

**The University of Edinburgh**  
**Fairtrade Steering Group (FSG)**

**Minute**

**Task Group of the Sustainability & Environmental Advisory Group**  
**32nd Meeting: Mon 19<sup>th</sup> Mar 2012 – 3pm - 4pm Cuillin Room, Charles Stewart House**

**Members:**

Karen Bowman, Convener	Director of Procurement	KB
Dr Kenneth Amaeshi	Senior Lecturer , Business School, CR & Governance Network	KA
Evelyn Bain	Procurement Manager	EB
Eleanor Cowie	Press and PR Officer, Communications and Marketing	EC
Philippa Faulkner	EUSA Vice-President Services	PF
Davy Gray	EUSA Environmental Coordinator	DG
Stephanie Hay	Development and Alumni	SH
Prof Tim Hayward	Director of the Just World Institute, SSPS, CHSS	TH
Angela Lewthwaite	Estates and Buildings	AL
Ian Macaulay	Asst. Director of Accommodation Services, Catering	IM
Rev Ali Newell	Associate Chaplain	AN
Jane Rooney	Estates and Buildings (Secretary)	JR
Emma Saunders	People & Planet	ES
David Somervell	Sustainability Advisor	DS
Matt Lawson	SRS Research Assistant	ML
Co-convenors of Fairtrade Café Students	Edinburgh University People and Planet Society	FCS

[www.seagfsg.estates.ed.ac.uk](http://www.seagfsg.estates.ed.ac.uk)   [www.fairtrade.org.uk](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk)  
[www.fairtrade.org.uk/resources/downloadable\\_resources.aspx](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/resources/downloadable_resources.aspx)

<b>Corresponding:</b>	Daniel Abrahams; VP Prof Mary Bownes; Prof Pete Higgins; Prof Michael Northcott; Mr Nigel Paul; Prof Jan Webb	
<b>Present:</b>	Amabel Crowe (AC); Dorothy Cunningham (DC).	
<b>Apologies and / or unable to attend:</b>	Dr Kenneth Amaeshi; Eleanor Cowie; Stephanie Hay; Prof Tim Hayward; Emma Saunders; Matt Lawson	
<b>1</b>	<p><b>Previous minute of meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2012 - agreed.</b></p> <p><b>Noted</b> actions from previous minute related to FT14 and no longer needed to be followed up.</p>	<b>Action</b>
<b>2</b>	<p><b>Lessons from FT Fortnight 2012</b></p> <p><b>WELCOME &amp; THANKS</b></p> <p>Convener welcomed Dorothy Cunningham to the meeting and thanked her for her work promoting FT14 on the website.</p> <p>Convener also thanked all involved for their hard work during the Fortnight, in particular Morag Eadie for organising the VIP visit and Ali Newell on behalf of the Chaplaincy for hosting.</p> <p>AN led the group in thanking KB for her work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Noted</b> that a letter of thanks had been received from Fiona Hyslop and a reply issued from Mary Bownes.</li> </ul>	

	<p><b>IMAGES FROM FT14 EVENTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DS <b>proposed</b> setting up a Flickr account as a way of storing images of FT14 events in the future.</li> <li>• <b>Noted</b> that when using official pictures from the VIP event these should be credited to Douglas Robertson.</li> <li>• <b>Noted</b> that AC and PF had images from the FT Football event.</li> <li>• DG to review his from various activities and forward to EB and DC.</li> </ul> <p><b>ADVANCE PLANNING FOR 2013</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Noted</b> that a lack of information in the run up to FT14 made it hard to engage people and that contact details for events needed to be made available well in advance to encourage word of mouth.</li> <li>• DG <b>noted</b> that societies in particular required additional time to check availability and co-ordinate activities.</li> <li>• <b>Noted</b> that more time on planning would lead to more groups being involved and a greater variety of events and activities.</li> <li>• DS <b>noted</b> that given early sight of the material next year, DS and ML could do a series of teasers based on Edinburgh rather than national events.</li> <li>• <b>Noted</b> that the group may not know the theme for next year but they could start planning based on the kind of events the University can cope with and the type of societies that would be interested.</li> <li>• Group <b>agreed</b> to start planning resources for the fortnight at the beginning of the academic year at the meeting scheduled for 29<sup>th</sup> November, produce an outline programme before Christmas and to publish the programme in late January / early February.</li> </ul> <p><b>MULTIPLE ‘ACTION WEEKS’</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Noted</b> that FT14 would always coincide with International Women’s Day.</li> <li>• PF <b>noted</b> that as there were four themed action weeks at the same time of year it could be a struggle to keep up with them, and suggested combining or aligning them.</li> <li>• DS <b>noted</b> that the group could find something that EUSA was interested in and build around a more general theme, e.g. international responsibilities.</li> <li>• IM <b>noted</b> that FT14 was nationally set, that its message was already becoming muddled by the others and that Fairtrade was the only area where the University was at risk of losing accreditation.</li> <li>• Convener <b>noted</b> that each organising body felt a strong sense of ownership for their own events, that this group was not the appropriate forum to discuss the issue and that it was not within the groups’ power to make other action weeks combine.</li> </ul> <p><b>REMIT OF THE GROUP REGARDING FT14</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concern was <b>noted</b> that the message of FT14 was diluted over the 2 weeks, and that it could be challenging to fully populate it with appropriate events. Convener clarified the responsibility of the group; to provide a steer to event organisers, to ensure something was happening that was worth reporting and to capture and report it through the work done by EB.</li> </ul>	<p>ALL AC,PF DG</p> <p>ALL</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Noted</b> that the Group should not be overambitious and try to populate FT14 with an event every day but instead focus on doing fewer events better.</li> <li>• Group <b>noted</b> that most years the programme consisted of one focal event pulled together by Convener's team, plus a series of smaller society run events.</li> <li>• <b>Noted</b> the need to put the ball into the students' court regarding future events.</li> <li>• Group <b>noted</b> that, as a national event, the University benefited from FT14 in terms of press and PR.</li> </ul> <p><b>ENGAGING SOCIETIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concern was raised that the group was not engaging with the Fairtrade café. Convener agreed that the FT café were a key part of the group and <b>proposed</b> holding alternate meeting in the Chaplaincy scheduled at a time to suit the café.</li> <li>• Concern was <b>noted</b> that the group was failing to engage with new people.</li> <li>• Convener <b>noted</b> the need for the group to liaise with other societies and ensure it was able to follow this up with new people at the start of the next year.</li> <li>• Group <b>noted</b> that the Hearty Squirrel co-op were currently very active and had a good deal of overlap with People &amp; Planet.</li> <li>• Convener <b>noted</b> that with events such as the Cabinet Secretary visit there was no flexibility regarding the time.</li> <li>• PF, who had gone along to the FT Football event, <b>noted</b> that it was well attended, with representation from The Student, SJP, the Socialist Society, and People &amp; Planet.</li> <li>• Convener asked if it would be possible to get a brief write up of the event.</li> <li>• Convener <b>noted</b> that for events such as FT football, which had been done before, the group can reasonably assume they will be going ahead next year and start planning and promoting them earlier.</li> <li>• DC <b>noted</b> that with earlier web publicity, staff e.g. Finance, could field a team to compete.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members wanting photographs from the Cabinet Secretary visit to contact KB.</li> </ul>	<p>PF</p> <p>ALL</p>
<p>3</p>	<p><b>Workers Rights Consortium</b></p> <p>Amabel Crowe presented a paper proposing that all suppliers producing garments for the University of Edinburgh be monitored by the international labour rights monitoring organisation the Workers Rights Consortium (WRC).</p> <p>The Group was invited to <b>comment</b> on the paper, in particular on the financial cost to implement the proposal, <b>endorse</b> the recommendation in line with the University's policy commitment to social responsibility and sustainable procurement, and <b>decide</b> where the proposal should be directed for approval.</p> <p>There followed discussion during which the following main concerns were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concern that simply playing the £1,000 fee and signing up as an individual entity would not be an adequate response.</li> </ul>	

- Concern about what joining would actually mean in practical terms and about the specifics of what the University would be committing to do.
- **Noted** that the University may not be able to obtain information on the actual factories at the end of its extended supply chain.
- **Noted** that EB had liaised with the consortium that purchases on behalf of the University and that KB had talked to universities that had already affiliated with the WRC and with others that were considering joining. **Noted** that as more Universities signed up, the leverage it held would increase. **Noted** that only 4-5 were currently affiliated but with more committed this would soon rise to 7 or 8 and that in 2 to 3 years time once the message had spread the situation would be very different.
- As the University procures collaboratively through a consortium which purchases on its behalf, it was felt that the best way to effect meaningful change would be if the University could ask the procuring body to embed WRC monitoring as a customer requirement rather than pursuing it independently as an institution.
- **Noted** the consortium's response that it already had ethical procurement guidelines in place. **Noted** that documentation demonstrating its suppliers' compliance with International Labour Rights legislation and /or involvement with the Fair Labour Alliance was available from EB.
- The consortium had emphasised that it would not be possible to make any post-contract additions. **Noted** that at this time the University was 1/3 of the way through the current contract and so at this point the University would have to join as an institution and work with its suppliers through the current contract, renegotiating during the next cycle.
- Issues around the finance cost. **Noted** that this group did not have the authority to commit 1% of the University's garment turnover and that this decision would lie with SEAG Ops. **Noted** that the University's annual spend on garments (c.£42K) was not particularly significant, did not represent a large proportion of its overall spend and would not translate into much leverage over suppliers. **Noted** that the University sector using collaborative contracts would have to ensure that it was not paying multiple times for the same information, but also **noted** that WRC would not take supplier funding in any form to undertake site visits. **Noted** that all reports were made public on the WRC website.
- Concern that the WRC anticipated that the University would seek out information on the factories where the garments were being produced, which would represent a step further down the supply chain than what was currently resourced or being done and would exceed what was done for other consumables such as food, which was not monitored beyond the first tier of suppliers. **Noted** the challenge, from a procurement point of view, in getting that close to the production source through third party providers.
- Concern that the action the University could take if a problem was found in a factory report would be limited as the University would not have the right to cancel the contract with that factory. **Noted** that the WRC would also not be in a position to tell the factory to make changes. However, the University could facilitate the process and expect its suppliers to engage with the factories to work towards improvement.
- Concern that the decision to join should represent the views of the wider University, both students and staff, and not just the opinions of this group.
- Issues around the potential content of the Scottish Government Sustainable Procurement Bill and any changes to the EU tendering process to enforce consideration of sustainability. **Noted** that Cabinet Secretary Fiona Hyslop MSP

	<p>supported the inclusion of workers rights. <b>Noted</b> that the issue was far from being ignored at government level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concern about how achievable it would be to keep track of all suppliers, as they tended to be a moving target, and with 10 or 15 suppliers on the framework, how well those without a complaint against them would be monitored. <b>Noted</b> that resources from procurement team and consortia are limited.</li> <li>• Concern about the consequences for the reputation of the University if bad practice was found to be going on whether we joined or not. <b>Noted</b> that by signing up, the University would be clearly demonstrating its commitment to eradicating bad practice. By taking a pro-active approach the University could reduce its risk, demonstrate that it was taking ameliorative action and raise awareness.</li> <li>• Issues around the next steps for the proposal and the appropriate target for referring it on. <b>Noted</b> the postponement of the next SEAG Ops meeting, which would not meet again for over 2 months. <b>Agreed</b> to pass the proposal on to Nigel Paul as the best way to get a decision that would enable the University to sign up this year.</li> <li>• Issues around a lack of understanding of how WRC operates, the nature of the dialogue it enters into with the factories and how its policy of advocating consolidating the supply chain to increase purchasing power and influence may risk workers in the factories that lose business. <b>Noted</b> that a comprehensive case study of a UK institution in a similar position would be a useful tool in increasing the group's understanding. <b>Noted</b> that People &amp; Planet were producing a case study based on Loughborough, which was the furthest down the track of the UK institutions, but that as the UK affiliates had only recently joined there were problems getting the required information. KB to keep in touch with peers in other HEIs.</li> <li>• Group <b>agreed</b> that the proposal was something they would instinctively wish to support as it was consonant with the values of Group, the University and EUSA (as a NUS affiliate) and that if it would fit in with the way the University worked and with its regulations then the group ought to endorse it.</li> <li>• <b>Noted</b> that the group took a leadership role in Fair Trade and could do so again regarding WRC. Convener indicated at least one university already keen to follow our lead.</li> <li>• <b>Noted</b> that KB, PF had rescheduled a call to NUSSL re: the NUS position using WRC.</li> </ul> <p>Convener thanked AC for the paper and EB for the surrounding research.</p> <p>Group <b>agreed</b> that it warranted a bit more investigation before a recommendation was made.</p> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All members were asked to read the document and pass their comments back to Karen Bowman by 30th March.</li> <li>• Based on the general feeling within the group as communicated to KB by email, KB to write to Nigel Paul to make a recommendation.</li> <li>• AC to make Loughborough case study available to the group once it was completed.</li> </ul> <p><b>Post meeting note:</b> DS offered a paper from the website that summarised their WRC</p>	<p>KB</p> <p>ALL</p> <p>ALL</p> <p>KB</p> <p>AC</p>
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	<p>aims: <a href="http://peopleandplanet.org/dl/wrc_explained.pdf">http://peopleandplanet.org/dl/wrc_explained.pdf</a></p> <p><b>Post meeting note:</b> KB, PF, AC, DG and EB were on telecom with NUSSL re: their use of WRC, which established that NUS spend over £2m p.a. and were planning a 'Living Wage Fair Trade' garments by consolidating their 5 suppliers (10 factories) working alongside WRC and P&amp;P. EUSA asked how to be involved in this locally. KB asked about EUSA's own policy statement.</p> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EB to finalise analysis of non-EUSA spend and supplier ethical statements.</li> </ul>	EB
4	<p><b>National Fairtrade Awards</b></p> <p><b>Noted</b> that applications for 2012 were now open and recommendations were requested. Further information available at: <a href="http://ctt-news.org/5QB-PEH6-1Q4J1J-9P7I4-1/c.aspx">http://ctt-news.org/5QB-PEH6-1Q4J1J-9P7I4-1/c.aspx</a></p>	ALL
5	<p><b>Possible Internship and Fairtrade Volunteers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Noted</b> that convener had met with employ.ed to discuss the creation of a 1½ year graduate paid internship (probably at grade UE03) for fair trade and a 8 week placement this summer (on living wage) as part of Employ.ed pilot.</li> <li>• <b>Noted</b> that once agreed the opportunity to volunteer would be released for next year's Freshers.</li> </ul>	
6	<p><b>Information for re-application to FTF</b></p> <p><b>Noted</b> that re-application was now underway.</p> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All members to send in details for the return including photos to EB</li> </ul>	ALL
7	<b>AOB</b>	
8	<p><b>Dates of Next Meeting</b> - Thur 24 May 3-4:30 – Cullin Room, Charles Stewart House; Thur 27 Sept 3-4:30 – Raeburn Room, Old College and Thur 29 Nov 3-4:30 - Torridon Room, Charles Stewart House.</p>	

**Note:** Fairtrade Foundation has guided on use of its brand name i.e. any commodities or services not accredited with the Fairtrade Foundation should be termed 'fair trade' (two separate words with no capital "F")