

MINUTE OF A MEETING of the Fair Trade Steering Group held in the Ochil Room, Charles Stewart House on Monday 15 December 2014.

Members: Karen Bowman (in chair), Director of Procurement
Kenneth Amaeshi, Lead, Corporate Responsibility & Governance Network
Evelyn Bain, Procurement Manager
Tasha Boardman, EUSA Vice President Services
Conor Bond, Sports Union President
Michelle Brown, Head of SRS Programmes
Jill Bruce, Development and Alumni
Liz Cooper, SRS Research and Policy Manager
Joe Farthing, SRS Communications Manager
Hannah Genders Boyd, People and Planet Representative
Moira Gibson, External Affairs Manager, Communications and Marketing
Dave Gorman, Director of SRS
Davy Gray, EUSA Environmental Officer
Stephannie Hay, Technology Enhanced Learning Services
Tim Hayward, Director of the Just World Institute
Matthew Lawson, SRS Programme Manager
Ian Macaulay, Asst. Director of Accommodation Services, Catering
Ali Newell, Associate Chaplain
Briana Pegado, EUSA President
Vikki Stewart, Estates and Buildings Representative

Apologies: Kenneth Amaeshi; Tasha Boardman; Michelle Brown; Jill Bruce; Moira Gibson; Davy Gray; Stephannie Hay; Tim Hayward; Matthew Lawson; Ian Macaulay; Briana Pegado

1 The minute of the meeting held on 30 September 2014 was approved as a correct record. **Paper A**

Members welcomed Sports Union President Conor Bond to the Group.

2 All matters arising covered in the agenda or post-meeting notes to Paper A.

SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS

3 **Good Food Nation Consultation – SFTF Response** **Paper B**

FTSG noted a paper from the Research and Policy Manager comprising a copy of a letter from SFTF Director Martin Rhodes regarding links between the Scottish Fair Trade Forum and the Good Food Nation Consultation and ensuring that fair trade is considered alongside local food.

Action – JR to remind KB at the start of the New Year to follow up with the Cross Party Group on the Scottish Government response if not yet received.

4 **Freshers' Week 2015 – Fair Trade Themed Food Festival**

The SRS Communications Manager gave a verbal update on plans for Freshers' Week 2015. Event planning would begin in January, led by SRS Programme Facilitator Lucy Miu.

The SRS Department organises a Food Festival annually as one of the major ways it engages with students. This year's event attracted over 600 attendees, 500 of which left their details, with a good number subsequently responding to communications and getting involved in volunteering. As the event usually involves the Fairtrade Café and fair trade outlets across the city, fair trade could easily be considered as an overriding theme for the 2015 event, though there would also be other elements present. FTSG acknowledged that the focus on food was in itself inherently limiting.

Student members expressed support for the idea and were happy for the event to be promoted. Many organisations, charities, NGOs, producers and local businesses could be linked in under the fair trade theme. It was anticipated that a potential student audience of this size would attract significant interest from these groups. Members agreed to build on relationships already in place as well as seeking out new links such as the ethical cleaning product stall, new this year.

There was space in the EUSA marquee for around 12 stalls. The SRS stall focused on volunteering opportunities could be used as a base. The Sports Union could feed in on aspects of healthy living, as these tended to have considerable overlap with fair trade, and look at ways of combining themes (e.g. smoothie bike). The aim was to attract students in with the food offering but integrate this into engagement activities including:

- Encouraging participants to explore where ingredients come from
- Food tastings comparing mass-produced with fair trade goods (e.g. Ben Miller's Ubuntu cola tasting)
- Talking about issues of buying and budgeting in fair trade (particularly relevant to new students)
- Teaching students how to make fair trade meals (in previous years Accommodation Services had provided a chef to do a cooking demo).

Action – JR to follow up with IM re: possibility of arranging a demo.

Members discussed issues around fair trade labelling and ensuring that merits are assessed in the context of comparison with non-fair trade products and that information is presented in a way that people can relate to.

Action – JF to follow up with a message to the Group inviting further suggestions.

Event Co-ordinator Lucy Miu would raise the event through the student forum seeking volunteers and wider student involvement.

Agreeing with the proposed focus on activities and engagement, the Convener welcomed this event as raising awareness of fair trade outwith FT14 and endorsed it on behalf of the Group.

5 SRS Strategy Review Update

Paper C

The Head of SRS Futures introduced the paper which shared the trajectory of the SRS Strategy Review currently in progress. Looking to 2020, the 2009 strategy document had indicated that social responsibility and sustainability were important to the University and outlined how these issues would be approached. This had subsequently led to the formation of the SRS Department.

At the halfway point in the life of the current strategy, it was felt to be the right time to review how things were working so far and to reflect on how the strategy could be made more easily relatable. Osbert Lancaster of the

School of GeoSciences was facilitating the review using the five elements of the Appreciative Inquiry approach, as outlined in Paper C.

Action – All members were asked for their comments on Appendix 1: Definitions of Social Responsibility and Sustainability.

FTSG recommended:

- Reaching out to the student body through their School and class reps
- Making specific reference to EUSA
- Not making specific mention of Electronics Watch and conflict minerals as this was just one of many aspects of trade justice
- Mentioning elements of the APUC Code of Conduct.

Action – KB to provide DS with the correct terminology.

The main feedback was to make the definitions section shorter and simpler, to ensure that the refreshed strategy was less passively descriptive, had clear deliverables, included reference to fair trade, and engaged with staff and students. It should be framed as a common strategy between the University and student representative groups.

The Group acknowledged the need to ensure that fair trade followed through into University policies and asked that the SRS Strategy reflected that.

ROUTINE ITEMS

6 Workers' Rights Consortium – Update on UoE/WRC Skype call

Paper D

FTSG noted a paper from the Research and Policy Manager comprising notes from a very positive Skype conversation with the WRC exploring how UoE could take its affiliation further. WRC had been created based on the US market and were keen to explore how to make their offering more applicable in a UK context. Issues discussed included the possibility in future of investigating factories in UK supply chains and the possibility of exploring funding at a European level.

Action – LC to put out a call through the EAUC Fair Trade Community of Practice to ask how many other members were affiliated with WRC.

FTSG acknowledged that the situation in the garment trade was much more complex and that the best strategy in this case would be to approach the top brands and persuade them to agree to core principles which would then trickle down and influence the market, though an issue remained as to who would be responsible for verifying compliance.

FTSG noted that the EUSU do not source from Nike or Adidas, prefer to use UoE branded garments which they can be certain are fair trade, and ensure that this is enshrined in their policies and on their website. The Convener recognised huge opportunities for the Sports Union to influence and promote ethical choices.

Action – CB to pass tender / contract details on to JR.

Members discussed linking up UK Fairtrade Universities with other countries' movements.

The Procurement Manager would meet with the APUC representative in January to go over: WRC, increasing procurement of fair trade cotton garments, and fair trade pointers within ITT documentation. While UoE was relatively small in this context, APUC had agreed that the University's

opinions would be taken into account.

Action - EB to write a paragraph outlining what people should be asking their colleagues and pass to KB & DG for sign off.

The Director of SRS fed back on the PRI Conference in Montreal, noting the work of researcher James Gifford at Harvard which indicated that running factories in the cheapest way possible was not cost efficient in the long term (due to compensation costs, waste, and so on).

7 EUSA Fair Trade Update

Action – JR to carry forward this item to the next meeting in February.

8 Electronics Watch Update

A fuller update would be provided at the next meeting following a UoE / Electronics Watch Skype conversation to be held on 17 December.

Progress with the Sustainable ICT Group was ongoing, building links between those responsible for purchasing major IT consumables.

UoE first signing up to Electronics Watch had been promoted and it was now felt to be timely to start promoting follow up activity.

The Convener highlighted to members the Panorama documentary '[Apple's Broken Promises](#)' profiling working conditions in Apple's supply chain, to air on BBC One at 9pm on 18 December.

9 Fair Trade Events Update (including Trade Advocacy Event)

FTSG noted plans for a public ethics forum event focusing on conflict minerals. The Research and Policy Manager was also working with the Fair Trade Advocacy Office in Brussels on a mixer for practitioners and researchers, currently planned for April 2015. A fuller update would be provided at the February meeting.

10 Fair Trade Communications Update

Estates and the SRS Communications Team were about to launch a waste and recycling social media campaign focused on the message that coffee cups should now go in a different bin. Over the next six to twelve months the Communications Team would focus on a few key messages (e.g. how to factor buying ethically into budgeting). A fair trade themed message could be launched by September 2015, provided it had a really clear hook.

Members discussed the difficulty of formulating a clear message in terms of what label and what standards to endorse. FTSG noted the approach of the 'Who Made Your Pants?' campaign as an example of a clear message where the focus was not on certification and technical issues.

It would need to be made clear whether the aim was to educate and raise awareness, or ask people to take action. It was proposed that themed lists could be put out every 3 months (e.g. top ten fair trade gifts, fair trade stationery for the new term and so on.) Next steps would be deciding what the message would be and where best to deliver it. Consultation on the issue could take place during FT14. The recent consultation had highlighted a lack of awareness that Fairtrade products were sold at UoE. It would also be important to work with EUSA Global to engage with international students who may not be aware of the issue.

Action – AN to forward details of a EUSA Global representative to JR who

would invite them to join the Group.

Action – LC, JF & DG to think further on the message and how to keep it meaningful, easy to communicate, and easy to adapt through the seasons, for roll out in the 2015-16 academic year.

FTSG discussed previous plans to create a map of fair trade outlets in Edinburgh and the scale of the effort involved in collecting the data. Noted a student green mapping project currently ongoing that this could align with.

Members discussed a previous agreement to engage with students on fair trade as they joined the University, though it was unclear if this actually gone ahead. Content on fair trade was included in the residential halls booklet issued to new students. In the absence of a central induction for students, this outreach could be made through the SRS Departmental presence at the Societies Fair.

FTSG noted that Communications and Marketing were in the process of appointing a new Internal Communications Manager. UoE had not previously had any formal co-ordination of internal messages.

Action – JF to raise the issue of fair trade communications with the new postholder.

Members discussed the possibility of installing a fair trade noticeboard in every building. The SRS Communications Manager had previously looked into a sustainability noticeboard and noted that this had not been feasible due to the devolved management of buildings. Members agreed that other less passive methods of engagement would be pursued, including social media. It was proposed to get a well-known 'champion' involved, ideally a prominent alumnus.

Action – JF to follow up with Communications and Marketing.

11 Any Other Business

City of Edinburgh Fairtrade Events during Fairtrade Fortnight 2015

- Fairtrade Fortnight Public Event, Saturday 28th February 2015, at the main hall Summerhall, 10.00am – 2.30pm
- Fairtrade Fortnight Schools Event, Tuesday 3rd March 2015, 4.30pm – 6.30pm at St Thomas of Aquin's High School (invitation only)

A call was made for volunteers to help out at the open event on 28 February.

Action – EB to pass full details of the Summerhall event to VS.

Action – HGB & CB to let EB know as soon as possible if People & Planet or the Sports Union would like a stall at the schools event.

PPE producers from Mauritius would be visiting during FT14. Estates PPE representative Shona Meyer-Gleaves had agreed to look at samples, though the Department were happy with ARCO, their current provider. A slot for the producers to visit UoE was available on the afternoon of Monday 2nd March 2015. Members discussed running an event around the Fairtrade Café, with the Chaplaincy to host. Following a 10 minute speech in the auditorium the event would move upstairs to Room 2.

Action – EB to check details of the producer visit with Rachel Farey and

pass to JR for circulation to the Group.

Action – All were asked to promote the public event at Summerhall on 28 February through their networks.

Medical Instruments

In May 2014 the BMA launched a campaign for Fair Medical Trade. The Director of SRS fed back on discussions with Professor John Iredale who had raised the issue with his contact at NHS Lothian. The Convener was also pursuing the issue through NHS Lothian's procurement team. The issue would be raised informally at the next Board Meeting and an event or promotional campaign could be arranged in this area. It was behoven on UoE to investigate its own supply chains, with particular regard to the Vet School.

FTSG noted that the School of Chemistry was to receive an award in recognition of its work recycling gloves.

Community Orchard

Regarding the possibility of using UoE space for a community orchard, the Director of Estates had advised that colleagues in E&B were under significant pressure and this was not an immediate priority. The Estates Representative would raise the issue again in the New Year. The Head of SRS Futures noted that the Landscape Manager had met with Edible Edinburgh to identify options for growing on campus. The challenge was in making available publicly accessible space.

ITEMS FOR FORMAL APPROVAL/NOTING

12 Cross Party Group on Fair Trade / Bala Sport Presentation

The Sports Union President gave an update on the presentation by Bala Sport, producers of fair trade footballs. In the past fair trade footballs had a bad name as they tended to be poor quality. Bala's balls however were FIFA tested. Having originally concentrated on footballs, they were now expanding their focus to netball, rugby and so on. Having experienced problems in accessing professional clubs, Bala were now taking a bottom up approach.

The footballs were low cost and there was potential scope for the SU to look into and test them out. The Convener noted that this was a good opportunity for UoE to take a leadership position.

13 APUC Sustain Update

The Convener updated the Group on Sustain, the APUC web-based tool to assess supplier activity in the areas of social, ethical, economic and environmental sustainability. The APUC Code of Conduct had been agreed, published and integrated into UoE policy structures. The database was ready and suppliers had begun to fill in questions and provide supporting evidence. APUC had two people trained in social auditing who could edit the self-assessment responses.

The engagement tool was simple, free, and would avoid each institution having to question suppliers separately. However it would take some time to gather all the data. The immediate aim was to get data for the top ten companies supplying the sector group, representing 35% of spend. The tool would become part of UoE tender strategy.

The scheme may offer opportunity for work-based placements. Arranging opportunities for students to visit factories would require additional resources and academic departments to take ownership of this activity as relevant to their fields of study.

The new legislation coming in December would give UoE a sustainable procurement duty which would raise the threshold and enable it to take a stronger attitude on SRS issues.

14 Scottish Fair Trade Forum Awards Ceremony & Exhibition Launch

On 14 November 2014 the University Chaplaincy hosted the annual Scottish Fair Trade Awards Ceremony. FTSG congratulated Karen Bowman and Evelyn Bain who were among recipients of special recognition awards. Following the event a photography exhibition ran in the Chaplaincy from 14 to 21 November.

15 Use of Fair Trade Cleaning Products

The representative from Estates reported back on the floor cleaner trial which had just finished. Operational staff did not believe that the Traidcraft product – a domestic cleaner – stood up to winter footfall as well as current stronger cleaners designed for this purpose.

Regarding the hand wash, UoE had a variety of five litre and one litre dispensers across the campus which were supplied by the company that also supplies the hand wash. If these break or prove faulty they are replaced quickly and free of charge. Traidcraft were not currently in a position to provide these units. .

Members agreed to push the issue through supply chains, as had been done successfully on the provision of fair trade tea bags.

Action – TB to raise with EUSA the possibility of stocking these products in their outlets.

The Convener thanked members for all they had done in 2014 and looked ahead to achievements and opportunities in 2015.