

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report

Committee:	Policy and Resources Select Committee
Date:	22 July 2010
Title:	Fairtrade Motion referred from Full Council 20 May 2010
Reference:	1849
Report From:	Directors of Property Business and Regulatory Services and Environment

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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. A Notice of Motion requesting the Council to take the necessary steps to become the first Fairtrade County in South East England was submitted to Council on 20 May 2010. Following debate on the Council's progress to date and the overall position across Hampshire, the Leader proposed that the Notice of Motion be referred to this Select Committee with a request that the Committee seek to confirm three points. These points are set out below together with a brief summary of the conclusion, following additional research, to each question:

referred (i) that, as far as practicable, the beneficiaries of the Fairtrade initiatives currently supported by the County Council are those for whom the benefits are intended.

Yes. There is ample evidence that the Fairtrade programme has made a sustained difference to many workers and their communities who provide raw produce assessed as meeting the required certification standards.

referred (ii) that the measures required for the County Council to achieve Fairtrade accredited status would not be to the detriment of Hampshire producers of goods and services.

Qualified "yes". The measures to be taken are minimal and can be achieved in partnership with others and the Hampshire community in a balanced way.

Nevertheless, the implications of achieving this status bring expectations for the promotion and market growth of Fairtrade products, potentially at the expense of others. A cautious approach is suggested to limit detriment arising to local producers of any competing products and for the Council to consider establishing a Hampshire Food Project.

referred (iii) that Fairtrade measures already adopted by the County Council, or those additional measures that would be required to be adopted to achieve Fairtrade accredited status, provide appropriate value for money.

The response is in two parts:

- **“Yes” on achieving Fairtrade County status as the measures already adopted continue to provide appropriate value for money. The restricted range of quality Fairtrade products that continue to be offered by the County Council meets the requirements for Fairtrade County status and the minimal additional cost to gain this accolade can be said to represent appropriate value for money.**
- **Qualified “yes” against the value for money implications of the follow-through with the necessary Fairtrade County Steering Group (see (ii) above).**

1.2. The new suggestion for a Hampshire Food Project was not part of the referred issues but, if supported, is seen to only have minimal resource implications.

1.3. The report looks at the current situation at the County Council regarding what Fairtrade products County Council procures and the implications associated with promoting the remaining steps to become the first Fairtrade County in South East England. Conclusions are put forward for the Select Committee to consider as a way forward.

2. Contextual Information

2.1. The Notice of Motion presented by Councillor Mrs Buckley to Council on 20 May 2010 refers to a previous Motion on the same subject considered by Council in February 2005 and also referred to the Policy and Resources Select Committee. The Minutes of that earlier meeting record the proposed action and are attached as Appendix 1. The main thrust of the proposal was that the "County Council desires to be recognised as a council that actively supports and promotes the concept of Fairtrade, ensuring that producers from all countries get a fair price for their goods and labour." A link to the

background report prepared for the Policy and Resources Select Committee on 6 June 2005 is provided as Appendix 2.

- 2.2. It was considered that, on balance, the County Council for a modest cost could commit to support the wider principles of Fairtrade but leave its development and application for local groups to develop in the wider community. The Select Committee recommended that “the County Council supports the development of Fairtrade where applicable and agrees that the implementation of their principles be reviewed and monitored over time so that progress can be made consistent with the representations that the County Council can influence.” This recommendation was agreed on 21 July 2005.
- 2.3. The second Motion presented by Councillor Mrs Buckley to Council this year referred to the progress in market share that Fairtrade had achieved over the past five years. It is now the case that the proportion of Hampshire’s population living in Fairtrade zones has grown from nothing in 2005 to 46 per cent. She called on the County Council to take the necessary remaining steps to become the first Fairtrade County in South East England. The Minute recording this Notice of Motion is attached as Appendix 3 and includes reference to the requirements to achieve this status, Council’s progress to date and the Leader’s proposal to refer the Notice of Motion to this Select Committee. The briefing note prepared for May’s Council Meeting is attached as Appendix 4.
- 2.4. As a point of clarification to meet the requirements prescribed by the Fairtrade Foundation to justify “Fairtrade County” status would not (as is suggested in the Minutes) result in formal accreditation for the County Council. It is only crops grown in accordance with the practices promoted and verified by the Foundation that warrant Fairtrade accreditation. Fairtrade County status simply recognises that certain levels of access to Fairtrade products have been achieved across Hampshire and that further measures have been put in place to continue to promote market share. To avoid any doubt, it would be worth ensuring that the required publicity upon attaining Fairtrade County status made it clear that the accolade related to Hampshire as a whole and not Hampshire County Council specifically.

3. Research Findings – Referred Point (i)

- 3.1. The Certification process (carried out by Fairtrade Labelling Organisation – Certification) has had to face criticism by newspaper and television investigative journalists in the past. However, transparent auditing procedures, robust defences of assessment processes and strong evidence of local financial and social progress made has overcome most criticisms. It is now regarded by most as a credible campaign, developing long-term contracts between buyers and producers, where additional charges (the Fairtrade Premium) contribute to special bank accounts controlled democratically by the workers on each certified estate. These additional

funds support much needed improved working practices and equipment, as well as local educational, health and social care programmes¹.

- 3.2. It is this progress over the past ten years, coupled with a 30-fold increase in sales (reflecting consumer influence and expectations) that has attracted all the major retail food stores to stock a widening range of Fairtrade products.
- 3.3. In April this year, the Fairtrade Foundation (with its headquarters in London) received the Queen's Award for Enterprise (Sustainable Development)². The citation recognised it as:

“making a tangible difference to the livelihood and quality of life of local communities within some of the world's poorest regions and is an outstanding demonstration of the benefit which sustainable consumerism has on communities across the globe.”

The Foundation has also been selected as one of 25 UK representatives in the 2010 European Business Awards, designed to recognise and promote excellence, best practice and innovation.

- 3.4. **Therefore, the answer to the first referred point posed to the Select Committee is a clear “yes”.** Evidence points to a strong degree of certainty that, as far as is practicable, the beneficiaries of the Fairtrade initiatives currently supported by the County Council and others across Hampshire are those for whom the benefits are intended.

4. Research Findings - Referred Point (ii).

- 4.1. As acknowledged in Appendix 2, the requirements for the Council to apply for Fairtrade County status are minimal. However the implications of one part of these outstanding actions is of concern. It has to be borne in mind that a formal application for Fairtrade County status³ has to be submitted to and approved by the Fairtrade Foundation. In addition to other material, such a submission must be accompanied by evidence that a local Steering Group has been convened:

“to ensure progress and continued commitment to the campaign.” This is expected to “ideally include a council representative, campaigners, and people representing the area's schools, churches and businesses. The group is responsible for an annual assessment to monitor whether

¹ <http://www.ethicalconsumer.org/FreeBuyersGuides/fooddrink/tea.aspx>

²

http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/press_office/press_releases_and_statements/april_2010/fairtrade_foundation_wins_queens_award_for_enterprise.aspx

³ http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/includes/documents/cm_docs/2008/ft_app.doc

the area is continuing to meet the five goals. The group organises special events for Fairtrade Fortnight in March each year.”

Whilst it may be possible to contain the size of the group with District and community representation (and with the County Council only participating, not leading), the central tenet is the expectation of promoting only Fairtrade products and giving specific support to the annual Fairtrade Fortnight. This level of exclusive promotion runs counter to the Council’s established and even-handed position which continues to give strong support to a wide range of local food producers. It is not the case that Fairtrade can insist that preference is given to their products – they are well aware of the European Directives and regulations that govern procurement here.

4.2. It should be realised that once the criteria for Fairtrade County status across Hampshire have been met, it is likely that this issue will draw the interest of other organisations, communities and businesses. Therefore, the Council may like to investigate now how readily this would happen and encourage others to lead here rather than for the County Council to be the prime motivator behind the necessary steering group to be established. Whilst it is strongly believed that it is better for the County Council to be inside any necessary steering group rather than outside, this should not be at any price. It is suggested that the Council takes the initiative to look at the support for and the desired scope and make-up of any such steering group as it:

- (i) provides the opportunity to make the case for a more even-handed approach, promoting the big picture and not adopting a single organisation perspective;
- (ii) could allow home-grown producers to participate, as well as involving those towns and communities/organisations already associated with Fairtrade;
- (iii) could have the ability to promote sustainable produce procurement; and
- (iv) need not be led by the County Council.

4.3. Alongside this approach of sounding out the interest in and the possible characteristics of such a steering group, it would be timely for the Council to coordinate and reinforce its own promotion of sustainable food procurement. This would show its intention to retain an influential even-handed approach to promoting a range of produce (which includes some Fairtrade items) whilst continuing to provide staunch support for Hampshire Fare, local farmers and other producers. This could be achieved by setting up its own broad-based Hampshire Food Project (outlined in Appendix 5) consisting of representatives from existing partners and suppliers and with an invitation extended to both Fairtrade and the chairperson of any new group set up as part of achieving Fairtrade County status. The impartiality of such a group could be reflected in the proportionality granted to each member (representing an initiative, label or brand) and this would enhance the credibility of the Council’s general position.

4.4. Therefore, the answer to the second referred point is a qualified “yes”, and where a two-part approach is proposed in response to concerns arising from the implications of the requirement to establish a Fairtrade County Steering Group:

- investigate the interest in, and scope/potential membership of any Fairtrade County Steering Group; and
- consider setting up a Hampshire Food Project for the Council's own sustainable food procurement purposes.

5. Research Findings - Referred Point (iii)

5.1. The County Council continues to offer only a limited range of Fairtrade products – consisting of sugar, coffee, tea, orange juice and bananas. These products are available from the new coffee shop and restaurant in Ell Court, with Fairtrade coffee tea and sugar available when applicable at its various meetings and in its main office complex. This availability of Fairtrade products (although of limited range) continues to meet the resolution from 2005 and complies with the first goal of Fairtrade County status (serving tea and coffee at its meetings and in offices/canteens). This would not have to change if Fairtrade County status was achieved.

5.2. Although Fairtrade products can be slightly more expensive because of the premium applied, consumer expectations have increased the market and driven prices down. The additional cost to the County Council for its limited range of quality Fairtrade products is minimal and can be said to represent appropriate value for money.

5.3. The background note to the County Council's May 2010 meeting (Appendix 4, paragraph 2.4) suggested that support to a Fairtrade County Steering Group might anticipate an officer commitment of perhaps 20 days annually. This would include support for the Steering Group drawn from within existing resources – potentially within the area of community development, economic development, sustainability or procurement. Members may wish to be aware that the model constitution for a Fairtrade group includes the proposal that members should “be encouraged to make a voluntary annual subscription”. The likely scale of any such financial contribution is unknown.

5.4. Therefore the answer to the third referred point requires two separate (but related) answers:

- **“yes” as no further action is required concerning measures to achieve Fairtrade County status by way of product procurement** as it is considered that the measures currently adopted are sufficient and continue to represent appropriate value for money taking into account other Council aspirations also being met; but

- **qualified “yes” against the commitment needed for any such Fairtrade County Steering Group** as care is needed over the implications and should follow the approach suggested of investigation into support from others, desired terms of reference, membership and allocation of resources.

6. Promoting Sustainability

- 6.1. The proposed approach would promote sustainability and the Council's support for the Aalborg Commitments (which includes encouraging responsible consumption and lifestyle choices, by adopting and facilitating the prudent and efficient use of resources to encourage sustainable consumption and production). One of the 50 actions specifically identified includes support for eco-labelled, organic, ethical and fair trade products. Doing this in a controlled fashion need not be to the detriment of Hampshire producers of goods and services, especially where the limited range of goods supported by the Council from Fairtrade have to be imported. There remains, therefore, overlap between the motion proposed by Councillor Mrs Buckley and existing policy commitments towards the procurement of such products.
- 6.2. This measured approach also signals the Council's stance in acting as a sensitive community leader, supporting improved sustainable practices in developing countries whilst also ensuring the promotion of Hampshire's own products and services.

7. County Council's Role – A Suggested Approach

- 7.1. Alongside any investigation into the implications of achieving Fairtrade County status, the County Council should consider setting up a Hampshire Food Project (as described in paragraph 4.3). As a great amount of liaison already goes on between the Council and these groups and organisations at present it is not felt that there would be any additional resources needed to focus coordination and reinforce opportunities to progress local sustainable food procurement.

8. Conclusions

- 8.1. **Against referred point (i)** – there is a clear answer “yes”. There is ample evidence that the Fairtrade Scheme has made a sustained difference to many workers providing raw produce assessed as meeting the required certification standards.
- 8.2. **Against referred point (ii)** – merits a qualified “yes”. The measures to be taken by the Council to achieve recognition of Hampshire's status as a “Fairtrade County” are minimal and can be achieved in partnership with others and the Hampshire community in a balanced way. Nevertheless, the implications of achieving this status bring expectations for the promotion and

market growth of Fairtrade products, potentially at the expense of others. The County Council would not wish to act in this way beyond the levels of support already given. It is suggested that a way forward to limit detriment arising to local producers of any competing products is for the Council to adopt the suggested cautious approach towards the merits and operation of a Fairtrade County Steering Group.

8.3. Against referred point (iii) the response is in two parts:

- “Yes” against achieving Fairtrade County status as the measures already adopted continue to provide appropriate value for money. Although in most cases Fairtrade products are slightly more expensive, consumer expectations have forced retailers and suppliers to behave ethically and sustainably as a matter of course, rather than only offering such products at premium prices. The restricted range of quality Fairtrade products that continue to be offered by the County Council meets the requirements for Fairtrade County status without the need for any change. The minimal additional cost to gain this accolade (by continuing with this restricted range) can be said to represent appropriate value for money, bearing in mind the additional benefits delivered to producers, supported by the Council.
- “Qualified yes” against the value for money implications of the follow-through with the necessary Fairtrade County Steering Group (see (ii) above).

8.4. The new suggestion for a Hampshire Food Project (introduced in response to (ii)) was not part of the referred issue but, if supported as part of the recommendations, would need to be looked at critically to ensure that there were no additional resources needed.

9. Recommendation

9.1. Based on the evidence and conclusions in this report, it is proposed that the Committee recommends to the County Council that it passes the necessary resolutions in favour of:

- (i) maintaining the appropriate procurement of selected Fairtrade products to meet its own existing commitments and as part of promoting Hampshire as a Fairtrade County;
- (ii) monitoring the evidence needed to support a partnership Fairtrade County application and to receive a report back on timing and the possible membership, terms of reference and level of commitment issues for any Fairtrade County Steering Group (as part of ensuring this approach remains consistent with the County Council's overall vision and aims);
- (iii) supporting (if (ii) is satisfactory):

- (a) the submission (with others) of evidence to the Fairtrade Foundation to recognise that Hampshire has met the requirements entitling it to Fairtrade County status;
 - (b) participation as a member of any Fairtrade County Steering Group; and
- (iv) requesting that an assessment is made of the merits of setting up a Hampshire Food Project.

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

Document

Location

Document references or extracts in
appendices to this report

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equalities Impact Assessment:

- 1.1. Proposal supports improving the working, health and social conditions of estate workers in developing countries whilst also being sensitive to the needs of local Hampshire producers. It promotes the Council's inclusive approach towards procurement.
- 1.2. Fairtrade aims to protect human rights by providing social justice, sound environmental practices and economic security.

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

- 2.1. Not applicable.

3. Climate Change:

- a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

In both the limited procurement of sustainably grown tea/coffee/sugar for use within the Council and the suggested low-key involvement with the follow-through after achieving "Fairtrade County" status, there is no expected impact. Indirect/embedded carbon emissions for these particular products are likely to be better than for those comparable products grown in less sustainable conditions.

- b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

The balanced approach suggested allows for changes in home-grown produce in response to climate change being considered for procurement.

Qualified support to Fairtrade provides, in those countries where it operates:

- long-term trading relationships, guaranteed prices and additional social premium to invest in the future – this helps communities face up to climate change impacts by being able to take adaptation measures (e.g. shading coffee bushes to combat higher temperatures/longer sunshine periods, mulching to conserve water and re-using water); and
- a better chance for combining short-term actions with longer-term strategies including changing cropping patterns and re-investing in alternative crops.

Councillor Buckley's Motion considered by Council in February 2005. The Minutes of that meeting record the following action:

379 NOTICE OF MOTION - FAIRTRADE

Councillor Mrs A Buckley, seconded by Councillor A P Collett, proposed the following motion, notice of which had been given in accordance with Standing Order 17.

"Hampshire County Council desires to be recognised as a Council that actively supports and promotes the concept of Fairtrade, ensuring that producers from all countries get a fair price for their goods and labour.

The County Council gives its support to the concept of Fairtrade and will seek national recognition as a Fairtrade County.

The County Council will seek to purchase products displaying the Fairtrade Mark which guarantees producers are fairly paid and work in reasonable conditions.

The County Council shall encourage the use of products that carry the Fairtrade Mark amongst local business, commercial and other organisations.

The County Council will endeavour to ensure that where refreshments are provided at meetings held in county facilities everybody attending is offered a choice of Fairtrade products (such as tea, coffee, fruit and fruit juice or biscuits).

The County Council affirms that it will work with suppliers, contractors and consultants to raise awareness of ethical considerations and social responsibility in county purchasing decisions.

The County Council will promote awareness of Fairtrade on a regular basis by making publicity and educational material available to local people concerning the opportunities that Fairtrade provides to foster sustainable development.

The County Council resolves that a Cabinet Member shall be assigned responsibility to ensure a continued and widening commitment to a Fairtrade Hampshire and to provide periodic reports on the County's progress towards meeting this objective."

The Council agreed with the suggestion from the Leader that this item required detailed investigation of all of the implications.

Ordered:

That the motion put forward by Councillor Mrs A Buckley on the subject of Fairtrade be referred for consideration to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny and Select Committee.

**Background report prepared for the Policy and Resources Select Committee
on 6 June 2005**

<http://www.hants.gov.uk/decisions/decisions-docs/050606-prprec-R0526152225.html>

Minute from 20 May 2010 Council meeting:

111. NOTICES OF MOTION

Two Notices of Motion had been received and listed in the agenda in accordance with Standing Order 17.1.

a) Councillor Buckley, seconded by Councillor Payne, presented the following Notice of Motion:

“In February 2005 I put a Fairtrade motion at the Council meeting.

This was referred to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny and Select Committee on 6 June 2005. The conclusion of the report considered by the Committee (and as detailed at <http://www.hants.gov.uk/decisions/decisions-docs/050606-prprec-R0526152225.html>) was that:

6.1 The principles of Fairtrade products and the wider philosophical arguments have been reviewed in the report. On balance the County Council for a modest cost could commit to support the wider principles but leave its development and application for local groups to develop the wider community.

6.2 The committee would therefore have to recommend to the County Council that it passes the necessary resolution in favour of Fairtrade producers, encourage their promotion and review the development of a Fairtrade network across the County.

The Committee's subsequent recommendation to the County Council was that:

The County Council supports the development of Fairtrade where applicable and agrees that the implementation of their principles be reviewed and monitored over time so that progress can be made consistent with the representations that the County Council can influence.

This recommendation was agreed by the County Council on 21 July 2005.

Motion to HCC 2010

During the last five years since the motion was put to the County Council and the recommendation agreed, a great deal of Fairtrade development has taken place. The proportion of the population in Hampshire living in Fairtrade zones has grown from nothing in 2005 to 46 per cent now and I call on Hampshire County Council to take the necessary remaining steps to become the first Fairtrade County in South East England.

This would involve achieving all of the five goals required by the Fairtrade Foundation to become Fairtrade accredited:

The five goals are:

1. Local council passes a resolution supporting Fairtrade and agrees to serve Fairtrade tea and coffee at its meetings and in its offices and canteens.
2. A range of (at least two) Fairtrade products is readily available in the area's shops and local cafés/catering establishments.
3. Fairtrade products are used by a number of local work places and community organisations
4. To attract media coverage and popular support for the campaign.
5. A local Fairtrade steering group is convened to ensure continued commitment to its Fairtrade town/area status.

The Council's progress to date and the action needing to be taken in respect of each of the five goals is as follows:-

1. Serving Fairtrade refreshments. **This goal has been met since 2005.**
2. and 3. will be met shortly when 50 per cent of the population reside in Fairtrade Districts in Hampshire.
4. Relates to press and could be met by an article in Hampshire Now.
5. Requires setting up a small steering group with district and community representation.”

Pursuant to Standing Order 17.4, the Leader proposed that the Notice of Motion be referred to the Policy and Resources Select Committee with a request that the Committee seek to confirm:

- (i) that, as far as is practicable, the beneficiaries of the Fairtrade initiatives currently supported by the County Council are those for whom the benefits are intended;
- (ii) that the measures required for the County Council to achieve Fairtrade accredited status would not be to the detriment of Hampshire producers of goods and services; and
- (iii) that Fairtrade measures already adopted by the County Council, or those additional measures that would be required to be adopted to achieve Fairtrade accredited status, provide appropriate value for money.

Fairtrade – Briefing note prepared in response to the Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Buckley for the County Council meeting on 20 May 2010

1. Background

- 1.1 The aims of the Fairtrade movement can be summarised as seeking to “guarantee a better deal for third world producers”. “Fairtrade” is the “brand” that covers products that are certified to internationally recognised standards and is promoted in the UK by the Fairtrade Foundation.
- 1.2 Retail sales of Fairtrade products have increased greatly since 2005 in the UK from some £200 million annually to nearly £800 million in 2009 (estimated). The number of towns (and boroughs and villages) with Fairtrade status has also increased – from 110 local authorities in 2005 to 478 today. The list includes the English counties of Cumbria, Devon, Herefordshire, Rutland, Shropshire and Somerset, twenty London boroughs and a number of major cities such as Birmingham, Bristol and Manchester.
- 1.3 The number of towns and cities listed on the Fairtrade Foundations website for the South East of England has increased from 11 in 2005 to 70 (see Appendix 1). Eleven of the 70 are within Hampshire (including both Portsmouth and Southampton). No county councils are included in the current list for the South East.
- 1.4 The previous motion submitted by Cllr Buckley in 2005 was referred to the Scrutiny and Select Committee, which was chaired by Cllr Kendall. The committee considered a report on Fairtrade at a meeting on 6 June 2005 (copy at <http://www.hants.gov.uk/decisions/decisions-docs/050606-prprec-R0526152225.html>) and ultimately it was agreed at Council that a measure of support would be given to the initiative (approved recommendation – the County Council supports the development of Fairtrade where applicable and agrees that the implementation of their principles be reviewed and monitored over time so that progress can be made consistent with the representations that the County Council can influence). The current policy position provides official support for the development of Fairtrade “where applicable” and underpins the use of Fairtrade tea and coffee at the Council’s headquarters in Winchester.

- 1.5 The constraints on broader support for the use of Fairtrade products within the County Council's own operations were principally:
- Other policy priorities within the area of sustainability and localism
 - The relatively limited nature of the range of Fairtrade products – around 64% of Fairtrade sales are accounted for by bananas, coffee, tea, cocoa products and flowers
 - The potential for a substantial price premium (demonstrated in research conducted in 2005)
 - Some uncertainty about the benefits of the scheme (not all poor producers or poor countries are included) and suggestions in some quarters that greater effort should be directed into other trade justice initiatives such as reducing import duties and production subsidies in developed nations, and into alternative schemes (such as the Rainforest Alliance).

1.6 A schedule of the relevant actions undertaken by the County Council's catering services team are included at Appendix 2 for the information of Members.

2. **Conditions for becoming a Fairtrade town or county**

2.1 The Fairtrade Foundation's website lists five goals which must be met to qualify:

- i) Local council passes a resolution supporting Fairtrade and agrees to serve Fairtrade products for example, in meetings, offices and canteens.
- ii) A range of Fairtrade products are readily available in the area's retail outlets (shops, supermarkets, newsagents and petrol stations) and served in local catering outlets (cafes, restaurants, pubs).
- iii) Local workplaces and community organisations (places of worship, schools, universities, colleges and other community organisations) support Fairtrade and use Fairtrade products whenever possible. A flagship employer is required for populations over 100,000.
- iv) Media coverage and events raise awareness and understanding of Fairtrade across the community.
- v) A local Fairtrade steering group is convened to ensure the Fairtrade Town campaign continues to develop and gain new support.

2.2 As stated by Cllr Buckley, the first of these has been met by the resolution previously passed by Council and it is not thought to be necessary for there to be a wider use of Fairtrade products in schools or residential homes in order to fulfil this requirement.

- 2.3 The fourth goal relates to raising awareness and this could be achieved relatively simply and at low cost to the County Council.
- 2.4 In order to meet the fifth goal, a small steering group would need to be established in order to submit an application to become a Fairtrade county. This does not necessarily have to be led by the County Council and it should be possible to draw on local campaign groups for membership of the steering group, but an officer commitment of perhaps 20 days annually should be anticipated. Support for the Steering Group would need to be drawn from within existing resources – potentially within the area of community development, economic development, sustainability or procurement. Members will wish to be aware that the model constitution for a Fairtrade group includes the proposal that members should “be encouraged to make a voluntary annual subscription”. The likely scale of any such financial contribution is unknown. The guidance suggests that the group should include a council representative, campaigners and people representing the area’s schools, churches and business.
- 2.5 For areas with a population greater than 500,000, the guidance links the award of Fairtrade status to a target for at least 50% of the population to reside in a designated Fairtrade town, village, city, zone or borough. Cllr Buckley indicates that this target will be met “shortly” and refers to current coverage as 46%. This analysis of the current position appears to be a slight overstatement, but may rely on knowledge of other local campaign groups which have not yet achieved accreditation for their areas. It would require further research to understand the position and provide an estimate of when the 50% threshold might be achieved. However, this question is not in itself an obstacle to the formation of a campaign (steering) group and would indeed be a natural topic for that group to consider.

3. **Summary**

- 3.1 Over the last five years, there has been a significant expansion in the number of local authorities taking part in the Fairtrade Town scheme. This expansion reflects rapid growth in the (estimated) value of retail sales of Fairtrade products.
- 3.2 The County Council has previously passed a motion expressing limited support for Fairtrade initiatives. The new motion tabled by Cllr Buckley is more limited in scope than the one presented in 2005 (see Appendix 3) and would not necessarily require the County Council to commit to a greater use of Fairtrade products.
- 3.3 Instead the focus of the motion is on seeking “Fairtrade County” status for Hampshire. This would require the County Council to work with interested parties towards meeting the five goals set out by the Fairtrade Foundation. The principal commitment would be in the form

of staff time to establish and maintain a steering group and, should the Council decide to support the initiative, it may be prudent for Members to set out their expectations about the limits to this commitment both in terms of time and any financial contribution.

- 3.4 The motion has a degree of fit with the Aalborg commitments, but Fairtrade has not previously been identified as an area for priority action.

Role for a broad-based Food Project for Hampshire.

Alongside any investigation into the implications of achieving Fairtrade County status, the County Council should consider assessing the merits of setting up a Hampshire Food Project (as described in paragraph 4.3 of the above report).

As a food purchasing organisation, it is part of HCC's duty to ensure that an appropriate body covers the range of foodstuffs being procured. This would be a most appropriate role for a Hampshire Food Project (comprising from the County Council HC3S, County Supplies, Scientific Services and Environment) and add to the authority's integrity in purchasing a wide range of good quality and value for money sustainable food. With the rise in market share of ethnic food producers, this would be a timely and even-handed response. Such an approach would pre-empt the achieving of Fairtrade County status and help to avoid detriment to home-growers/producers whilst keeping issues like food miles, seasonality, certification and intended benefits to the fore. It would allow a review of progress across the board to be taken and to look at the next stage of co-ordinated policy direction and action for the County Council.

While Fairtrade would be an important part of this Project it would none the less be only a part of a more holistic and balanced approach (others being: Compassion in World Farming, Rainforest Alliance, Prince of Wales Food Trust etc as shown below). To maintain the Project's credibility of being impartial the proportionality of each sustainable farming initiative (label/brand) would need to be maintained.

HCC is already involved with wide range of sustainable farming initiatives via:

- Red Tractor
 - Farm Alliance
 - Hampshire Fare
 - Hampshire Life Food and Drink
 - Compassion ion World Farming
 - Rainforest Alliance
 - Fairtrade
 - SE Food Group
 - Maritime Trust
 - Prince of Wales Food Trust (commissioned report)
- and has won awards including :
- Countryside Design Award 2007 from the Campaign to Protect Rural England;
 - Compassion in World Farming - Good Egg Award; and
 - Hampshire Life Magazine - Food Personality of the Year Award

The County Council promotes the minimal use of packaging for foodstuffs (and its recycling) and the use of combined distribution of chilled and other foods on vehicles to reduce food miles.