

**THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
FINANCE, HOUSING AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
FAIRTRADE STEERING GROUP**

Minute of Meeting of the Fairtrade Steering Group held in Council Headquarters, Inverness on Tuesday, 24 September, 2013 at 2.00 p.m.

PRESENT:

Mr H Wood, The Highland Council
Mr R Saxon, The Highland Council (by telephone conference)
Ms H Kirk, Inverness Fairtrade Group and Inverness & Moray Co-op Area Committee
Mr G Morrison, Parliamentary Officer, Chief Executive's Service
Mr A MacInnes, Administrative Assistant, Chief Executive's Service

BUSINESS

Mr H Wood in the chair

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Ms J Campbell and Mrs J Slater, The Highland Council, Ms J Keast, Inverness Fairtrade Group, Mr J Alexander, Presbytery of Inverness and Ms T Rogers, Broadford Fairtrade Group.

2. Declaration of Interest

The Group **NOTED** that there were no declarations of interest expressed.

3. Minutes of Last Meeting

There was circulated for information, the Minutes of the last meeting of the Group held on 18 June, 2013 which were **NOTED**.

Arising from the Minutes the following matters were raised:-

- i) Fairtrade School Uniforms – it was advised that the Education, Culture and Sport Service uniforms were a matter for each school and that the service did not recommend any particular supplier or brand.
- ii) Community Council Associations – Ward Managers had been contacted to establish what Community Council Associations there were in their area.

It was **AGREED** that these Associations would be contacted to ascertain if they would like a presentation on Fairtrade.

- iii) Community Councils – letters had been sent to Community Councils asking if they would like to consider setting up a Fairtrade Group in their area. Expressions of interest had been received from Kinlochleven Community Council; Glenurquhart Community Council; and Aviemore Community Council, who had passed the letter to their Chamber of Commerce to take this forward. It was hoped that three new Fairtrade villages could be established from these contacts.
- iv) Dounreay – it was reported that the Canteen Manager at Dounreay had welcomed the idea of setting up a Fairtrade stall to raise awareness of Fairtrade products. The canteen already had some Fairtrade products on offer. Mr S Kelly, Co-operative Membership would be contacted to explore the possibility of setting up a stall in the Dounreay Canteen and whether he could also link into a Fairtrade event in Thurso on 16 November, 2013.

It was **AGREED** that enquiries would be made into establishing Fairtrade status for the Dounreay canteen.

- v) Bilingual signs – **NOTED** that three bilingual signs had now been erected for Inverness becoming a Fairtrade City.
- vi) Fairtrade Schools – the Director of Education, Culture and Sport Service was in support of discussions on the possibility of Fairtrade being part of the curriculum for schools by linking Fairtrade with the ECO schools programme. It was **AGREED** that an update on this would be provided to the next meeting of the Group.
- vii) Membership - letters had been sent to the Inverness Business Improvement District (BID) and the Caithness Chamber of Commerce inviting them to have a representative on the Steering Group. No responses had been received to date and Councillor R Saxon **AGREED** to approach the Caithness Chamber of Commerce again. It was **NOTED** that a BID in Lochaber was in the process of being established and contact would be made with them.

4. Draft Fairtrade Zone Status Renewal Application

There was circulated Report No. FTSG/2/13 by the Chief Executive which invited comments on the draft Fairtrade Zone Status renewal application for the Highlands and thereafter to approve the application for submission to the Fairtrade Foundation.

The renewal application form provided a summary of activities that had been undertaken to promote Fairtrade over the last 12 months both locally and regionally within the Highlands. It also set out the overall aim for each of the five goals, the proposed actions to be undertaken to achieve that aim and then how success will be measured.

In terms of the renewal application form, the following comments were made:-

Goal one – *(Local council passes a resolution supporting Fairtrade, and agrees to serve Fairtrade products)*

It was **AGREED** to encourage the Council's Catering Service to provide a wider range of Fairtrade products, particularly fruit and better labelling of Fairtrade products on display as well as exploring the possibility of Fairtrade products in school tuckshops.

Goal two – *(a range of (at least four) Fairtrade products are readily available in the area's shops and served in local cafes/catering establishments)*

Members were advised that the Inverness Fairtrade Group had conducted a survey in their local area of Fairtrade products sold by businesses. It was found that while small businesses had cut back on products they sold, larger businesses had increased the amount of Fairtrade products on offer. The withdrawal of products from small businesses was put down to difficult market conditions.

While the aim of increasing by 20% the number of existing and new retail businesses that will expand their range of Fairtrade products from the base line figure was challenging, it was felt that it would be achievable.

Goal three – *(Fairtrade products are used by an appropriate number of local work places and community organisations)*

It was **AGREED** that the status of the One World Group would be clarified.

Goal 4 – *(Attract Media coverage and popular support for the campaign)*

It was **NOTED** that the possibility of BBC Radio Scotland using their "Kitchen Café" programme to host a cooking event using Fairtrade products was being explored. Identifying innovative ways to promote Fairtrade would also be explored.

Goal 5 – *(a local Fairtrade Steering Group representing a range of local organisations and sectors meets regularly to ensure the Fairtrade Town continues to develop and gain support)*

The key aim was to broaden membership of the Group in order to promote and increase the use of Fairtrade products.

Thereafter, the Group **APPROVED** the draft Fairtrade Zone Status Renewal Application for submission to the Fairtrade Foundation, subject to any further comments being submitted to the Parliamentary Officer by the end of September, 2013.

There then followed a discussion on encouraging more schools to achieve Fairtrade status, where it was suggested that a Fairtrade logo or badge could be added to school uniforms to show that their school had achieved such status. It was also suggested that an annual competition for primary and secondary schools on the Fairtrade theme could also be developed, with a Fairtrade flag or plaque being given to the successful schools at Fairtrade fortnight in February, 2014. It was also suggested that the winning teams be invited to display their project at an appropriate committee meeting.

It was **AGREED** to give these proposals further consideration.

5. Local Fairtrade Group Updates

The Group **NOTED** the activities undertaken or being planned by the Inverness Fairtrade Group.

It was **AGREED** that Groups who were unable to be represented at the meeting be asked to submit a written report on Fairtrade activities undertaken.

6. AOCB

It was **NOTED** that:-

- i The Highland Council had renewed its membership of the Fairtrade Foundation; and
- ii Scotmid had agreed to do a pamphlet for the Fairtrade fortnight.

Date of Next Meeting

It was **AGREED** that arrangements be made for a further meeting of the Group in March, 2014.

The meeting ended at 2.55 p.m.