

**RENFREWSHIRE FAIRTRADE STEERING GROUP
THURSDAY 12 JUNE 2008
MINUTES OF MEETING**

Present:

Cllr Derek Mackay (chair)
Amanda Moulson, RC Planning
Marie Davidson, RC Planning
Nicola Irvine, RC Chief Exec's
Pauline Moss, RC Chief Exec's (minutes)
Joanne MacDonald, RC Chief Exec's
Liz Cotton, Rainbow Turtle
Celia Mackie, Paisley Diocese
Cllr Iain McMillan
Laura Gibson, RC Education
John Littler, Bishopton Steering Group
Louise Pirie, Trinity High School
Caroline McKinney, Trinity High School

Cllr Brian Lawson
Cllr Davy Arthur
Cllr Allan Noon
Cllr George Adam
Alison Clark, MEPC
Jack Nellaney, RC Education
Maureen Brough, PFTP
Marianne McGuire, RC Education

Paul Mullan, Scottish Parliament
Richard Gibson, RC Planning
Iain McKie, RC Finance

Apologies:

Cllr Iain Langlands
Mary Alice Mansell, LIA
Derek Provan, BAA Glasgow Airport
Mary Baillie, RC Chief Exec's
Graeme Clark, PACT
Bobby Findlater, UWS
Niall Gordon, UWS

David Elder, RC Environmental Services
Tommy Reilly, Reid Kerr
Alison Duff, RC Finance
Cllr Marie McGurk
Cllr Bill Perrie
David Buttery, UWS Student Association

2. Matters Arising

The minutes were read and agreed. The only item from the minutes not covered by the agenda was the Vision Statement. John and Pauline circulated a draft Vision Statement for the group to take away and look at. The group agreed to forward any comment or changes to Pauline. Once the final draft is agreed, Pauline will email a PDF version to the group and Nicola will ensure that it is put on the Fairtrade Steering Group's web pages.

Action – Group to forward changes to Vision Statement to Pauline as soon as possible

3. Publicity and marketing

Joanne gave a brief update in Mary's absence. Ongoing press coverage has been good and it is important that group members continue to let Joanne know in advance about Fairtrade 'good news stories' or events so that they can be sent out to the press in good time.

Amanda's Paisley Vision Board magazine has run a very positive piece on Fairtrade; this has gone out to more 80,000 recipients in Paisley and the wider area.

Cllr Mackay thanked Alison for the very positive publicity that MEPC had given the campaign in their Hillington Herald and also for distributing the Fairtrade Guide in the paper which goes out to 7,000 recipients.

a. Fairtrade Information Packs

A draft pack was circulated, the general opinion was that they looked good and would be a good resource. The packs will be sent out to churches first, with reply paid postcards enclosed to audit the support for Fairtrade within the faith community. Celia asked if the packs could also be sent to the Diocese. After the churches have been contacted, we will send out packs to the businesses that responded to Richard's letter and then to community councils and finally we will make up a pack for schools.

Action – Nicola and Pauline to start sending out packs to churches, including those already contacted by Celia, and update the group at the next meeting

b. Fairtrade Fortnight Awards

A submission was made on behalf of the Renfrewshire Fairtrade Steering Group to the Fairtrade Foundation's Fairtrade Fortnight Awards, for our Roadshow and associated activities this year. Winners should be notified by the end of June; Pauline will let the group know the outcome.

4. Events

a. World Fairtrade Day

Nicola gave an update on the events of World Fairtrade Day and showed pictures of the Council's coffee tasting session which proved a success. A survey had been carried out amongst staff, with the overwhelming majority of staff stating that their coffee being Fairtrade was either 'very important or important' to them.

b. Five Years of Paisley as a Fairtrade Town

A subgroup comprising Maureen, Liz, Amanda, Marie, Nicola and Pauline have met to move forward with the plans for the 23rd of August and a brief update was given. The 'Two Rivers Festival' is also taking place that day but Marie has been in touch with organiser Tommy McGrory and it is hoped to link up the two events so they compliment each other. The message for the event is to show that Fairtrade is more than just coffee and the PR surrounding it will reflect this. Marks and Spencer have agreed to support the event by having a Fairtrade window display that weekend and the Fairtrade banners will be hung throughout the town.

Action – subgroup to continue to meet, Pauline to email details of event around Steering Group once finalised.

5. Progress Updates

a. Rainbow Turtle

Rainbow Turtle have collected the keys for the new warehouse in Wallneuk. The plan is to create a Fairtrade 'Hub' where Rainbow Turtle can build up a wholesale and distribution service and continue with their popular 'sale or return' and holding stalls at events across Renfrewshire. They are working with Café Direct and Divine Chocolate to draw up contracts to be wholesalers of their products so that they can be more competitive on the procurement side. They are aiming to launch the 'Hub' in August alongside the events for 'Five Years of Paisley as a Fairtrade Town'. Liz said they were very pleased with the new premises and thanked Cllr Mackay and Richard and his team for their support in moving this forward.

b. Procurement

Iain gave an overview of the current position with purchasing Fairtrade goods within the Council. The Council have to abide by the boundaries as set out by European laws. Iain and his team have been in discussions with the Scottish Procurement Directorate (SPD) and the Scottish Government, looking for more guidance on this issue, as the existing advice is fairly vague (mostly policy) and was last updated in 2005. They are looking at ways of strengthening the existing 'Added Value' wording within the tender document and also at putting out a communication to procurement officers across the Council regarding Fairtrade. Maureen asked if he had been in touch with the Scottish Fairtrade Forum. Iain hasn't but hoped that if they were lobbying SPD and the Government also then this might strengthen the argument. Discussions have also taken place with Scotland Excel; they are very supportive of our Fairtrade campaign but are also bound by the same legislation. There is a role for the group to play in terms of lobbying big suppliers, and making them aware that there is a market for Fairtrade within the public sector. Iain will update on any progress with SPD at future meetings.

c. Fairtrade Council Report

A report has been submitted for consideration at the Council meeting on the 26th of June, essentially detailing what the group has achieved so far and what steps still need to be taken to achieve Fairtrade Zone Status for Renfrewshire. All group members are welcome to attend the Council meeting which is open to the public.

Action – Pauline to circulate the Council report and to update on any comments from the Council following the meeting on the 26th

d. Application for Zone Status

Our progress towards Fairtrade Zone Status has been good and as detailed in the Council report, we should be in a position to apply towards the autumn, giving the Fairtrade Foundation plenty of time to process our application with a view to celebrating during Fairtrade Fortnight 2009. There are some actions which will require assistance from the group membership when compiling the application, namely the audit of shops and cafes across Renfrewshire. Nearer the time the group will discuss how best to tackle this.

e. Local groups update

Bishopton held a Fairtrade Café as part of the Christian Aid Plant Sale and are also hosting a Fairtrade stall on Bishopton Day (21st June). Celia explained that they had been having some problems with their local Cooperative store in terms of supporting their campaign. Bishopton are interested in producing a Fairtrade shopping bag and would be interested in learning from Lochwinnoch's experiences.

PFTP have been focusing their efforts in supporting the wider Renfrewshire campaign, assisting with the recent changes at Rainbow Turtle and also preparing for the five years celebrations.

Lochwinnoch provided an email update - they are moving on with their campaign, have successfully lobbied their local spar store who are now stocking a range of Fairtrade products, the group has produced a Fairtrade shopping bag and are running a stall at the Lochwinnoch Gala Day on Saturday (14th June). They hope to apply for Fairtrade Village Status soon.

6. Schools Steering Group

Caroline and Louise led a discussion about setting up a Steering Group for schools, initially Secondary Schools, to campaign together on Fairtrade. Soon the schools will not be able to sell chocolate, and therefore need to look beyond that for supporting Fairtrade, planning

inter-schools events and supporting each other. Marianne suggested linking in with the pupil forum. It was agreed that a subgroup would be formed to develop this further.

Action – PM to email Marianne Louise and Caroline’s contact details. Marianne to set up a subgroup meeting with Louise, Caroline and Laura which will report back to future meetings.

7. AOCB

Businesses – responses to Richard’s most recent mailing with the Fairtrade Guides are still coming in, some businesses have asked to be included in next year’s guides and others have asked for advice on supporting Fairtrade.

Community – a Fairtrade presentation was given to the Greensyde Centre in Linwood, a day centre for adults with learning disabilities. The presentation was very successful and the social committee are interested in Greensyde becoming a Fairtrade Centre. They are keen to link in with the local secondary schools for support. Representatives from the social committee have been invited to attend the Steering Group.

St Mirren Football Club – Cllr McMillan suggested the group approach St Mirren to ask if they can start using Fairtrade footballs. He understands that a special football has to be used for official games, but felt that they might be able to use Fairtrade footballs during their training. It was agreed that this could bring excellent press coverage and was a good idea. The group also discussed the idea of arranging a Fairtrade Football Match.

Action – Pauline to draft letter to St Mirren on behalf of group

8. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on **Thursday 28th August 2008 at 11am** in the Council Chambers.