

The City of Edinburgh Council

10.00am, Thursday 29th August 2024

Request for funding for the International Fairtrade Towns Conference 2025

Executive/routine
Wards All

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 To note that the Lord Provost has supported Edinburgh Fairtrade City Steering Group (EFTCSG) and Scottish Fair Trade Forum to submit a bid for Edinburgh to host the International Fair Trade Towns Conference in August 2025.
- 1.2 To note that this bid has been successful, and Edinburgh will be announced as the 2025 host at this year's International Fairtrade Towns Conference taking place between the 20th-22nd of September 2024 in Drankenstein, Africa.
- 1.3 To approve a request for the Council to approve £30,000 from the existing sustainability budget to support the delivery of the International Fairtrade Towns Conference 2025. This would be divided into £15,000 in the financial year 2024/25 and £15,000 in 2025/26.

Deborah Smart

Executive Director of Corporate Services

Contact: Christine Downie, Strategy Manager

E-mail: christine.downie@edinburgh.gov.uk | Tel: 0131 123 4567

Request for funding for the International Fairtrade Towns Conference 2025

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Fair Trade movement aims to improve pay and working conditions for farmers and workers worldwide.
- 2.2 The city of Edinburgh supports this movement and is a certified Fair Trade City. The Edinburgh Fairtrade City Steering Group leads work across the city to promote Fair Trade and increase uptake of Fair Trade products. With support from the Lord Provost and Councillor Cameron (Depute Lord Provost), the group successfully bid for Edinburgh to host the International Fair Trade Towns Conference 2025.
- 2.3 This report responds to a motion by Councillor Cameron requesting financial support to host the international Fair Trade Towns conference in August 2025. The Council agreed the terms of this motion and to provide meaningful support to the conference.
- 2.4 A Council commitment of £30,000 (£15,000 in 2024/25 and £15,000 in 2025/26) is requested by the steering group to support delivery of the conference.

3. Background

- 3.1 Fair Trade is an international movement that aims to secure better prices, fair terms of trade and improved working conditions for farmers, producers and workers in the developing world. The movement now works with farmers and workers in more than 1,900 producer organisations across 70 countries.
- 3.2 The Fair Trade movement takes action such as:
 - 3.2.1 setting standards for companies and farmers involved in the supply chain such the Fairtrade Minimum Price
 - 3.2.2 certifying products and ingredients that meet Fair Trade standards
 - 3.2.3 working with companies and partners to support Fair Trade activities
 - 3.2.4 lobbying the government and campaigning to raise awareness in communities

- 3.2.5 working directly with farmers and workers on specific issues and projects.
- 3.3 This year represents the 30th anniversary of the Fair Trade movement. This will be celebrated during Fair Trade Fortnight taking place on Monday 9th September – Sunday 22nd September 2024.
- 3.4 The international Fair Trade Towns movement is an important part of the Fair Trade movement. It brings together key community players to increase awareness and sales of Fair Trade products in local areas.
- 3.5 Edinburgh achieved Fair Trade City status in 2004. The Edinburgh Fairtrade City Steering Group (EFTCSG) continue to meet regularly to promote Fair Trade and encourage the use of Fair Trade products in the city. The group announced in July 2023 that the city's Fair Trade Community status had been renewed for another three years until 2026.
- 3.6 The Council is an important member of the EFTCSG, and Councillors and officers regularly attend the group meetings.
- 3.7 The Council has taken on commitments as part of its role within the Fair Trade Towns movement. A [Fair Trade Policy Statement](#) and Action Plan are in place to demonstrate an ongoing commitment to promoting Fair Trade in the city and using Fair Trade products where possible.

4. Main report

- 4.1 The International Fair Trade Towns movement started in April 2000, and there are now over 2,000 Fair Trade Towns covering 30 countries worldwide.
- 4.2 The movement aims to bring together important local stakeholders such as businesses, local authorities, and schools to promote Fair Trade locally and support increased use of Fair Trade products.
- 4.3 As part of the movement, International Fair Trade Towns conferences are hosted annually to bring together Fair Trade communities and raise the profile of the movement.
- 4.4 The first International Fair Trade Towns conference was held in London in November 2006. Since then, places such as Switzerland, Ecuador, Lebanon and Japan have hosted the conference. This year's (2024) conference is taking place in Drakenstein in Africa in September.
- 4.5 In December 2023, applications opened to host the International Fair Trade Towns Conference in 2025. The Edinburgh City Fair Trade Steering Group and Scottish Fair Trade Forum submitted a bid for Edinburgh to become the host. This bid has been successful, and Edinburgh will be announced as the 2025 host at the upcoming conference in Drakenstein, Africa.

- 4.6 The conference will take place over two and a half days from the 29th to 31st of August 2025. It will bring together cities and towns working towards Fair Trade principles.
- 4.7 The theme of the International Fair trade Towns Conference 2025 in Edinburgh will be the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the importance of Fair Trade in driving progress towards these. The conference will also highlight the important contributions that Edinburgh has made to the Fair Trade movement including:
 - 4.7.1 hosting the International Trade Fair Trade Charter launch in 2018
 - 4.7.2 its work as a Fair Trade City and increased awareness of Fair Trade principles
 - 4.7.3 its role in Scotland's Fair Trade Nation mission.
- 4.8 Hosting this event provides an opportunity to highlight the good work taking place in Edinburgh to support the Fair Trade movement, and to celebrate the achievements of the city to date, along with offering the opportunity to include children and young people from Fair Trade schools in the event.
- 4.9 It would also bring revenue to the city and benefit the city's hospitality industry. Approximately 150 delegates will spend three or more nights in the city.
- 4.10 In total, the running cost of the event will be £67,000. This is based on approximately 150 delegates attending and approximately 100 Edinburgh school or university students attending at no cost to themselves or their school/university.
- 4.11 The Scottish Government, Scotmid Co-operative, The University of Edinburgh and others have committed to providing funding and resources to support its delivery.
- 4.12 The Steering Group is continuing to pursue other potential funders, but the current level of funding committed may not be sufficient to go ahead with the event.
- 4.13 The Edinburgh Fairtrade City Steering Group have requested that the Council provides £30,000 over two years to support the event. This would be divided into £15,000 in this financial year (2024/25) and £15,000 next financial year (2025/26). This would be used to fund speakers and the general running costs of the event.
- 4.14 A commitment such as this from the Council would allow the steering group to be sure that the conference can proceed. It may also support the steering group to encourage other funders to commit to supporting the event and potentially provide more opportunities to provide subsidised spaces to increase the community impact.
- 4.15 Supporting the conference would make sure that the Council continues to meet the aims and objectives included in the Fair Trade Policy Statement. The conference will raise the profile of Fair Trade in the wider city and promote Edinburgh's status as a Fair Trade City.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 Officers will continue to support the Fair Trade movement in the city, and fulfil the Council's Fair Trade commitments.
- 5.2 Representatives of the Council will work with city-wide partners to develop and support the International Fair Trade Towns Conference 2025.
- 5.3 Members will continue to be informed on the International Fair Trade Towns Conference 2025 as it develops. A detailed event plan will be circulated to members once developed by the Edinburgh Fairtrade City Steering Group.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 A total of £30,000 will need to be identified from the Council's budget to support the conference. This comprises of £15,000 from the budget for 2024/25 and £15,000 from the budget for 2025/26.
- 6.2 This cost can be fully met from re-profiling funding previously approved by Council to support sustainability-related projects with no consequent financial impact on current budgets.
- 6.3 The total cost of the event will be £67,000. The Scottish Government has committed £10,000 and Scotmid Co-operative have committed £9,000. The University of Edinburgh has committed to providing conference facilities free of charge with an estimated value of £10,000-£15,000.

7. Equality and Poverty Impact

- 7.1 This commitment will not have a direct impact on equality, human rights and socio-economic disadvantage in the city. However, it will support poverty reduction and equality at a global scale by promoting the Fair Trade movement. This movement aims to contribute to poverty eradication by supporting farmers and workers to access fair pay and working conditions.

8. Climate and Nature Emergency Implications

- 8.1 As a public body, the Council has statutory duties relating to climate emissions and biodiversity. The Council

“must, in exercising its functions, act in the way best calculated to contribute to the delivery of emissions reduction targets”

(Climate Change (Emissions Reductions Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019), and
City of Edinburgh Council – 29th August 2024

“in exercising any functions, to further the conservation of biodiversity so far as it is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions”

(Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004)

- 8.2 The City of Edinburgh Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and committed to work towards a target of net zero emissions by 2030 for both city and corporate emissions, and embedded this as a core priority of the Council Business Plan 2023-27. The Council also declared a Nature Emergency in 2023.

Environmental Impacts

- 8.3 The impacts of this report have been considered in relation to the three elements of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 Public Bodies Duties and the outcomes are summarised below.
- 8.4 The proposals in this report may increase carbon emissions as delegates will be travelling from across the world to Edinburgh to take part in the conference. Many delegates may choose to fly to the city. This will be mitigated by outlining the sustainable transport options available to delegates and encouraging use of sustainable transport where possible.
- 8.5 The proposals in this report will not have a direct impact on the city’s resilience to climate change impacts, however they will improve levels of global resilience to climate change. The Fair Trade movement aims to make sure that farmers are paid fairly, and this increases their ability to invest in sustainable farming techniques and to adapt to the risks of climate change.
- 8.6 The proposals in this report are not expected to have any adverse impacts on nature because Fair Trade aims to promote a sustainable approach to food production that prioritises environmental protection. To be a certified Fair Trade producer, farmers are required to improve soil and water quality, avoid using harmful chemicals, and protect biodiversity.
- 8.7 The proposals in this report will support sustainable development impacts both in Edinburgh and worldwide. The conference will give free access to young people in Edinburgh so that they can learn about Fair Trade. This will advance social justice in the city. The conference will also promote social justice and environmental good stewardship worldwide by supporting the Fair Trade movement to grow. This movement improves conditions and pay for producers and workers, and builds their skills and knowledge to enable them to farm in a way that protects the environment.

9. Risk, policy, compliance, governance and community impact

- 9.1 The community has not been consulted or engaged in creating this report. There will be limited impacts on the community. The conference should deliver positive impacts to the community by bringing business to the city and providing an opportunity for young people to learn more about the Fair Trade movement.

- 9.2 The Council will continue to have an influence over the organisation and running of the event. Councillor Cameron sits on the event steering committee that is overseeing the conference, and the Lord Provost is appointed as honorary vice chair for the steering group.
- 9.3 The recommendations of this report support achievement of the objectives and aims contained in the Council's Fair Trade Policy Statement.

10. Background reading/external references

- 10.1 City of Edinburgh Council – Fair Trade Policy (Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee, August 2018)
- 10.2 Policy and Sustainability Committee – Policy Update – Strategy and Communities (February, 2021)

11. Appendices

Appendix 1 - FAIR TRADE POLICY FOR THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

POLICY STATEMENT 2021

The City of Edinburgh Council supports the Edinburgh Fairtrade City initiative and will promote the use of fair, fairly traded, and ethical products in Council directorates (including schools) and raise awareness of fair, fairly traded and ethical products amongst Council staff.

The Policy Aims are:-

- to support and promote the International Fair Trade Charter;
- to promote the use of fair, fairly traded and ethical products across the Council and to serve fair, fairly traded and ethical coffee, tea, sugar, and snacks (where served) at Council meetings, in offices and canteens;
- to promote and raise awareness of fair and ethical trade amongst Council employees and the wider city;
- to offer fair, fairly traded and ethical products as an option on the Council food contract and other appropriate Council contracts where catering may be provided by an external provider.

Key Objectives are:-

- to maximise the range of fair, fairly traded and ethical products available on Council contracts and to publicise them across the Council (including in schools);

- to increase the range of fair, fairly traded and ethical food and beverages available in dispensers as part of Council contracts;
- to continue to work with Scotland Excel in promoting fairly traded goods and ethical trading practices through the collaborative frameworks that Scotland Excel deliver and the Council purchases from;
- to provide support to schools holding fair trade status and those working towards it;
- to continue to promote Edinburgh's status as a Fairtrade city through communications and other media;
- to promote through the Council's website and Communication Service annual Fairtrade Fortnight and World Fair Trade Day events and other activities and initiatives organised or supported by the Edinburgh Fairtrade City Steering Group. This includes online engagement and virtual events following the coronavirus outbreak;
- to work with the Edinburgh Fairtrade City Steering Group and other stakeholders to promote and increase the share of fair and fairly traded goods purchased and consumed in the city;
- to monitor the implementation of the policy and report on progress.

Implementation

The policy will be implemented jointly by Strategy and Insight and Communications in the Chief Executive's Directorate, Commercial and Procurement Services in Finance, Catering Services in Property Facilities Management, and Communities and Families.

**Appendix 2 - The City of Edinburgh Council - Fair Trade Policy
Action Plan 2020**

Objective 1: Maximise the range of fair and fairly traded products on Council contract			
Action	Lead Section	Timescale	Progress to date
Maximise the range of fair, fairly traded and ethical products on the Council's food contract and other appropriate contracts where catering may be provided by an external provider	Catering Services, Property and Facilities Management Commercial and Procurement Services, Finance	Ongoing	A range of fair and fairly traded products are available in the City Chambers and Waverley Court canteens and cafes. A number of fair trade products such as premium chocolate was introduced in 2019. Fair, fairly traded and ethical products can be purchased in other Council buildings. All Council schools sell fair trade products. Members of Commercial and Procurement Services actively work with Councillors and the Lord Provost and other members of the Edinburgh Fairtrade City Steering Group to develop strategies to increase the range and visibility of fair, fairly traded and ethical product options in contracts.
Look at the viability of purchasing staff uniforms made from fairly traded materials	Commercial and Procurement Services, Finance	complete	This request has come from the Edinburgh Fairtrade City Steering Group. The Council's current uniform provider Arco provide fairly traded cotton polo shirts which were promoted at the Council event during Fairtrade Fortnight.

Maximise the range of fair, fairly traded and ethical trade products served at Council meetings	Catering Services, Property and Facilities Management	Ongoing	Fairly traded tea, coffee and sugar are served at all Council meetings. All coffees and teas provided by the catering department are fairly and ethically traded.
Maximise the range of fairly traded and ethical products for sale in Council cultural venues	Catering Services, Cultural Venues, Culture	Ongoing	A range of fair, fairly traded and ethical products are available in the Council owned cultural venues including products that are carbon neutral, organic, sustainable and not for profit.

Objective 2: Increase the number of schools holding Fairtrade status			
Action	Lead Section	Timescale	Progress to date
Increase the number of Council schools with Fairtrade status and provide support to those schools working towards it	Schools & Eco Schools, Communities and Families	Ongoing	<p>A number of Council schools currently hold Fairtrade school status and a number are working towards it</p> <p>Approx 15 primary, 8 secondary and 1 special school are Fairtrade registered schools and one play group. 4 primary, 1 secondary and one special school hold FairActive fair trade status and five primary, one secondary and one special school hold FairAchiever status.</p> <p>BalaSports a supplier of fairly traded sports balls is now a Council supplier following feedback from schools that they would like to purchase more fairly traded goods.</p>

Increase the number of Council schools with school uniforms made from fairly traded cotton	Schools, Communities and Families	Ongoing	A number of Council schools partner with KoolSkools as a supplier of Fair Trade school uniforms and purchase school uniforms that are made with fairly traded materials, including St Mary's Leith and Duddingston primary schools. KoolSkools attended the 2020 Fairtrade suppliers event held in Waverley Court and made contact with 8 Edinburgh schools, which has led to commitment from Balgreen Primary School to offer KoolSkools products, and an order from Royal High Primary School for leavers' hoodies.
--	-----------------------------------	---------	---

Objective 3: Communication and promotion			
Action	Lead Section	Timescale	Progress to date
Promote and raise awareness of fair trade issues amongst all Council employees	Strategy & Insight & Communications Catering Services, Property and Facilities Management	Ongoing	Fair trade events, campaigns and issues have been promoted through Newsbeat, the Council's website and social media. The Council's Catering Service advertise their fair, fairly traded and ethical products in Council cafes and canteens.
Continue to promote Edinburgh's status as a Fairtrade city through signage, communication and other media	Strategy & Insight Communications	complete	In 2015, 15 signs bearing the Fairtrade logo and the words 'We are a Fairtrade city' were erected around the outskirts of Edinburgh. Due to compliance requirements with road network signage legislation it is not possible to extend this road signage throughout the city. Other options may be

			<p>considered, such as a flag for the City Chambers to be flown during Fairtrade Fortnight.</p> <p>A number of high profile fair trade campaigns and events have been promoted by the Council's communication service including the 2020 Fairtrade suppliers event held in Waverley Court attended by a keynote speaker from the Cote D'Ivoire, MSP Minister for Europe and International Development, the Lord Provost and a number of local SMEs specialising in fairly traded and ethical products</p>
Promote through the Council's website and Communication Service annual Fairtrade Fortnight events and the Edinburgh Fairtrade Festival	<p>Strategy & Insight, Communications</p> <p>Schools</p>	Annual	<p>The Council promotes Fairtrade Fortnight annually in collaboration with the Edinburgh Fairtrade City Steering Group. This has included the Lord Provost's Fairtrade Awards and School Awards and representation and publicity around Fairtrade events staged in Edinburgh, especially the annual Edinburgh Fairtrade Festival.</p> <p>A successful event with 12 stalls of Fair Trade suppliers and 130 attendees was held in Waverley Court as part of Fairtrade Fortnight in 2020. A range of fair trade items such as football and rugby balls, sustainably sourced school uniforms, textiles, chocolates and coffee were on sale. The feedback from those attending was very positive, with stall holders receiving an increase in orders and a key supplier of</p>

			<p>workplace clothing agreeing to offer a fair trade promotion of their uniform range.</p> <p>Hand Up Events, a social action business that promotes and platforms fair and ethical trade and a member of the Edinburgh Fairtrade City Steering Group, held a World Fair Trade Day Gathering at the Usher Hall in May 2019 with support from the Council.</p>
Objective 4: Monitoring and Implementation			
Action	Lead Section	Timescale	Progress to date
Undertake monitoring of the uptake of fair, fairly traded and ethical products	<p>Commercial and Procurement Services, Finance</p> <p>Catering Services, Property and Facilities Management</p> <p>Schools</p>	Annually	Monitoring is limited under the current financial systems but insofar as it is possible the take up of fairly traded products is monitored and reported to the Edinburgh Fairtrade City Steering Group to assist with understanding what promotion and awareness raising needs to take place.
Monitor the implementation of the policy and report on progress	Strategy and Insight	Annually	An annual report on progress will be produced.