

8.5 FAIR TRADE COMMUNITIES (LH:SB)

Submitting Councillor: Cr Charlotte Baines

NOTICE OF MOTION

That Council:

- 1. Notes progress toward implementation of the “ Fair Trade Communities Guidelines”.*
- 2. Establishes a Committee entitled, “Fair Trade Steering Group”, and*
- 3. Adopts the proposed Terms of Reference, attached to this report, for the operation of the Fair Trade Steering Group.*

INTRODUCTION

At its meeting on 28 October 2008 Council resolved to commit to becoming a Fair Trade municipality through the application of the Fair Trade Communities Guidelines. This initiative was first raised through the “Young Person’s Advisory Committee” and following Council’s endorsement of the program Council Officers have commenced a process of implementation. Council has also set a target of twelve months in which to meet this target.

BACKGROUND

Fair Trade is defined as, “a trading partnership, based on dialogue, transparency and respect, that seeks greater equity in international trade. It contributes to sustainable development by offering better trading conditions to, and securing the rights of, marginalised producers and workers. Fair Trade organisations (backed by consumers) are engaged actively in supporting producers, awareness raising and in campaigning for changes in the rules and practice of conventional international trade”.

The ability to achieve accreditation as a “Fair Trade Community” is subject to Council satisfying an array of criteria set by the Fair Trade Association of Australia and New Zealand. In a broad context, Council is required to undertake the following:

1. Pass a resolution that states Council’s support for fair trade and commit to the serving of fair trade products across Council.
2. Establish a Fair Trade Steering Group.
3. Encourage the availability of fair trade products in local shops.
4. Encourage the use of fair trade products within workplaces.
5. Promote fair trade through media and other avenues, and
6. Develop “Progress Goals” that represent further enhancements to the program.

DISCUSSION

In the context of Council's progress toward accreditation as a Fair Trade Community Council has satisfied the first criteria, namely the passing of a resolution on 28 October 2008 of its support and commitment to the serving of Fair Trade products across Council. This criteria has been further strengthened through actions to promote the use of such products to staff, the introduction of Fair Trade coffee and tea across the Civic Centre with a staged roll-out to occur across all remaining sites. Other opportunities are being considered for the introduction of such products across Council's residential care facilities, commercial outlets such as aquatic and recreation facilities and community halls.

The second criteria, "Establish a Fair Trade Steering Group" has been considered further and it is now proposed that Council approve the establishment of a Committee to support Council in the promotion and engagement of Fair Trade and to assist in the development and implementation of further initiatives. In regard to this criterion it is envisaged that the committee will have a significant external focus and seek the engagement of the wider business community (through such forums as the Economic Development Committee and trader groups) as well as community based organisations such as schools, clubs, and churches.

Terms of reference have also been developed for adoption by Council and are now attached for the consideration of Council.

The third criteria, "Encourage the availability of fair trade products in local shops", will be achieved through the framework established under the second criteria. The accreditation outcome sought at this level will require Fair Trade certified products such as tea and coffee to be readily available across the municipalities shops, cafes and catering establishments. Tools that may be applied in pursuit of this criteria may include community awards, media and promotion together with strategic input from Council's Economic Development Unit.

The fourth criteria, "Encourage the use of fair trade products within workplaces" is designed to achieve the adoption of Fair Trade principles and accreditation within other workplaces and other organisations. At this stage no specific initiatives have been developed however it is considered that the proposed committee will give early attention to advancing this aspect of accreditation.

The fifth criteria, "Promote fair trade through media and other avenues", will involve the both the Committee and the Public Relations Unit in exploring and maximising opportunities to promote Fair Trade values across the community and to provide positive recognition to those in the community who have already embraced the Fair Trade principles in their business or community group.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

As the principles underpinning the operation of Fair Trade have already received Council recognition there are no further policy implications at this stage. The range of products available under the Fair Trade brand is currently limited with the primary impact falling upon the provision of tea and coffee supplies.

FINANCIAL

Whilst the costs associated with Fair Trade products is higher than non-Fair Trade products any additional costs will be managed within current budgets due to the relatively small volumes concerned.

CONCLUSION

A commitment to Fair Trade will ultimately lead to the application of a just set of principles that will contribute to a reduction in the exploitation of persons from third world countries whilst laying the foundations for an improvement in their quality of life. The acceptance of these motions will enable Monash to advance its effort in this regard.

ATTACHMENT 1

FAIR TRADE STEERING GROUP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Name: Fair Trade Steering Group

Scope: The aim of the Fair Trade Steering Group is to ensure continued commitment of Monash Council to its Fair Trade Community status including involvement with and promotion of Fair Trade to the community and local business.

Objectives:

- To promote the concept of Fair Trade within the City of Monash.
- To encourage increased availability of fair trade products within the City of Monash by developing a Fair Trade Business Award.
- To raise awareness of Fair Trade through participation of Fair Trade fortnight.
- To ensure continued commitment to gaining and maintaining Fair Trade Community Status for the City of Monash, by achieving the goals of a Fair Trade Community as set out in the FTAANZ document *Guidelines for the Fair Trade Communities Award*.
- To encourage workplaces, businesses, schools, universities and churches to work to promote and use Fair Trade products.
- To advise Council in matters concerning Fair Trade, including drafting these terms of reference.

Membership

THE FAIR TRADE STEERING GROUP MEMBERSHIP WILL CONSIST OF UP TO EIGHT (8) MEMBERS AND WILL INCLUDE REPRESENTATION AS FOLLOWS:

- A Councillor.
- Up to 2 Council Officers.
- Residents and representatives from community organisations and businesses.

All Fair Trade Steering Group positions are voluntary positions.

Selection process

Upon submitting an expression of interest, applicants will be short listed and interviewed by the selection panel and appointed if successful.

The selection committee will include a Councillor(s), the Manager Economic Development and such other Council Officers as are required. The committee will assess the nominations against the selection criteria and recommend appointments to Council. All appointments will go to Council for endorsement.

Requirements for members (criteria)

Fair Trade Steering Group members will be able to demonstrate:

- Interest in the principles of social justice, third world poverty or environmental production.
- Knowledge of the local community
- Willingness to work in a team and be a leader in the community
- Advocacy, community development and business skills are desirable but not essential
- The ability to commit 2-4 hours a month to attend meetings and various related events

Council will aim to achieve representation from different cultural backgrounds, career diversity, different levels of ability, different geographical areas across Monash and have an age and gender balance.

Terms of Appointment

- Members are free to resign at any time. This must be submitted in writing to the Council Officer providing executive support to the Steering Group and will be effective from the date nominated.
 - New members will be recruited as the need arises.
 - The Steering Group will be responsible for advising on policy and strategic issues and assist in the implementation of the Fair Trade Community Goals.
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Meeting Frequency and Duration

- The Fair Trade Steering Group will meet bi-monthly unless otherwise determined by the Group.
 - It is expected that each member attend a minimum of 60% of all meetings in a particular calendar year.
 - In extraordinary cases (such as when a meeting is cancelled) a special meeting may be called.
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Quorum & Decisions

- 50% of members present shall constitute a quorum.
 - Decisions will be made by consensus as far as possible; otherwise by majority rule, with all Steering Group members entitled to vote.
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Working Groups

The Fair Trade Steering Group may establish Working Groups/Parties to address specific issues as they arise.

Role of Councillor

- To act as Chairperson
 - To be the link between Council and the Fair Trade Steering Group
 - To table issues and concerns to Council on behalf of the Fair Trade Steering Group
 - To nominate another Councillor to chair meetings in his/her absence
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Executive and other Support

- The Economic Development Unit will provide Executive Support to the Fair Trade Steering Group
 - The Director Human Resources and Administration will provide such other support as is required to give effect to implementation of Council's Fair Trade initiatives across Council's internal operations
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Evaluation and Review

The Fair Trade Steering Group Terms of Reference and membership will be reviewed and evaluated on an annual basis
