

Council, Tuesday 27 June 2006

Opposition Policy Item

Barnet Fairtrade Campaign

Barnet should contribute to tackling third world poverty by becoming a Fairtrade Borough. This would help enable disadvantaged producers from poor countries to receive a better deal, through encouraging support for the Fairtrade Mark.

The Fairtrade Mark is an independent consumer label that appears on UK products as a guarantee that they have given their producers a fairer deal.

The Fairtrade Mark requires companies to achieve and maintain certain standards and so guarantees:

- farmers a fair and stable price for their products,
- extra income for farmers and estate workers to improve their lives,
- a greater respect for the environment,
- small farmers a stronger position in world markets, and
- a closer link between consumers and producers.

The Mark is awarded by the Fairtrade Foundation, a registered charity organised by CAFOD, Christian Aid, Oxfam, The Women's Institute, Traidcraft Exchange and the World Development Movement. It shares internationally recognised Fairtrade standards with initiatives in twenty other countries, working together as Fairtrade Labelling Organisations International (FLO).

Since 2002, the UK Fairtrade Foundation has encouraged communities to promote Fairtrade locally. Since then over 100 towns, cities and boroughs across the UK have been awarded Fairtrade status, including Camden, Croydon, Hammersmith & Fulham, Kingston, Lambeth and Lewisham in London.

More information is available at: www.fairtrade.org.uk

Recommendations:

Council supports Fairtrade and believes the Council should campaign to be awarded Fairtrade Borough status.

Council asks the Cabinet to:

- Seek Fairtrade Borough status
- investigate serving Fairtrade products at relevant committee and council meetings and in council offices; and to encourage staff to use Fairtrade products,
- promote awareness of Fairtrade to residents on a regular basis through Barnet First magazine, First Contact, libraries and other outlets,
- invite members of the three party groups, Civic Network, Multi-Faith Forum and others to convene a local Fairtrade Task Group of local representatives to lead the campaign and organise special events for Fairtrade Fortnight in March each year,

- encourage a range of Fairtrade products are readily available in the borough's shops and local cafés/catering establishments,
- encourage Fairtrade products to be used by a number of local work places and community organisations such as places of worship and schools.
- ask the Chief Executive to: allocate Fairtrade borough campaign responsibilities to a member of staff; write to the editors of the local newspapers asking them to support and cover the Barnet Fairtrade Campaign; and write to the Borough's three MPs asking them to support the Barnet Fairtrade Campaign.