issues	GEL 18 000
Ambartsum Baboian	Chairman of the Commission on Social Affairs, Culture, Education, Sports and Youth	GEL 18 000



Besik Gogsadze	Chairman of the Commission on Municipal Property Management, Natural Resources and Agriculture Issues	GEL 18 000
<b>Sum</b>		<b>GEL 157 800</b>

#### Remuneration of the Chairpersons and Deputy Chairpersons of the factions

Name and Surname	Position	Remuneration
Giorgi Gvaramadze	Chairman of the Georgian Dream Democratic Georgia - Akhaltsikhe faction	GEL 18 000
Arutun Agababian	Chairman of the Georgian Dream - Conservatives faction	GEL 18 000
Giorgi Beroshvili	Chairman of the Georgian Dream - Industrials faction	GEL 18 000
Irina Gelashvili	Chairwoman of the European Georgia - Movement for Freedom faction	GEL 18 000
Tamar Gogoladze (until May 22)	“Chairwoman of the Georgian Dream - Greens faction (until May 22)	GEL 7 105
Samvel Oveian (since August 25)	Chairman of the Georgian Dream - Akhaltsikhe faction (Since August 25)	GEL 6 300
Nodar Talakhadze	Deputy Chairman of the Georgian Dream - Democratic Georgia - Akhaltsikhe faction	GEL 12 000
Giorgi Zakroshvili	Deputy Chairman of the Georgian Dream Democratic Georgia - Akhaltsikhe faction	GEL 12 000
Aleksi Labadze	Deputy Chairman of the Georgian Dream - Conservatives faction	GEL 12 000
Petros Vartanian	Deputy Chairman of the Georgian Dream - Industrials faction	GEL 12 000
Eka Tatalashvili	Deputy Chairwoman of the European Georgia - Movement for Freedom faction	GEL 12 000
Archil Uchidze (Since August 25)	Deputy Chairman of the Georgian Dream - Akhaltsikhe faction (Since August 25)	GEL 4 200
<b>Sum</b>		<b>GEL 149 605.26</b>

### Expenses of business trips:

During the reporting period, GEL 359 was spent on the business trips within the country of four employees of the City Council of Akhaltsikhe.

<b>Expenses of the business trips of Akhaltsikhe City Council of 2017 convocation in 2020</b>	
Gela Nozadze - Chairman of the City Council	GEL 15
Manana Baliashvili - Chairwoman of the Finance and Budget Issues Commission	GEL 45
Giorgi Vediakov - Member of the City Council	GEL 209
The driver of the Chairman of the City Council	GEL 90
<b>Sum</b>	<b>GEL 359</b>

### Telephone communication expenses:

Akhaltsikhe City Council spent GEL 7,712.89 on telephone communications.

<b>Expenses of telephone communications of Akhaltsikhe City Council of 2017 convocation in 2020</b>	
Public officials and other members of the City Council	GEL 5 799.97
Members of staff	GEL 1 912.92
<b>Sum</b>	<b>GEL 7 712.89</b>

### Vehicle and fuel expenses:

The Chairman of the City Council and the Deputy Chairman of the City Council use two vehicles provided for the City Council of Akhaltsikhe Municipality. The fuel purchased using the local budget is consumed by every public official of the City Council with their own cars. This fuel has not been used only by two members of the City Council: Deputy Chairman of the Georgian Dream Democratic Georgia - Akhaltsikhe, Nodar Talakhadze and the Chairwoman of the Georgian Dream - Greens, Tamar Gogoladze (Until her faction was dissolved). Fuel has never been issued for them during the reporting period.

There is a duty vehicle on the City Council's account that can be used by every public official of the City Council.

The City Council of Akhaltsikhe consumed **36,045.87** litres of fuel in total, worth of GEL **64,681.26**.

See the detailed information on the fuel consumed here.

GEL **8,859.10** was spent on repair and rehabilitation of the vehicles of the City Council in 2020.

# RECOMMENDATIONS:

## **Exercise of oversight function:**

- Members of the City Council of Akhaltsikhe should be more actively involved in oversight activities. In particular, they should use control mechanisms more often and should supervise the process of public procurements and large infrastructure projects more effectively;
- The standing commissions of the City Council should be actively involved in the process of oversight of the activities of the executive bodies;
- The City Council should actively and conscientiously reveal cases of conflict of interest, incompatibility with office, and violations of the Rules of Procedure of the City Council and of ethical norms in the municipality.

## **Sessions of the City Council:**

- The City Council of Akhaltsikhe should improve the organizational part of its activities, reduce the number of extraordinary sessions, as such sessions obstruct the involvement of citizens, facilitate mobilization of the interest groups, improve the opportunity to prepare the issues to be heard at the sessions and enhance transparency of a representative body.

## **Accountability:**

- Attendance of members of the City Council at the sessions of the Council and its commissions should be improved. We believe that every member of a City Council should take responsibility and attend the sessions. In addition, members of a City Council should be subjected to corresponding sanctions in the event of missing a session without a valid reason;
- Filling out asset declarations by officials is an important mechanism for ensuring transparency and accountability. At the same time, filling out declarations incompletely also contains a risk of corruption. For this reason, it is necessary that officials fill out declarations completely and without any shortcomings.

## **Activities of factions:**

It is important for the activities of factions to be beneficial for the relevant self-government. Factions should get actively involved in the process of considering and deciding on issues that fall under the powers of the City Council, study / control the activities of the City Hall and municipal legal entities; submit initiatives to the City Council; get actively involved in the budgeting process; etc. Factions increase citizens' involvement in self-government, as well as support local initiatives and advocate for citizens' needs and problems. Therefore, we call upon the factions to use these instruments actively.

**Expenditures of the City Council:**

- It is important that the expenses incurred by the City Council to be in compliance with the exercise of the powers assigned to the Council by law;
- The City Council should exercise strict control on the administrative expenditures of both the representative body, in particular, and the municipality, in general, and be oriented on efficient spending of financial resources.

**General Assembly of a Settlement:**

- According to the Local Self-Government Code of Georgia, the general assembly of a settlement is one of the most important mechanisms of the citizens' involvement in self-governance. The voters, as well the Mayor of a municipality on his/her own will or using the City Council's solicitation, are given the right of convocation;
- As the General Assembly of a Settlement has not been held yet, it is important that this mechanism will be activated by the City Council's initiative. The City Council should address the Mayor to hold the assembly. The General Assembly of a Settlement is necessary for the municipality to better plan the budget of the next year.