

Report from Fairtrade Special Meeting

Date: 20 July 2009

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 A special meeting of Renfrewshire Fairtrade Steering Group was held on 7 May 2009 to review the Fairtrade campaign to date and to identify and refocus attention on specific areas for further action.
- 1.2 This came at an ideal time for the Steering Group, Fairtrade Zone Status had just been achieved, the group had been formed for around 18 months, and the chairperson of the group, Cllr Mackay was stepping down.
- 1.3 The format of the meeting was to split into groups to discuss four main questions outlined below. These questions were chosen from points highlighted by the Fairtrade Foundation in our application feedback, or were to assist with developing a particular part of the campaign. The best ideas were then written up onto flipchart paper and each person was able to vote for their favourite ideas.
- 1.4 A general discussion also took place and also the agreement of a new chairperson for the Steering Group, Cllr Brian Lawson.
- 1.5 This report summarises the ideas which were most popular and provides an update on the current position and suggested next steps. **Appendix 1** details *all* the ideas recorded, the barriers and solutions (where available) and other comments. A column has been added to provide any follow-up to date, or comments and suggestions. The ideas have been recorded in this report in the language/terminology used in the notes sheets, in order to reflect the original author's intentions.
- 1.6 It is hoped that this document will form the basis of an action plan for the next year of the Fairtrade campaign, alongside the requirement for the Steering Group to renew the Zone Status in November 2009 and also another progress report due to Council in December 2009.

2. KEY QUESTIONS DISCUSSED BY GROUP

- What should we do for a 'big event' this year?
- How do we encourage faith groups to engage with the wider Renfrewshire Fairtrade campaign?
- How can we coordinate Fairtrade activities in towns and villages with an interest in Fairtrade already and/or how do we encourage an interest where there is none at present?

- How could local Fairtrade groups and the Renfrewshire Fairtrade Steering Group fit better together?

3. PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED BY GROUP

3.1 Events

- Large scale concert/ Fairtrade music festival – with well known personality/bands with a commitment to Fairtrade. Scottish focus. Venue at park or St Mirren Park.
- Sporting event – ‘cooperative games’, football etc
- Fairtrade fashion show

3.2 Faith groups

- Find ways of engaging new audiences, e.g. student groups
- Develop a recognition award, include schools, churches etc

3.3 Local groups

- More local groups needed to build campaign – identify local activists and share ideas
- Use community events to make local groups known locally
- Gala days

3.4 Towns and villages

- Fairtrade champions in each LAC to form main group, with employed coordinator
- Encourage ‘Fairtraders’ in one group (e.g. school) to promote Fairtrade to other local organisations and groups (e.g. churches linked to school)

3.5 General

- Throughout all themes developing an e-newsletter, using ‘Facebook’ and ‘bebo’ and having a more in-depth Fairtrade website was suggested.

4. Response Summary – Events

4.1 There are some excellent ideas for high-profile and imaginative events. Obviously they all can’t be done at once, so some will have to be put on hold for future consideration.

4.2 By far the most popular was to have a Fairtrade Music Festival during the summer, with other spin-off events on the day. This will take a lot of planning therefore a sub group should be established as soon as possible who will plan this event, with support from the Council.

- 4.3 In addition, wherever possible Fairtrade should be promoted by tying in with existing events such as Paisley's 10K, One World Week etc.
- 4.4 Preparations will also need to begin shortly in order to develop a full programme to celebrate Fairtrade Fortnight 2010.

5. Response Summary - Faith groups

- 5.1 Engaging with faith groups is a priority area highlighted by the Fairtrade Foundation in our application feedback report. Work has taken place in this area to try and link together faith groups with the wider Fairtrade campaign.
- 5.2 Last year, the Steering Group wrote out to 90 faith groups in the Renfrewshire area with information packs and reply paid postcards. To date only ten groups responded.
- 5.3 In addition, several members of the Steering Group are representatives from wider networks of faith groups and have worked hard to develop Fairtrade campaigning - some have also reported frustrations in moving this forward.
- 5.4 It is known that excellent work is being carried out by groups but as yet the right person/people to contact has not been identified.
- 5.5 The responses to the faith group question offered some suggestions of 'ways in', such as working with student groups, women's guilds, Sunday schools etc. In addition, a suggestion was made to develop a recognition award for Fairtrade campaigning, open to churches, schools etc. This was a popular suggestion.
- 5.6 Last year the Provost's Community Awards included a new category – the Spirit of Fairtrade award –which was open to all organisations, groups, businesses who campaign for Fairtrade. A nomination for the volunteers of Paisley Abbey's café and gift shop was submitted and they were a runner up on the night.
- 5.7 This will be more extensively publicised within the existing 'Fairtrade community' and also through faith group networks such as the Diocese, Presbytery, PACT, university/college groups etc.

6 Response Summary - Local groups/towns and villages

- 6.1 There is an acknowledgement that whilst the Fairtrade Zone status covers the whole of Renfrewshire, targeted work needs to take place in particular areas to encourage more local groups across our towns and villages
- 6.2 Work has been underway already to try to make links with other areas including:
- a report was sent to all Local Area Committees encouraging local action to support Fairtrade in June.
 - Lochwinnoch Fairtrade Group has been working with colleagues in Howwood to encourage them to support Fairtrade locally.
 - a Fairtrade information stall toured gala days across Renfrewshire this summer, visiting Johnstone, Houston, Fountain Gardens, Barshaw Park and Sma' Shot Day. This was very successful and can be fairly easily replicated next year, targeting specific areas for action.
- 6.3 Following these actions, interest has been indicated by following areas – Houston, Howwood, Johnstone and Renfrew. These areas will be targeted for further action first. Volunteers will be required to coordinate the approach in these areas and support the interested parties into setting up action groups or similar.
- 6.4 Due to the level of interest across communities and also the difficulties experienced in linking with Faith groups a number of suggestions centred on an 'outreach' approach. Consideration could be given to hosting a community 'coffee morning' similar to the successful business breakfast held in FT14 2009.

7. General points

- 7.1 Continued commitment is needed within Renfrewshire Council and other supporting organisations (UWS, Reid Kerr, MEPC etc) to make sure that Fairtrade is supported at all levels – consideration should be given to ways of promoting this such as possible Fairtrade teams competition etc.
- 7.2 The availability of Fairtrade products in shops, cafes etc needs to be expanded (vital for status renewal) – consider the possibility of making a flier and visiting local shops and tie this in with local schools/community groups?
- 7.3 Efforts will continue to support Fairtrade through the Council's Corporate Social Responsibility agenda and to develop procurement protocols to support Fairtrade in partnership with Scotland Excel, Scottish Procurement Directive and other local authorities.

Corporate Policy Unit

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APPENDIX 1 - All ideas

Events

What should we do for a 'big event' this year?

Idea	More Details	Barriers	Solutions	Follow up/ comments
Fairtrade weekend/ Fairtrade carnival	themed entertainment school involvement local sports person promoting Fairtrade footballs and sportswear incorporate fashion show into weekend	Financing Volunteers Venues Bands Alcohol license Security Roads Health and safety Getting people to come	Sponsorship/donors Bands who'll play for free Hold in a local park Hold at St Mirren Park Use wrist bands to denote age (for buying alcohol) Utilise university/college for volunteers Entrance fee to help cover cost Programme with PR for sponsorship Carnival rides, food stall and bar make profit but come for free Targeted publicity – including facebook, bebo etc Volunteers doing PR in street get free entry Invite groups to attend	Sub-group to form to plan and take this forward for summer 2010

			(eg girl guides etc)	
Fairtrade music festival	Fairtime' – radio link music	Venue Licensing Image – target audience Cost/risk	Forward planning Radio and press promotion Link to UWS and Reid Kerr Young local bands Sponsorship Council support	Incorporate into above
Fairtrade food festival	-	Administration Licensing Environmental health concerns Staffing costs/volunteers	Incorporate into farmers market and continental market Sponsorship Partnership working	Hold for future
Fairtrade fashion show	-	Limited suppliers Venue Affordability Stock availability	Research and investigate retailers Link with UWS and Reid Kerr Marketing and communications prior to event Forward planning to allow retailers to source sufficient items	?
Fairtrade conference	Open to all, especially non-participatory groups Wine reception	Location Cost Planning Generating interest from non-Fairtrade organisations	Central and accessible location Sponsorship/fundraising Promotion/marketing	Possible tie in with some sort of towns/villages, LACs and community councils open day

Promotional caravan/bus to tour	-	Planning Cost Volunteers Resistance from other groups/shops	Utilise existing resources Promotion and marketing Sponsorship	Hold for future
Promotional weekend in local pubs/cafes	-	Lack of awareness and knowledge by people who run establishments Lack of interest	Publicity/awareness raising beforehand Incentives for businesses?	Links with FT14 and other events Forward planning essential!
Wine tasting	-	-	-	Hold for future
Feed a family Fairtrade on a low budget	-	-	-	Hold for future
Fairtrade themed days	Food Educational	Cost Buy in by individuals	Promotion Marketing Incentives	Hold for future
Fairtrade cooking competition	-	-	-	Hold for future
Drama – play or show	Provide Fairtrade message to younger people (particularly in schools)	Organising drama group and providing information Access to various schools and organisations for young people Children and young people might not have in interest to do it	Contact local drama groups Elected meetings could provide access working with the Education Dept Church and faith groups could provide access to youth organisations	Hold for future

Faith Groups

How do we encourage Faith Groups to engage with the wider Renfrewshire Fairtrade campaign?

Idea	More Details	Barriers	Solutions	Follow up
Utilise existing networks better	-	-	-	See below
Talk to presbytery and diocese		Lack of time (esp clergy) Limited group of volunteers Do they want to get involved in wider campaign?	Small steps of commitment Approach congregations through Sunday schools, women's guild etc Show the potential for getting support and networking with others	Letter to key contacts, schools and WG Consider hold a community 'coffee morning' (like the business breakfast but for churches and community groups)
Education through Sunday school and other church groups	-	-	-	See above
Local roadshow visiting churches	-	-	-	See above
Link through University groups	-	Unwilling to get involved due to time constraints Identifying faith group members	Start at basic level, eg. promote use of FT refreshments during meetings of different faith groups Use those groups as basis for appealing to wider student body Publicity/promotion/posters	Reps from Steering group to take this forward – make connections

			Encourage voluntary work for CVs	
Use existing links/mission interest	-	<p>Spiritual is not enough</p> <p>Tradition established role</p> <p>Commitment</p> <p>People do their 'own thing' not necessarily want to be part of a bigger campaign</p> <p>How do both groups fit together></p>	<p>Appeal to people's notion of right and wrong, helping others and making a difference</p> <p>Offer practical help</p> <p>Initial meeting to gauge involvement and issues</p> <p>Better utilise the people who we already have connections with</p>	No clear action from this
Award for 'Best Promotion of Fairtrade'	-	<p>Finace/funding</p> <p>Awareness</p> <p>Make outcome worthwhile</p>	<p>Possibly utilise existing funding</p> <p>Increase communication through existing networks</p> <p>Promote FT Zone status</p>	<p>Increase awareness of Provost's Community Awards Spirit of Fairtrade category – mail shot, church magazines, website etc</p>

Towns and villages

How can we coordinate Fairtrade activities in towns and villages with an interest in Fairtrade already and/or how do we encourage an interest where there is none at present?

Idea	More Details	Barriers	Solutions	Follow up
Links between Steering group and local groups	-	Some groups think of FT as a charity and that they are already heavily involved in many charities Groups very busy already and many members have other commitments	Presentations Films Awareness raising	No clear action from this
Transfer of info via email	-	-	-	Yes, continue to use this and extend the network if possible
Website for groups	Mini site for each key thematic/geographic area Utilise Bebo, Facebook, Twitter Groups enter events themselves (like on SFTF's website) Make pages available on school intranet	Potentially could be many websites if all areas started one Time implications of keeping it up-to-date Some people do not have access to a computer Technology skills gap	IT coordinator to set up a main web site and keep up to date with input from all groups Publicise use of free computing in libraries Training Cost of domain name	Updates to Council's FT website Look into utilising Facebook network
Involvement of community council, tenants and residents	Presentation to these groups about Fairtrade	Other priorities Time Same individuals	Get Fairtrade on agenda Delegate	We can write out to groups (can get details from colleagues in the

associations				Council) . We will need to establish a bank of volunteers who are willing to attend meetings where invited. Already have a powerpoint presentation prepared for use and can supply FT info packs to take out.
Visit gala days	Fairtrade information stalls	Volunteers Publicity/awareness Costs Structure/content	Form group/committee to devise ideas/content Rota drawn up of volunteers to avoid the same people all the time Info packs to groups prior to roadshow Sponsor/support from Council	This has already taken place this year with much support from the Council who allowed employees to take time back in lieu for volunteering on stalls. Happy to do this again, will need a proactive plan for which gala days to attend.
Set up more and smaller local groups – eg Paisley East etc	-	Difficulty identifying local activists Transfer of info from local groups to steering group and between local groups Sense of isolation	Use existing groups, Councillors, churches etc Steering group newsletter, email, webpage etc	Not really an action – this is what we're trying to do generally – hopefully all the other actions will lead to this.
Member of steering group to attend local community groups	-	-	-	Volunteers required – can tie in as above
Work with local area	Identify a 'Fairtrade	Champion may not be	Need to ensure that if no	Started – report went to

committees	Champion' to coordinate work in their area – one from each of the groups + a coordinator	enthusiastic enough Time constraints Would local community participate? What if no one volunteers Area too big to coordinate Bogged down in bureaucracy	one in current group is interested that another person from the community council could be identified Organise meetings around people's lifestyles Volunteer development Utilising established base to spread word	all LACs. Some follow up will be required – two have shown an interest already. Again volunteers will be required to take this forward.
Existing Fairtrade groups making links into other community forums / Steering group to contact chair/vice chair of all local groups	Senior forum, tenants and residents groups	Difficulty getting info to local groups Identifying chair/vice chair of groups	-	Can write out to groups as above, will require volunteers to follow up and attend meetings where invited.
Fairtraders active in one forum to promote it in others within their community using existing links, eg faith churches, schools etc	-	Forging links to other organisations at a local level Isolation of groups with different interests Exclusiveness of some groups Limits to outsiders going into schools	Fairtrade is not a divisive area Getting people active on Fairtrade in one context to extend it into others they are in touch with Contact made with other local organisations to let them know about Fairtrade	Great idea – will discuss further at Steering group – making links proactively

Local groups

How could local Fairtrade groups and the Renfrewshire Fairtrade Steering Group fit better together?

Idea	More Details	Barriers	Solutions	Follow up
Website for group	-	-	-	Jackie is working on updating the website and we will take this forward. Any suggestions from the group are very welcome
Renfrewshire Fairtrade Newsletter	events listing contact details for groups	Control and production Costs Buy in from local groups	Member of Steering group to attend local groups to encourage them	Good idea – happy to do this – initially as an e-newsletter for ‘interested people’ and continuing the annual ‘FT guide’ and more regular updates in the Renfrewshire magazine
Create links between local groups	-	-	-	No clear action from this
Consider evening meetings and meeting in different places	-	Evenings can be difficult What other accommodation is available? Cost implications	Paisley is central	No clear action from this
Autonomy is still important	-	-	-	No clear action from this
Involve faith groups	-	Churches have other priorities and charities Same individuals always	Make Fairtrade a priority Get volunteers – stress importance of Fairtrade	See above section

		having to do everything Tradition	Make it fun	
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