

To: Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board

On: 28th May 2019

Report by: Lead Officer

Heading: The Effectiveness of Fair Trade within Renfrewshire

1. Summary

- 1.1. At its meeting on 27th August 2018, members of the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board agreed an annual programme of activity for the Board for 2018/19. This included a review which would look at the effectiveness of fair trade within Renfrewshire.
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2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board considers and approves:
- the purpose and proposed scope of the review;
 - the provisional timescale as outlined in Appendix 1 of this report.
 - authorise the Lead Officer to contact any organisations recommended by the Board who may have information useful to the Board and who may be potential witnesses;
 - delegate powers to the Lead Officer, in consultation with the Convenor, and grant the Convenor of the Board permission to extend the timescale of the final report from 16th March 2020 to 26th May 2020 to allow for the inclusion of Fairtrade Fortnight

which takes place during February each year. Further permission is sought to alter the timescales of the review to accommodate the provision of material evidence, including that provided by witnesses throughout the course of the review;

- authorise the Lead Officer to make the necessary arrangements to progress the review within the agreed timescales.
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3. Background

3.1 Fair trade aims to provide fair terms of trade for farmers and workers in the developing world, whilst:

- obtaining better prices,
- improving working conditions,
- providing local sustainability,

This is undertaken in a variety of ways by requiring companies to pay sustainable prices. That is, prices that never fall below the market price for the produce.

3.2 Fair trade aims to stop discrimination against the poorest, weakest producer by addressing conventional trade. This enables farmers, producers and those associated with fair trade in the developing world to improve their conditions and have more control over their lives.

4. Fair Trade in Renfrewshire

4.1 Renfrewshire Council recognises the importance that fair trade has; both within Renfrewshire and the effect it has globally to the producer.

4.2 On 28th February 2019, Renfrewshire Council became one of the first Local Authorities in the UK to formally adopt the International Fair Trade Charter. Adoption of the Charter is not legally binding, however it signals Renfrewshire Council's intention to commit to the fair trade principles set out in the Charter.

4.3 The International Fair Trade Charter is a comprehensive document that lays out the purpose and aims of fair trade, as agreed by the World Fair Trade Organisation and Fairtrade International, two of the biggest global fair trade organisations.

- 4.4 Renfrewshire has a strong fair trade brand with a prominent retail outlet (Rainbow Turtle) situated in Paisley that is dedicated to the selling of fair trade produce. Paisley is also home to a commercial fair trade importer, distributor and educator based in Paisley (Just Trading Scotland).
- 4.5 Many of Renfrewshire's towns and villages are classified as fair trade towns.
- 4.6 Each year Renfrewshire Council and its partners participate in Fairtrade Fortnight. A variety of events take place in local communities and schools throughout this period aimed at promoting Fairtrade and raising awareness.

5. Purpose of the Review

- 5.1 The key purpose of this review will be to:
- (1) understand what motivates people to purchase fair trade products.
 - (2) ensure that fair trade in Renfrewshire benefits the producer at source.
 - (3) understand the processes in place to monitor the effectiveness of fair trade within Renfrewshire
 - (4) understand how fair trade is promoted within schools.
 - (5) determine if the current processes in place for the purchase and distribution of fair trade goods is the most efficient, both for the end producer and the customer.
 - (6) identify if there are other ways to deliver fair trade to ensure best value, whilst ensuring that the correct people are benefiting. This could include investigating if the current process of purchasing from numerous countries and spreading the wealth is the most beneficial, or, focus on a single country.

6. Scope of the Review

- 6.1 In undertaking this review, it is recommended that the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board approve that the Lead Officer:
- Consults with fair trade Organisations within and out-with Renfrewshire, namely Rainbow Turtle, Just Trading Scotland, Scottish Fair Trade Forum, Fairtrade International and Fair Trade Scotland. The intention of this is to understand the process or

purchasing, distributing and selling fair trade products and to gain an understanding of what motivates people to purchase fair trade.

- In relation to items 5.1(3) & 5.1(4) listed above, the Lead Officer will focus on the services currently provided by the Chief Executive's Service, predominantly how Renfrewshire Council engages with schools and community groups and how Renfrewshire Council monitors if fair trade is effective.
- Presents comparative information on fair trade within East Dunbartonshire Council, a Local Authority widely regarded as being one of the leading fair trade Authorities in Scotland.
- The Lead Officer will engage with Elected Members on the Fair Trade Steering Group to gain their overall views on fair trade within Renfrewshire.

7. Timetable and Witnesses

- 7.1 It is proposed that the review commences following the meeting of the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board and is progressed through subsequent Board meetings, with a final draft report being submitted for approval in March 2020 and a final report thereafter to Council in April 2020.
- 7.2 It is proposed that stakeholders from the council's Chief Executive's Service, Children Services, other Local Authorities, and partners including Rainbow Turtle, Just Trading Scotland, Scottish Fair Trade Forum and Fair Trade Scotland are invited to future meetings. Witnesses will be asked to provide written evidence prior to any meetings with the Board to allow members sufficient time for preparation ahead of the meeting.
- 7.3 It is proposed that the Lead Officer take forward the indicative timetable as set out in Appendix 1 of this report.
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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.
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Appendix 1 – Timetable for the Effectiveness of Fair Trade within Renfrewshire

Date of Board Meeting	Stage of Review
28 May 2019	Commencement of review
26 August 2019	Continuation of review
23 September 2019	Continuation of review
4 November 2019	Continuation of review
20 January 2020	Continuation of review
16 March 2020	Draft report to Board
TBC	Final report to Council

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