

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure
DATE	15 November 2011
DIRECTOR	Stewart Carruth
TITLE OF REPORT	Fairtrade City Working Group
REPORT NUMBER:	CG/11/135

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update the Committee on the recommendation made at the last meeting of the Fairtrade City Working Group that the Group be disbanded and replaced with a Fairtrade City Steering Group.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee ratifies the decision taken at the meeting of the Fairtrade City Working Group of 7 June 2011 and agrees to disband the Working Group.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications as this report is of a housekeeping nature.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There are no other implications.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

Following discussions at the Working Group as to how best to take forward the promotion of Fairtrade in the city, officers had prepared a report outlining various options for the future of the Group. It was felt by members that the Working Group had potentially achieved as much as it could in its present form, and that the promotion of Fairtrade and the maintenance of Aberdeen's Fairtrade status should be taken forward through a wider forum. Although the Council remains very much committed to Fairtrade, and the Working Group in its current form had supported many projects and achievements, it was felt that taking the Group in a different direction could prove to be more productive, particularly given the current financial climate.

At its meeting on 7 June 2011, the Working Group was presented with three options for consideration. Option one was to retain the Working Group in its current form; option two was to expand the membership of the Working Group; and option three was to disband the Working Group and set up a new Fairtrade City Steering Group which could still be attended by Councillors and

other Council officials but would not be led or run by the Council in the way the Working Group was currently administered.

The guidance from Fairtrade advises that a Steering Group can be composed of representatives from local development agency groups (the Fairtrade guidance gives Oxfam and the World Development Movement as examples); Fairtrade shops or cafes; schools and youth centres; supportive supermarket managers; local Councillors; and a local sustainability officer.

The option of forming a new Steering Group would mean that any Council-related Fairtrade issues could be submitted to the Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Committee (as parent Committee) if required, and a summary report of progress made with Fairtrade throughout the year would be submitted to Committee on an annual basis.

The Working Group agreed to approve option three (disbanding the Working Group and forming a new Fairtrade Steering Group), and to recommend this to the Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Committee as parent Committee for ratification.

On 7 October 2011, an event was held at the Beach Ballroom for invited guests. The aim of the event was to look for potential Steering Group members; celebrate Aberdeen's Fairtrade City status; and highlight the achievements of the Fairtrade City Working Group. As a result of this event, a list of attendees interested in forming a new Steering Group has been collated by the Sustainable Development Officer, Enterprise Planning and Infrastructure, who is the lead officer for Fairtrade issues within the Council. The Steering Group will develop a new action plan approach to renewing and retaining Aberdeen's Fairtrade City status. This renewal process for Fairtrade status is required every 2 years by certification body the Fairtrade Foundation.

It is anticipated that Elected Members may wish to be involved in the Steering Group once it is fully established, and this would be dealt with through the normal Outside Bodies appointments process.

6. IMPACT

This report and the proposed formation of a Fairtrade City Steering Group links with the Council's commitment in the Community Plan to actively promote sustainable production and consumption, in particular of eco-labelled, organic, ethical and Fairtrade products.

7. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Stephanie Dunsmuir
Committee Assistant
Legal and Democratic Services
Tel – (52)2503
Email – sdunsmuir@aberdeencity.gov.uk