
To: Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board

On: 4th November 2019

Report by: Lead Officer

Heading: The Effectiveness of Fair Trade within Renfrewshire

1. Summary

1.1. At its meeting on 28th May 2019, the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board agreed to the recommendations and review programme outlined in respect of providing an informed, evidence-based review on the effectiveness of Fair Trade within Renfrewshire.

1.2. The following report outlines the progress made by the Lead Officer in terms of taking forward the review since the last meeting on 23rd September 2019. The scoping paper stated that meetings would take place with Local Authorities and partners. The key areas of progress have included:

- Results of the staff survey on Fair Trade.
- A meeting with the Chair of Renfrewshire's Fair Trade Steering Group, Councillor Iain Nicolson.
- A meeting with Philip & Eve Broadis, Directors of Fair Trade Scotland Ltd.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board notes the progress of the review;

3 Progress

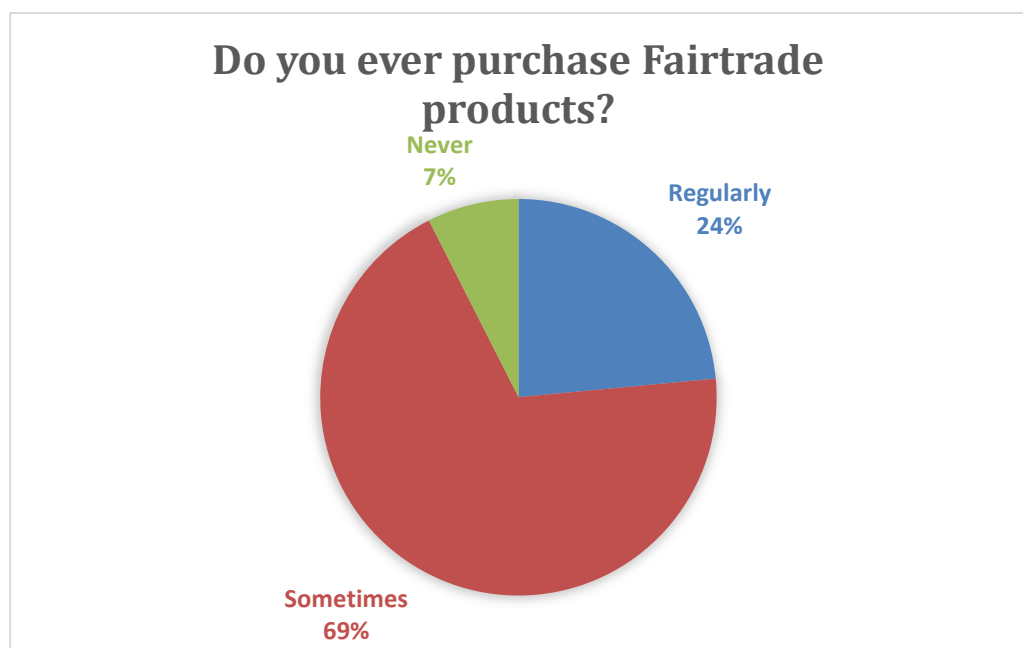
3.1 Staff Fair Trade Survey

- 3.2 At present, Renfrewshire has no processes in place to monitor the effectiveness of fair trade.

A survey of staff on fair trade was undertaken to get a better understanding as to what motivates people to purchase fair trade and provide examples of fair trade products that people are interested in purchasing.

- 3.3 The fair trade survey was completed by 268 members of staff with 100% of respondents having heard of fair trade.

- 3.4 The vast majority (93%) of staff were either regular or occasional consumers of fair trade products.

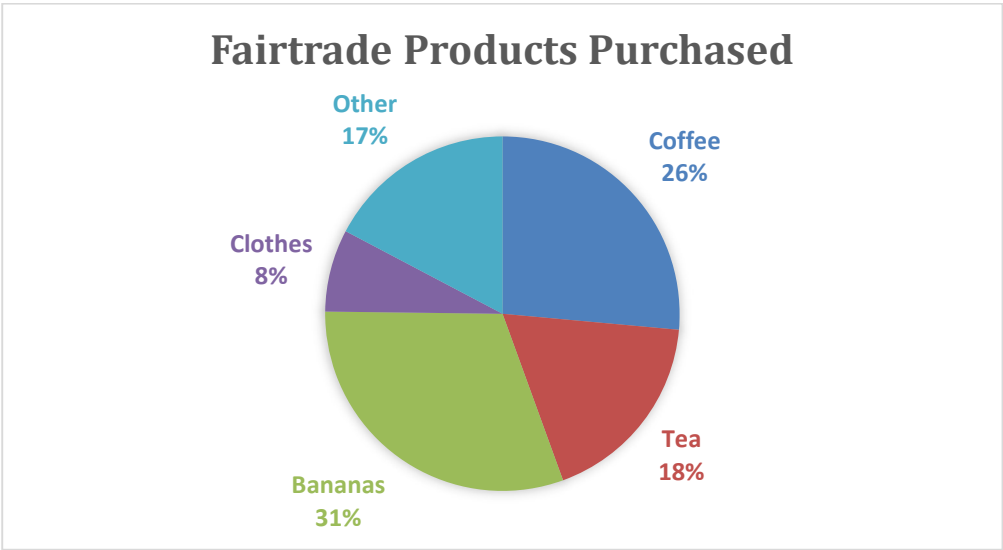


3.5

Of the fair trade products purchased, the vast majority were aware of items that are classified as fairtrade due to the fairtrade symbol.

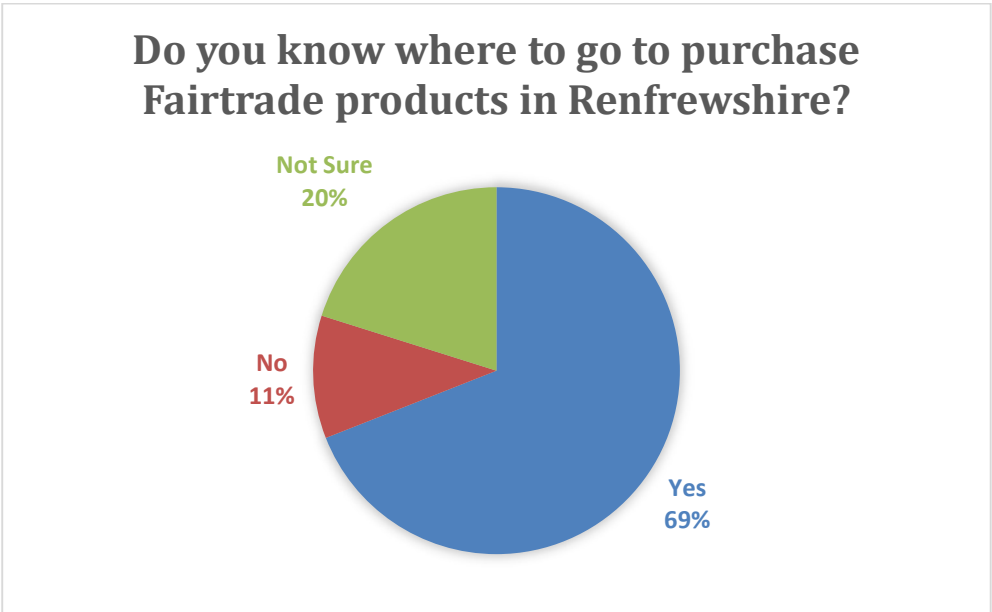


The breakdown of items purchased was mainly, tea, coffee and bananas as detailed. It was also noted that other items purchased included, chocolate, biscuits, jewellery, crafts and ornaments.

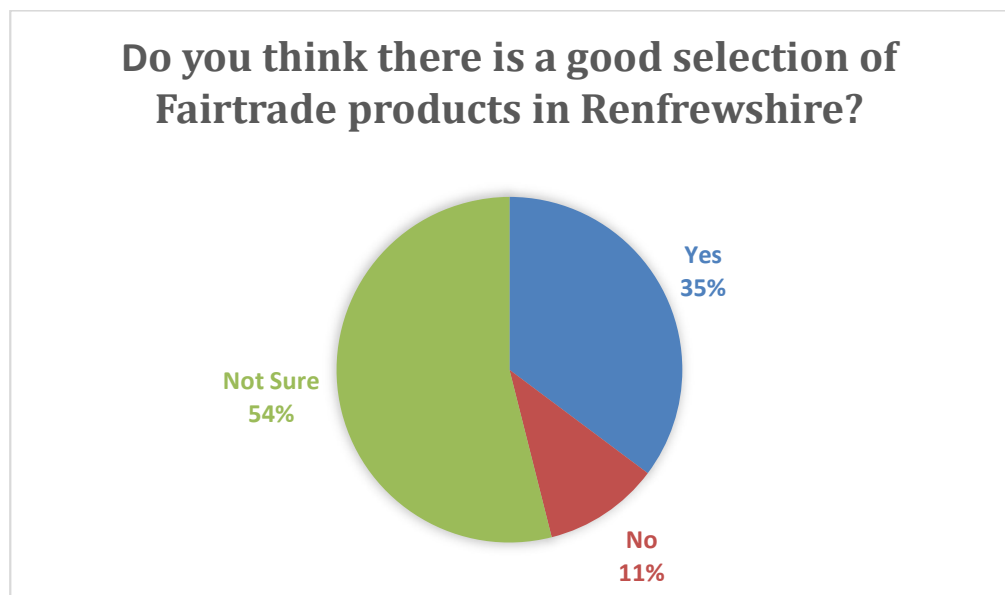


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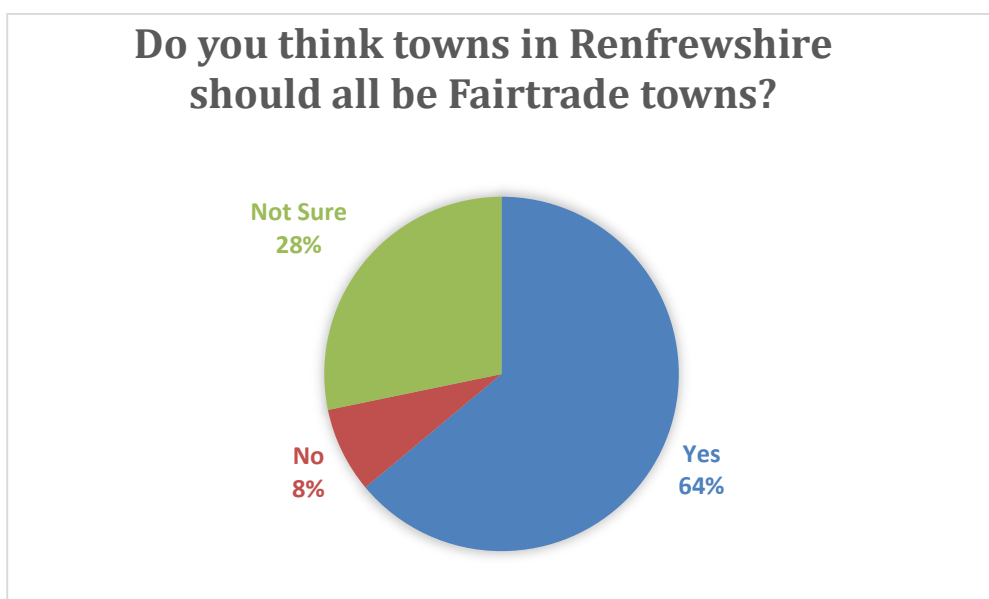
It was noted that the majority of people responding to the survey were aware of where to go to purchase fair trade products in Renfrewshire.



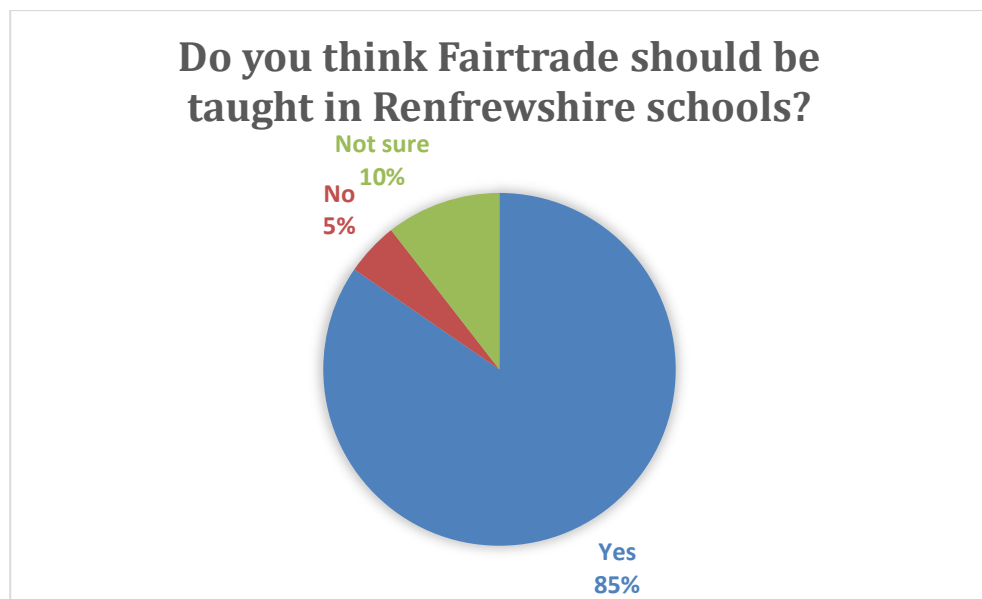
- 3.7 Although the majority of people were aware of where to go to purchase fair trade products, the majority were also unaware of the selection available in Renfrewshire. The results would indicate that the shops selling fair trade products are known to the potential customer base. However, it appears that many of the potential customers are choosing not to enter the shops and explore what items are available. In order to increase footfall, specialist shops may need to look at advertising the product range available to entice people through the door, rather than just trusting people to purchase purely through ethical values.



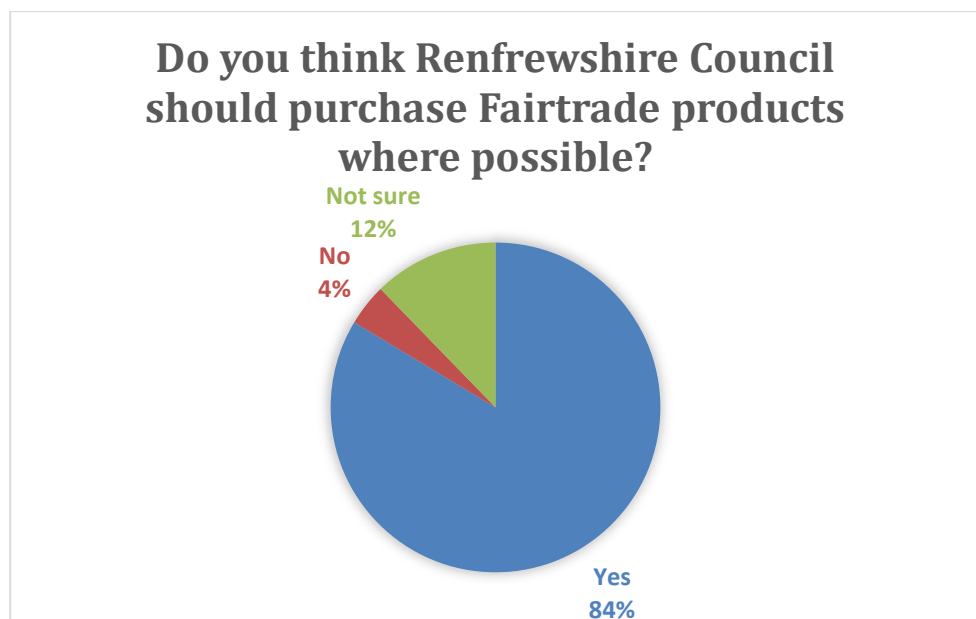
- 3.8 The vast majority (64%) of people believe that Renfrewshire should be made up of Fairtrade towns. However, many people are unaware as to what is required to be a Fairtrade town.



- 3.9 An overwhelming 85% of respondents believe that the children of Renfrewshire should be taught about fair trade at school. Fair trade or the ethical purchasing of goods does not form part of the school curriculum. At present it is down to individual schools as to whether they want to get involved in the promotion of fair trade and to introduce it into lessons, with some schools choosing to be more pro-active than others. It is recommended that options surrounding education and fair trade should be explored further by the fair trade steering group.



- 3.10 The majority (84%) of respondents believe that Renfrewshire Council should purchase fairtrade products where possible.



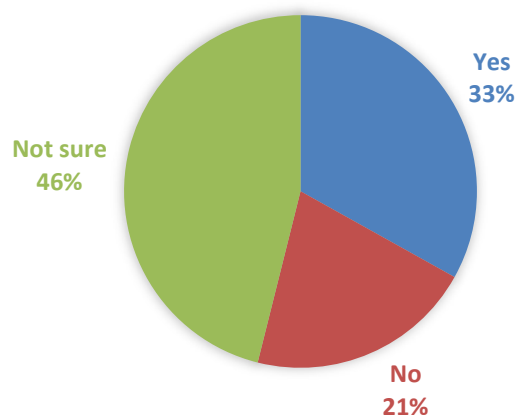
During the financial year 2017/2018, Renfrewshire Council purchased a variety of fairtrade items from the Scotland Excel Framework. Under the groceries and provisions lot, fairtrade items amounted to £5,732, less than 1% of the total spend of £814,838 with the items purchased detailed below.

Product Description	Quantity
Kit Kat (4 Fingers)	2
Kit Kat (2 Fingers)	182
Maltesers	1
Orange Juice (500ML)	8
Orange Juice (200ML)	125
White Sugar Sticks	31
Demerera Sugarsticks	16
Coffee Sticks - 1 Cup	23
Drinking Chocolate	1
Apple Juice (200ML)	92
Tea Bags (250)	3
Coffee Granules (250G)	9
Coffee Sticks - 1 Cup	2

It is recommended that a meeting is held between Procurement and a member of the fair trade steering group with a view to increasing the quantity of fair trade items currently being purchased.

- 3.11 Only one third of people believe that Renfrewshire Council is currently doing enough to promote fair trade. It is also clear that almost half of the people surveyed were unsure as to what promotion is currently undertaken. It is a recommendation that the steering group members increase the profile of fair trade within Renfrewshire. This could also be coupled with item 4.5, which recommends that specialist fair trade shops looks at advertising the product range available to entice people through the door, rather than just trusting people to purchase purely through ethical values.

Do you think Renfrewshire Council does enough to promote Fairtrade?



Renfrewshire Council have been actively involved in the promotion and engagement of fair trade for a number of years in a variety of ways such as the Fair Trade Steering Group.

At present, a letter drop is being investigated with an aim to engage with local businesses to highlight opportunities relating to fair trade and to allow them to promote fair trade in their work place. It will also allow local organisation and business' to highlight the benefits of fair trade.

It is anticipated that the letter drop will highlight the work that The Fair Trade Steering Group does and will hopefully result in new members joining the group. Most organisations or businesses have a corporate and social responsibility.

The engagement with local organisations and businesses could result in the creation of a fair trade or ethical award that can be displayed in shop windows etc. This could be explored further by the Fair Trade Steering Group along with any qualifying criteria.

4 Discussion with Councillor Iain Nicolson

- 4.1 The Steering group is there to allow any persons or organisations to come together to discuss fair trade within Renfrewshire. The convenor of the group is the Leader of Renfrewshire Council, who also chairs the

group. As such, a meeting has taken place with Councillor Iain Nicolson to discuss the issues surrounding fair trade.

- 4.2 It was noted that fairtrade as a brand has moved on over the years and the brand has been adopted by larger commercial organisations which may have diminished the ethical drive behind the fairtrade movement.
- 4.3 There is value in the promotion of ethical procurement with fair trade being one of the key strands. This point was discussed at the last fair trade steering group with little traction. This was mainly down to issues surrounding what is classified as ethical as there is no set standard to ensure consistent principles are adopted. There are currently many environmental platforms vying for the public's attention and fair trade is one of many.
- 4.4 Engagement with local communities and voluntary groups should be explored as the steering group exists to support fair trade throughout Renfrewshire. New members would help promote fair trade to the wider community.
- 4.5 Renfrewshire Council should be doing more to promote fair trade. This thought mirrors part of the staff survey with only 33% of staff thinking that the council does enough to promote fair trade. Councillor Nicolson discussed that one element could be a more aggressive procurement policy, with the council purchasing fair trade goods unless there is justification not to, whilst ensuring that products are still reasonably priced. This thought was agreed by 84% as detailed in the staff survey (section 3.10). Evidence should be gathered to detail why we do not buy fair trade to try and drive change. One of the starting points should be the Atrium café to ensure there is a focus on the purchase and selling of more fairtrade products.
- 4.6 Councillor Nicolson believes that the promotion of fair trade within schools should be encouraged and is echoed by 85% of staff surveyed. However, schools cannot be forced to engage as it does not form part of the school curriculum.
- 4.7 The promotion of fair trade to the wider public and businesses could be achieved through the award of a Renfrewshire Council fair trade sticker that can be displayed by local businesses. This will be discussed with the council's Planning & Performance Manager who oversees fair trade within Renfrewshire Council to discuss options and possible award criteria.

- 4.8 Councillor Nicolson stated that fair trade within Renfrewshire needs to show significant progress and the steering group needs fresh ideas to encourage fair trade and ensure that it thrives and continues to have a positive impact in the future.

5 Details of Discussion with the Directors of Fair Trade Scotland Ltd.

- 5.1 Philip & Eve Broadis discussed the differences between the Fairtrade Mark and the World Fair Trade Organisation (WFTO) accreditation.

- 5.2 The Fairtrade Mark guarantees giving a set price to the producer. Unfortunately, not all products carrying the Fairtrade Mark are 100% fairtrade. One example of this is when 10 farms produce a crop and only 1 of these farms is classified as fairtrade. In this instance, when all the produce, e.g. coffee is collected together, the fairtrade mark can be given to the entire crop even if only a small percentage is certified as fairtrade. However, this method also ensures a set price for the producer that can provide stability for their economy.

- 5.3 The impact of goods must be audited to ensure the producer is benefiting. At present, this is not undertaken in order to get the Fairtrade Mark and the process of accreditation is not fully audited.

- 5.4 Large International Organisations have diluted the mark in recent years as they purchase produce from co-operatives. Many of these co-operatives are not monitored and it may be a family with a number of farms that excludes the rest of the surrounding community.

- 5.5 At present, the WFTO is the only organisation that ensures the producer is key in the chain. It is relatively straight forward for a company to get the Fairtrade Mark and many would find it difficult to obtain the WFTO mark due to the thoroughness of the accreditation process.

The WFTO have set out 10 principles that must be adhered to in order to obtain their accreditation. This rigorous accreditation takes many years to obtain. Producers must stick to all 10 principles to get the WFTO mark. The 10 principles are:



5.6 The Fairtrade Mark and WFTO accreditation both have their roles to play in the promotion of fairtrade. It is down to individual organisations to decide what level of fair trade they want their goods to be.

6 Future Updates

6.1 As per the scoping paper, further investigations and discussions shall take place with partners including Rainbow Turtle. Discussions shall also take place with Renfrewshire Councils Strategic Procurement Manager to explore options or barriers to purchasing more fair trade produce.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** - *none*
2. **HR & Organisational Development** - *none*
3. **Community Planning**
4. **Legal** - *none*
5. **Property/Assets** – *none*
6. **Information Technology** - *none*
7. **Equality & Human Rights**

- a) The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

8. **Health & Safety** - *none*
 9. **Procurement** - *none*
 10. **Risk** - *none*
 11. **Privacy Impact** - *none*
 12. **Cosla Policy Position** – not applicable.
 13. **Climate Risk** - *none*
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