

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 8 FEBRUARY 2006

FAIRTRADE

Report by Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Support

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider approval of a resolution in support of Fairtrade.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Fairtrade Foundation exists to improve the position of poor and marginalised producers in the developing world. The Fairtrade Foundation encourages UK industry and consumers to support fairer trade and to purchase Fairtrade products.
- 2.2 The FAIRTRADE Mark is a certification label awarded to products sourced from the developing world that meet internationally recognised standards. In the UK, the first FAIRTRADE Mark products appeared in 1994 and sales are still expanding rapidly. Currently, more than 1,300 products carry the FAIRTRADE Mark in the UK.
- 2.3 Some 135 towns, cities and areas have already achieved Fairtrade status in UK. There are 231 towns or cities in the UK currently working towards the award. Many Scottish councils have passed a resolution to support the aims of Fairtrade.

3. ACHIEVING FAIRTRADE STATUS

- 3.1 There are five activities that a town or council area has to do in order to become a Fairtrade Town, City or Zone:
- (i) The local council must pass a resolution supporting Fairtrade and serve Fairtrade coffee and tea at its meeting and in offices and staff restaurants.
 - (ii) A range of Fairtrade products must be readily available in the area's shops and served in local cafés and catering establishments (targets are set in relation to population).
 - (iii) Fairtrade products must be used by a number of local work places (estate agents, hairdressers etc.) and community organisations (churches, schools etc.).
 - (iv) The Council must attract popular support for the campaign.

- (v) A local Fairtrade steering group must be convened to ensure continued commitment to Fairtrade Town status.

3.2 Monitoring of whether the Fairtrade Town goals and activities have been met is carried out by self-assessment, usually through the town's Fairtrade Steering Group. When a group has completed the self-assessment, it must be signed by two group members, plus a local authority representative. Once the assessment is returned to the Fairtrade Foundation, a certificate is issued confirming the Community's Fairtrade Town, City or Zone status. The Fairtrade Steering Group must submit a monitoring report on an annual basis.

4. FAIRTRADE WORKING GROUP

4.1 The Corporate Management Team has considered the issue of Fairtrade and has agreed that it should be supported.

4.2 In order to take forward the Fairtrade initiative within East Ayrshire, a short-life working group has been formed, with an officer from each Council department. A Principal Officer from Corporate Support chairs this group. The Fairtrade Working Group has a remit to develop the Council's approach to achieving Fairtrade status.

4.3 Whilst the Council is not yet a Fairtrade Council, the Council's Onsite Services, in response to a request from the Trades Unions, now only buy Fairtrade tea and coffee and have done so for several years.

4.4 Within East Ayrshire Council's secondary schools, there is already a substantial amount of Fairtrade activity. Schools hold special events to raise awareness of Fairtrade, peace and justice issues. In some schools, pupils sell Fairtrade products during intervals, lunch breaks, at parents' evenings and at school functions. Stewarton Academy also has strong links with the One World Shop in Glasgow.

5. NEXT STEPS

5.1 The Council must pass a resolution in support of Fairtrade. A proposed resolution is appended to this report.

5.2 The Fairtrade Working Group is currently organising a public meeting to establish the level of interest in setting up a Fairtrade Partnership or Partnerships. The Partnership Group must be made up of representatives from the community.

6. FINANCIAL / LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no financial or legal implications arising from this report at this stage.

7. COMMUNITY PLANNING/POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 As indicated in 4.3 above, Onsite Services purchase Fairtrade tea and coffee for Council meetings. The adoption of this resolution formalises Council policy in this respect.
- 7.2 The adoption of a resolution in support of Fairtrade is broadly consistent with the aims and objectives of the Community Plan, under the heading of Improving Opportunities.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 It is recommended that the Committee:-
- (i) recommend to Council the adoption of the proposed resolution in support of Fairtrade;
 - (ii) request further progress reports on the achievement of Fairtrade status for East Ayrshire; and
 - (iii) otherwise note the content of this report.

Elizabeth Morton
Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Support
30 January 2006

Background Information

Members wishing further information should contact Elizabeth Morton, Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources, Tel. (01563) 576103 or Carol Foote, Principal Officer, Tel (01563) 576159

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EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

Resolution in support of Fairtrade

The Council aims to be recognised by the residents and business community of East Ayrshire, by its suppliers, its employees and other local authorities, as a council that supports and promotes the aims of Fairtrade. The Council therefore resolves to:

- assist local Fairtrade Steering Groups in promoting and encouraging Fairtrade initiatives within East Ayrshire;
- use Fairtrade products when catering for Council meetings and functions;
- encourage the use of Fairtrade products amongst Council Services and staff; and
- promote the aims of the Fairtrade movement through the Council's website and in appropriate Council publications.

February 2006.