

## **AGENDA ITEM**

### **REPORT TO COUNCIL**

**19 OCTOBER 2011**

### **REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF LAW AND DEMOCRACY**

## **FAIRTRADE**

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To look at some of the activities the Council has been involved in since it resolved to support Fairtrade and to ask the Council and individual members to pledge their commitment to the principles underlying Fairtrade, maintaining the Borough's Fairtrade status and the work of the Fairtrade Steering Group.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the Council reaffirms its commitment to
  - promote awareness of Fairtrade issues and make publicity and educational information available to local people concerning the impact of unfair trade and the opportunities that Fairtrade provides to promote sustainable development.
  - encourage the use of Fairtrade products when catering for Council meetings and functions.
  - promote Fairtrade amongst local businesses, commercial and other organisations and to
  - support the work of the Fairtrade Steering Group and maintain the Borough's Fairtrade status
2. That each member of the Council signs a copy of the above reaffirmation of commitment, which will be framed and displayed in Stockton Town Hall

### **DETAIL**

1. The Fairtrade campaign was created in the late 1980s to help farmers in the developing world ensure they receive a fair price for their produce where fluctuating prices may not cover their cost of production.
2. The Fairtrade mark indicates that the item bearing it has been produced to a particular standard which involves the producers getting a fair return on their effort, including a Fairtrade premium to be spent on improvements decided on by the community. There are also rules about involving everyone in the decision making processes to ensure that the whole community benefits from the trade. Fairtrade products have to be produced with minimum harm to the environment also.

3. In March 2006 the Council resolved as follows:-

Stockton Borough Council welcomes the Fairtrade campaign supported by national organisations such as Oxfam and Christian Aid and locally by the Youth Assembly and the Joint Trade Union Council and recognises the contribution that Fairtrade can make to the long term alleviation of world poverty.

The Council, as an important consumer and opinion leader, therefore resolves:

- To promote awareness of Fairtrade issues and make publicity and educational information available to local people concerning the impact of unfair trade and the opportunities that Fairtrade provides to promote sustainable development.
  - To encourage the use of Fairtrade products when catering for Council meetings and functions.
  - To promote Fairtrade amongst local businesses, commercial and other organisations
  - To allocate the responsibility for meeting the criteria to become a Fairtrade Borough to the Fairtrade Steering Group.
4. The resolution had cross party support and at the time most members signed an A3 copy of the resolution which was framed and displayed at the Town Hall for a time.
5. Subsequently the Steering Group worked hard with residents and community groups to achieve the targets necessary to be granted Fairtrade status. In March 2007 notification was received that the necessary criteria had been met and Stockton was awarded Fairtrade Borough status.
6. Since that time the Steering Group has continued to promote Fairtrade and the following is a selection of related work, successes and activities that have taken place in the Borough:
- March 2008 - Newtown Resource Centre café (Gold Leaf Café) had one of their recipes accepted for publication in a new Fairtrade Recipe Book, edited by Sophie Grigson
  - October 2008 - Successful Fairtrade Wine tasting event
  - Feb/March 2009 - "Go Bananas Relay Event" won the runner up prize for the most innovative campaign in the country for Fairtrade Fortnight that year.
  - March 2009 - Publication of the Stockton-on-Tees Fairtrade Directory, listing places where Fairtrade products are available in the borough.
  - September 2009 - Successfully renewed Fairtrade Borough Status.
  - March 2010 - Tea Dances across the borough held using Fairtrade tea, coffee, sugar and biscuits to give people a chance to sample them.
  - Summer 2010 - St Cuthbert's Primary School became the first school in the Borough to achieve Fairtrade Status.

- Spring 2011 - Hundreds of people across the borough decorated Fairtrade cotton bunting as part of the national world record attempt on the longest length of hand made bunting. Stockton's was strung up on the Town Hall and made it into the Gazette and the Circuit. It then went down to London to be hung in Battersea Park with the rest of the world record beating attempt.

As well as this the Steering Group has undertaken numerous other smaller events to encourage more and more people to support Fairtrade.

7. It's over 5 years since Council made the resolution, detailed at paragraph 3 above, and in that time a great deal of progress in this area has been made, not only within the Borough, but also nationally and internationally. There have been two Elections of the whole Council in that time and many new members have joined the Authority. Given this it may now be appropriate to ask Council to re affirm its commitment to Fairtrade.
8. In addition, the Fairtrade Steering Group has highlighted the need to 'show that there's a real commitment on the part of the Council to supporting Fairtrade'. This could be through increased support of the Steering Group, more people willing to help in activities, encouraging people to try out and use Fairtrade products etc
9. European Local Democracy week 10<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> October has, as its theme, Human Rights. Democratic Services will be working with the Fair Trade Steering Group to highlight the fact that we are a 'Fair Trade' Borough. At the time of writing many events are planned, including ones at Stockton Riverside College and the Queen's Campus of Durham University to promote Fair Trade to students.

#### **FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

11. To be met from existing budgets.

#### **RISK ASSESSMENT**

12. This report is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

#### **EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

13. This report has not been subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment because it is not seeking approval for a new policy, strategy or change in the delivery of a service.

#### **CONSULTATION, INCLUDING WARD COUNCILLORS**

14. Cabinet Member for Access and Communities  
Chair of the Fairtrade Steering Group  
Group Leaders