



Subject:	Fairtrade in Belfast
Date:	21st May 2021
Reporting Officer:	John Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy
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Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	The purpose of this report is to invite Members to pass a resolution updating the Council's support for the continued campaign to maintain Fairtrade City (Borough) status for the Belfast City Council area.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Members of the Committee are asked to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Demonstrate continued support for Fairtrade by passing the following resolution: <p>“This Council acknowledges the very real contribution that Fairtrade makes to sustainable development, tackling poverty, and to improving the lives of people</p>

from some of the most disadvantaged farming communities in the developing world.

Welcoming the efforts of the UK Fairtrade Foundation, Fairtrade Ireland and the regional campaign, with Northern Ireland a Fairtrade devolved region, to raise awareness of the worldwide impact of unfair trade and the opportunities that Fairtrade provides to promote sustainable development, the Council resolves to provide civic leadership and active support for a campaign to maintain Fairtrade City/Borough status for Belfast City Council area.”

- Nominate two Elected Members to the Fairtrade Steering Group, who will act as the Chair and Deputy Chair.

2.2 Towards this objective we will:

- Seek to ensure that Fairtrade certified food and drink options are offered internally, in Council canteens and vending machines, 100% Fairtrade coffee and tea is available for all internal meetings; and included in procurement guidelines with subsequent annual review;
- Work in partnership with the media, businesses and local communities to raise awareness of Fairtrade issues and the opportunities for supporting Fairtrade throughout the City;
- Use our influence to encourage the increased availability and use of Fairtrade products locally, including during Council organized events, hospitality and festivals;
- Encourage the active involvement of communities from across the City in the local Fairtrade Steering Group and campaign for Fairtrade status, including representatives from local schools, churches, businesses and charities;
- Monitor progress on maintaining Fairtrade City/Borough status through production of an annual report; and
- Appoint officer(s) from the Council as administrative support and nomination of two elected members to the Fairtrade Steering Group, who will act as Chair and Deputy Chair.

3.0	Main Report
3.1	Fairtrade is a global movement for change that works to guarantee a better deal for disadvantaged producers in the developing world, securing better prices, decent working conditions and fair terms of trade. Its primary objective is to tackle poverty and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goals 2,5,8,12,13, 16 & 17 in the developing world.
3.2	Working through the concept of trade rather than aid, Fairtrade supports the development of thriving farming and worker communities and the protection of the environment in which they live and work. Fairtrade tackles any use of child labour and/or human trafficking.
3.3	The Fairtrade system achieves a better deal for producers in the developing world, by offering them two major benefits: the “Fairtrade Minimum Price”, which is a guaranteed, minimum price paid by importers and buyers, which covers the cost of sustainable production; and an additional “Fairtrade Premium”, which is designated for social and economic development in the producing communities.
3.4	The farmers and workers themselves decide how the Fairtrade Premium will be spent within their community; hence, in real terms, it means investment in schools, transport, health care, sanitation, an improved environment, infrastructure and better business equipment and practices.
3.5	Fairtrade has a strong and active presence in both the UK and Ireland, represented by the Fairtrade Foundation and Fairtrade Ireland, respectively. A key area of activity for these national organisations is to raise awareness and understanding of trade issues, and to promote the buying of Fairtrade certified products as a way for everyone, no matter who they are, to use the power of their purchase to make a difference to the lives of farmers and workers in the developing world. One of the ways in which this is achieved is through “Fairtrade Town” campaigns, whereby, local communities at borough, district, city, town or village level will be awarded Fairtrade status if they satisfy certain criteria set by the national organisations. Belfast passed Fairtrade resolutions to support a Fairtrade campaign and achieve the Fairtrade status, through full Council on February 18, 2000, October 18, 2004 and through the Policy and Resources Committee on November 19, 2004.
3.6	In 2005, Belfast was awarded Fairtrade City status by the UK Fairtrade Foundation and in 2006 awarded Fairtrade City status by the Fairtrade Ireland, in recognition of the work being carried on to promote Fairtrade. At this stage this was the highest level (City) of status available. In 2017, Northern Ireland achieved Fairtrade devolved region status as done in the other devolved regions of Scotland and Wales. http://www.northernirelandfairtrade.org/projects This requires every Council across Northern Ireland to play its active role in ensuring the entire Council area

	(City, Borough or District) and all Cities and Towns above the population of 6,000 within the Council area achieve Fairtrade status; hence the entire City/Borough/District becomes Fairtrade accredited.
3.7	With the expansion of Borough and District Fairtrade accreditations by the Fairtrade Foundations - Belfast was granted both City and Borough status upon renewal in 2016 and been successfully renewed every two years since, currently until March 19, 2022. Achieving Fairtrade City status was a significant milestone on this City's Fairtrade journey. However, it is important that the campaign continues to gain momentum, obtains commitments from more organisations and increases understanding across the whole community.
	Key Issues
3.8	In order to be awarded Fairtrade status for their borough, city, town, district, village or other area, local communities must meet certain criteria. The criteria, or "goals", set by both the UK Foundation and Fairtrade Ireland are broadly similar and can be summarized as follows:
3.9	Goal 1: Local council passes a resolution supporting Fairtrade, and agrees to serve Fairtrade products (for example, in meetings, offices and canteens), with the exploration and review of internal public procurement to include Fairtrade. Belfast City Council
3.10	In relation to Goal 1, Belfast City Council procurement of tea and coffee is included within the Ambient Foods contract; the specification indicated that coffee was expected to be supplied from Fair Trade products. In addition, there are concession contracts for example catering franchises at City Hall and parks sites where the specification states 'Use of a selection of Fair Trade certified products. It should be noted that the franchisee should, if possible, use a selection of Fair Trade accredited consumables' or 'Only high quality ingredients from reputable suppliers shall be used. The Contractor offers produce that is in season, fair trade and free range as part of its menu offer'.
3.11	Goal 2: A range of Fairtrade products (at least two) must be readily available and served in a number of the area's shops and catering establishments through a stock taking exercise.
3.12	Goal 3: Local workplaces and community organisations, such as places of worship, and schools, are encouraged to support Fairtrade and to use Fairtrade products whenever possible.
3.13	Goal 4: Use is made of the media and events to raise awareness and understanding of Fairtrade across the community.

3.14	In relation to Goal 4, Belfast City Hall was illuminated in the Fairtrade colours on Saturday 8 th May 2021 to mark World Fairtrade Day following a request from the All Party Group on Fairtrade.
3.15	Goal 5: A local Fairtrade steering group, which is representative of the local community and has a member of the council, is convened to ensure the Fairtrade campaign continues to develop and gain new support.
3.16	The passing of a Council resolution in support of Fairtrade is, therefore, a key element in maintaining the campaign. Support for Fairtrade will demonstrate Council's commitment towards social justice and sustainable development and exemplifies the ethical leadership that is one of the corporate values that defines how Council will do business.
3.17	Sustainable development is one of the cross-cutting themes within the Corporate Plan. Running through every aspect of the Council's work, sustainable development is based on balancing social, economic and environmental costs and benefits to ensure the best future for all. Significantly in the context of this item, it necessitates consideration of the international, as well as the local, view.
3.18	<p>It is important to emphasize that Fairtrade is not in competition with local farmers and that buying local and buying Fairtrade need not be mutually exclusive. It is recognized that many farmers locally in the UK and Ireland face similar issues to farmers elsewhere, not least in ensuring that they get a fair return for upholding decent social and environmental standards in their production. However, Fairtrade focuses on tropical products, such as coffee and bananas, that are not grown locally or on a few items, such as honey, for which local supply is insufficient to meet demand, necessitating imports from abroad and traded outside local season.</p> <p>Consequently, using the example of honey, the choice facing shoppers is not necessarily between local honey and Fairtrade certified honey, but between Fairtrade honey and conventional honey imported from abroad. It is possible, therefore, to advocate the purchase of local produce from our own farmers, while at the same time promoting Fairtrade and making an international difference in tackling poverty.</p>
	<u>Financial and Resource Implications</u>
3.19	It is anticipated that the costs associated with Council's support for and promotion of Fairtrade will be met from within existing budgets. The purchase of Fairtrade products and items, which the resolution commits Council to considering, will be carried out in accordance with relevant purchasing and procurement policies.
	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u>
3.20	None have been identified.

3.21	<p>Fairtrade is the gold standard of ethical labelling and can only appear on products from the developing world. Fairtrade is not a charity but local ethical consumerism led by cross community, public/private sector demand and statutory obligations: United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (Agenda 2030), particularly Goals 2,5,8,12,13, 16 & 17, which falls to each council under sustainability. Fairtrade alleviates poverty, tackles global issues and all forms of exploitation (child labour, trafficking), environmental and social considerations, including climate change. Fairtrade has an international dimension and wider implication for the most disadvantaged vulnerable small-scale producers world-wide, that produce the tropical commodities that are not able to be grown locally.</p>
3.22	<p>Fairtrade accreditation (status) in Northern Ireland is based on the entire council area (boundary): District, Borough or City. It is an entire council-wide achievement/accreditation of all sectors and representation of society (government, businesses, schools, churches, colleges/universities, etc).</p>
4.0	Documents Attached
	None