

Cross-Party Group on Fair Trade

Wednesday 14 May 2024 at 6pm, online

Minute

Present

MSPs

Colin Smyth MSP

John Mason MSP

Invited guests

Non-MSP Group Members

Martin Rhodes, Scottish Fair Trade

Charles Sim, East Ayrshire Fair Trade Group

Ian Fowell, Linlithgow Fairtrade Partnership

Jeanette McIvor, Queensferry Fairtrade Group

Morag Rennie, North Lanarkshire Fair Trade Group

Sandra Burt

Sally Romilly, One World Centre and Dundee Fair Trade Forum

Yasmina Ferrigan, Palcrafts/Hadeel

Pam Maxwell, North Ayrshire Fair Trade Group

Kiera Wilkins, Scottish Fair Trade

Scott Erwin, Green City Wholefoods

Craig Sullivan

John McDonald, North Lanarkshire Fair Trade Group

Nduzani Zaya, Scottish Fair Trade

Carol Morton, Hadeel

Jan MacGregor, North Ayrshire Fair Trade Zone Group

Andy Ashcroft, Kool Skools

Lesley Hinds, Office of Foysol Choudhury MSP

Apologies

Sarah Boyack MSP

Maggie Chapman MSP

Anne Walsh, West Lothian Fair Trade Group

Russell Salton, Edinburgh Fairtrade City Steering Group

Martin Meteyard

Karena Jarvie, Perth and Kinross Fair Trade Group

Alison Wright, Dumfries Fair Trade Group

Agenda item 1

Colin Smyth MSP welcomed everyone to the meeting. The minutes of the meeting of March 2024 were approved with minor amendments to the attendance record..

Agenda item 2

Guest Speaker: Martin Rhodes of Scottish Fair Trade presented the findings of their publication: "Report into Fair Trade expenditure and policy commitments within Scotland's public sector 2022-23". He set out that the report looked at the policy and expenditure of public bodies in Scotland in relation to Fair Trade. The report collates the policies of public bodies in relation to fair and ethical trade and expenditure on Fair Trade products. He highlighted that it was easier this time, compared to the previous research covering 2019-22, to find policy documents but that problems still existed in getting data on expenditure in a number of ways. Public bodies continue to define Fair Trade in different ways in recording and reporting sales. Some bodies may not be able to identify Fair Trade products that they have procured because their systems haven't recorded them as Fair Trade. This makes it impossible to compare year on year or between organisations. He highlighted the recommendation in the report that a definition of Fair Trade as a product with the Fairtrade Mark or WFTO Product Label should be used as an indicator in recording, reporting and monitoring Fair Trade procurement. The recommendation is that the definition would be used as an indicator of purchasing to promote transparency and not in the procurement process itself.

Agenda item 3

Discussion: There was a wide-ranging discussion on the report that covered a number of areas including the purchasing budget of schools; the potential for Fair Trade textiles in public procurement; the need to compare Fair Trade procurement expenditure as a proportion of overall procurement budgets; and the size of lots in tendering. There was a discussion about what further action could be taken and it was agreed that the CPG would write to the Minister with regard to the recommendation on the definition to be used for an indicator of Fair Trade expenditure.

Agenda item 4

Any other business: the date and time of the AGM would be circulated to CPG members.

Agenda item 5

The meeting closed at 7pm.