

Cross Party Group on Fair Trade

Convenor Colin Smyth MSP

Vice Convenor: Gordon Lindhurst MSP

Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 19 June 2019

Room: Q1.03, Scottish Parliament

1. Minutes from the meetings held on 6 March 2019 were approved as accurate.
2. In attendance: Colin Smyth MSP, James Kelly MSP, Martin Rhodes (SFTF), Anne Walsh (Fauldhouse and Breich Valley Fair Trade Group), Carol Morton (Hadeel), Ian Miller (ScotMid and Midlothian Fair Trade), Rachel Farey (One World Shop) Elizabeth Tobon (Dos Mundos), Martin Meteyard, Anna Bowman (All Things Fair), Alice Bowman (All Things Fair), Mary Popple (JTS and St Andrews Fair Trade Group), Gemma Elliott (Rainbow Turtle), Roise Rutherford (Dumfries Fair Trade Group).

Apologies: Russell Salton (Edinburgh Fair Trade Group), Shirley Brown, Rona Mackay MSP, Gordon Lindhurst MSP, Finlay Carson MSP, Neil Bibby MSP, Charles Sim (East Ayrshire Fair Trade Group), Karena Jarvie (Perth and Kinross Fair Trade Group), Liz Manson (Dumfries and Galloway Fair Trade Group)

3. Panel discussion: "Fair Trade shops on our high streets: challenges and opportunities". The four panellists were Rachel Farey of the One World Shop in Edinburgh, Anna Bowman of All Things Fair in Blairgowrie, Gemma Elliott of Rainbow Turtle in Paisley and Elizabeth Tobon of Dos Mundos in Anstruther. Each panellist in turn talked about the history of their shop, what it sold and how it traded. They also each in turn talked about the challenges and opportunities that they faced. The presentations were followed by a discussion on the issues raised including difficulties for high streets shops in general; the challenge to specialist shops from the mainstreaming of Fair Trade; the challenge from online shopping to high street shops; the usefulness of an online facility for shops dependent on type of product sold; difficulties in achieving economies of scale for small independent shops; the opportunities presented by a growing interest of consumers, particularly younger consumers, in ethical sourcing including veganism and environmental standards; promoting Fair Trade shops as part of tourism; the image of Fair Trade. The four shops present agreed that they would like to have an informal network of Fair Trade shops in Scotland to visit each other's shops, share knowledge and good practice, and explore options for collaboration. The Scottish Fair Trade Forum offered to assist this within its limited resources in order to initiate the informal network. There was interest in some shops in the possibility of an online portal that they agreed they would explore in the future.
4. Any other business: No other business.
5. The meeting closed at 8.45pm