

RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

To: Council

On: 12 February 2009

**Report
by
Chief Executive
Fairtrade Zone Status for Renfrewshire – a further progress report**

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 Renfrewshire Council demonstrated its continued commitment to Fairtrade by passing a resolution at the Council meeting on 8 November 2007 supporting the application for Fairtrade Zone Status for the whole of the county; a progress report was approved by Council in June 2008.
- 1.2 This report outlines the progress since then and the next steps needed to develop the Council's support and promotion of Fairtrade within Renfrewshire.
- 1.3 The application for Renfrewshire Fairtrade Zone Status was submitted to the Fairtrade Foundation in November 2008 and on 3 February 2009 notification was received that the application was successfully approved - the whole of Renfrewshire can now be classed as a Fairtrade Zone.
- 1.3 Fairtrade guarantees a better deal for third world producers. Fairtrade gives power back to both producers and consumers - producers get fair wages, good working conditions and help with the development of products and marketing, while consumers are given the choice to make a difference by buying Fairtrade products whenever they can. According to the Fairtrade Foundation, across the world's poorest nations

'seven million people – farmers, producers and their families – now benefit from Fairtrade'

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Council:
 - I. Notes the achievement of Fairtrade Zone Status for the whole Renfrewshire area
 - II. Notes the next steps outlined to continue supporting Fairtrade in Renfrewshire
 - III. Notes the financial and resource implications detailed in section 5 of the report
 - IV. Requests a further report detailing progress to be submitted to Council in March 2010

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Renfrewshire Council was notified on 3 February 2009 that the application for Fairtrade Zone Status had been successful. The feedback from the Fairtrade Foundation was very positive, including the following:

'It has been an absolute pleasure to learn more about all that's been going on in Renfrewshire and a real example of what can be achieved in a relatively short time if the energy, commitment and dedication is there. The panel were incredibly

impressed by the level of coverage you've generated, the comprehensive outreach across the community and the huge amount of work and dedication put in by steering group members. Please do pass on our thanks to everyone involved for all their hard work and commitment.'

- 3.2 To echo this sentiment, it is acknowledged that the campaign has been a very effective partnership effort and its success is the direct result of the enthusiasm and diligence of Elected Members, officers, volunteers from the community and representatives from a range of public and private sector organisations.
- 3.3 A publicity campaign is being developed to deliver the message that Renfrewshire is now a Fairtrade Zone. The Steering Group will consider how else to best promote this achievement across the county particularly during Fairtrade Fortnight. There may also be scope to include the wording 'Renfrewshire – We are a Fairtrade Zone' or similar on the community website, Council letter footings and other publications.
- 3.4 In addition to applying for Fairtrade Zone Status, throughout the year Renfrewshire Council coordinated a number of outreach events, talks and encouraged publicity to raise the profile of the Fairtrade campaign.
- 3.5 'Fair in the Square' was held in Paisley's County Square in August 2008 to celebrate the fifth anniversary of the town's Fairtrade status and publicise the wider Renfrewshire campaign. It was a fun-packed event within a large marquee selling a wide range of Fairtrade products from ice-cream to footballs. This was a free event, funded by the Council in partnership with Paisley Vision Board. Local Fairtrade businesses were invited to participate such as Redds and Chocolatz alongside campaigning groups including Oxfam, Christian Aid and Sciaf.
- 3.6 For the Provost's Community Awards 2009, Provost Lawson introduced new categories which included a 'Spirit of Fairtrade Award' devised to help raise the profile of Fairtrade in Renfrewshire. The award is open to independent outlets such as cafes, charity shops and restaurants that sell and promote Fairtrade goods and nominations are open to individuals or groups who actively promote Fairtrade. This award has been sponsored by the Piazza Shopping Centre who became a key supporter of the campaign in summer of 2008.
- 3.7 Renfrewshire Fairtrade Zone Campaign won the Fairtrade Foundation's 'Outstanding Achievement' award for Fairtrade Fortnight 2008. To be picked as the best campaign across the whole of the UK was a real achievement and judges commented that the campaign:

'excels in all areas – an integrated, well-planned and creative campaign that reached lots of people, engaged the media and communicated the Fairtrade message imaginatively'

4. NEXT STEPS FOR CONTINUING TO SUPPORT FAIRTRADE IN RENFREWSHIRE

- 4.1 It is a prerequisite of the Fairtrade Foundation that a progress report is submitted in one year's time and then every second year further updates are submitted. The right to continue to call Renfrewshire a Fairtrade Zone is based on the successful acceptance of these update submissions demonstrating a clear and continued commitment to the Fairtrade movement.
- 4.2 A requirement of the original application was to include a plan for how the campaign would be further developed. The following was outlined:
 - Encourage more villages across Renfrewshire to become Fairtrade – utilising the Council's Local Area Committees and Community Councils

- Develop procurement protocols to support Fairtrade in partnership with Scotland Excel, Scottish Procurement Directive and other local authorities
- Increase corporate use of fairly traded products
- Fairtrade Fortnight 2009 – exhibition of Fairtrade Foundation's Portrait Photographs, Schools Conference and Business Breakfast
- Maintain high profile of Fairtrade across Renfrewshire in addition to Fairtrade Fortnight

- 4.3 A key priority from this is to encourage Johnstone, Renfrew, Erskine, Linwood and the villages to develop local Fairtrade campaigns. The Steering Group will focus on this project and produce an action plan for rolling out a village-by-village approach, potentially using a 'peer-guidance' system where established Fairtrade villages would work with their nearby villages to encourage and advise them. The Steering Group is already aware of Fairtrade campaigning work taking place in local schools and churches and will look at how this could be pulled together and coordinated so that all strands weave together towards the shared goal. Elected members could also act as Fairtrade 'champions' within their wards, encouraging local campaigners to take their support to the next level.
- 4.4 The Council is currently developing a Corporate Social Responsibility Policy, through a programme of consultation and workshops. Once this has been established a procurement-specific Corporate Social Responsibility Policy and toolkit will also be developed. Alongside environmental and sustainability issues, Fairtrade will be one of the issues addressed in this policy. The Council's Procurement Team will continue to liaise with the Scottish Procurement Directive seeking guidance to strengthen procurement protocols supporting fairly traded products.
- 4.5 The Council resolved in November 2007 to support Fairtrade through catering for meetings. Departments should ensure that this is continued and Fairtrade products, especially tea and coffee, are used for catering wherever possible.
- 4.6 It should be noted that within the feedback report from the Fairtrade Foundation they commended the high level of support from the Council and commented that they
- 'look forward to seeing how the Council develops upon the commitments made, expands the range of Fairtrade products available to staff and visitors and continues to offer practical support to the Steering Group as it promotes Fairtrade locally'*
- 4.7 Fairtrade Fortnight 2009 takes place between the 23rd of February and the 8th of March. Renfrewshire has a full plan of events across the area to raise awareness and celebrate Fairtrade Fortnight.
- 4.8 In partnership with the campaign's flagship employer, MEPC Hillington Park, Renfrewshire is hosting a Fairtrade Business Breakfast at the Innovation Centre in Hillington on the 27th of February. The aim of this event is to raise awareness amongst local businesses about the Fairtrade movement and to encourage them to support Fairtrade within a business environment. The keynote speaker at the event is Linda Fabiani, MSP; the Government Minister for Europe, External Affairs and Culture.
- 4.9 Renfrewshire is coordinating the Fairtrade Foundation's Producer Tour for the West of Scotland in early March – to start off his tour Cornelius Lynch, a banana farmer from St Lucia, will be visiting a number of schools within Renfrewshire on the 3rd of March, followed by a public event in Lochwinnoch Parish Church in the evening. Cornelius will return to Renfrewshire at the end of the tour on the 7th of March for a small event in Houston.
- 4.10 Renfrewshire has secured the Fairtrade Foundation's Trevor Leighton Photography Exhibition which will be exhibited at various locations throughout Renfrewshire from the 17th of February until the 16th of March. The exhibition will open on the 17th of February in the

café at Paisley Arts Centre and will be open to the public, free of charge. It will also be displayed in MEPC Hillington Park, Bishopton Library and Lochwinnoch Library.

- 4.11 There are also a number of local events for Fairtrade Fortnight 2009 stage across Renfrewshire by Fairtrade volunteers, especially within the two Fairtrade villages – Bishopton and Lochwinnoch.
- 4.12 Throughout the year, events, promotion and publicity will be planned to show Renfrewshire's continued commitment to Fairtrade – this will include utilising the community website, Renfrewshire magazine, working with partners to include Fairtrade information in their publications and newsletters, arranging Fairtrade road-shows for gala days and on an ad-hoc basis wherever possible.
- 4.13 Lobbying work will continue with the business community to encourage the use fairly traded products wherever possible. Strong links with schools across Renfrewshire will be maintained to ensure the excellent campaigning work continues with each new intake of pupils.

5. SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 To extend the support for Fairtrade across Renfrewshire, resources will be required to continue the promotional campaign. It is estimated that around £6,000 will be required for the purposes of photo shoots, promotional materials, supporting events etc. These costs can be contained within the Chief Executive's marketing and publicity budget.
- 5.2 Throughout this campaign, the support of Elected Members, officers across the Council, volunteers, partners and other organisations has been vital to its success. It is hoped that this enthusiasm will long continue. As outlined above, Council services should continue to support the Fairtrade agenda, especially when arranging catering for meetings and other events. Council services should also continue to support Fairtrade events, offering staffing and other 'in kind' support wherever appropriate.

Chief Executive

If you would like further information on the content of this report, please contact Ron Morrison, Head of Policy, 0141 840 3228.

Implications of this report

- 1 **Financial Implications** – budget implications are detailed in section 5 of this report and can be met from current resources
- 2 **Personnel Implications** - None
- 3 **Community Plan/Council Plan Implications**

Wealthier and Fairer – Fairtrade supports some of the most vulnerable people in third world countries, enabling them to work themselves out of poverty and empowering them to invest in their communities. By promoting Fairtrade at a local level Renfrewshire Council supports this movement.
- 4 **Legal Implications** - None
- 5 **Property Implications** - None
- 6 **Information Technology Implications** - None
- 7 **Equal Opportunity Implications** - None
8. **Health and Safety Implications** – None
9. **Procurement Implications** – corporate procurement implications are detailed in section 4 of this report
10. **Risk Implications** - None