

March 12, 2019

**Advocacy Guidelines**

**The mission of Transition Cornwall+:**

***Transition Cornwall+ supports Cornwall and neighbouring communities in facing challenges such as the rising cost of energy and food, extreme weather, and financial uncertainty. By working together right now, we can create a more affordable, caring, healthy and secure future for all.***

One of the ways we accomplish this mission is through advocacy. The purpose of these guidelines is to ensure that Transition Cornwall+ carries out its advocacy activities effectively and efficiently while adequately representing the values of the Steering Group and the Action Groups.

**1. Guiding principles**

The following principles guide our approach to advocacy:

1.1 Evidence-informed – advocacy statements and positions are informed and guided by current evidence

1.2 Inclusive – advocacy activities consider the whole population and all age groups, as well as specific populations who face the greatest barriers to transitioning to a low carbon lifestyle

1.3 Relevant – advocacy activities align with Transition Cornwall+’s strategic planning and current priorities

1.4 Equitable – advocacy activities should identify and mitigate any potential for further impacting populations most at risk or already facing inequities (make sure that we are not unintentionally creating greater inequities)

**2. Types of advocacy**

There are four main types of advocacy that Transition Cornwall+ will carry out:

**2.1 Encouragement or praise** - for actions and efforts that support the mission of Transition Cornwall+.

**2.2 Developmental and proactive** – advocacy positions developed through a consultative process with members of the Steering and Action Groups, partners, and/or the general public and requiring some discussion and analysis. Examples: Membership on local Committees of Council, Input to Municipal Official Planning documents and policies, Strategic Plans, letters to Municipal Councils, MPPs and MPs.

2.3 **Endorsement** – where a partner or relevant group wishes to obtain Transition Cornwall’s support or endorsement for either a particular project or an advocacy position. Examples: local level issues, letters of support for grant applications, and consultation surveys.

2.4 **Urgent and responsive** – sometimes there are issues that require an urgent or immediate response. In this case, every effort should be made to consult with the Steering Committee and the Action groups as well as relevant partners before taking a position. Even if there is not time to actually meet, consultation can be carried out by e-mail and telephone. Examples: support for infrastructure projects like sidewalks and bike lanes, personnel issues and protection for trees and environmental threats.

**3. Advocacy process for developing, responding to, and communicating advocacy: (See visual guideline at bottom)**

**3.1 Encouragement or praise**

3.1.1 The first priority is to encourage actions by our team and others that contribute to the Mission and goals of Transition Cornwall+. The Steering and Action Groups will watch for ways to give kudos, either publically or privately, to municipalities, groups or individuals helping to advance the work of community building.

**3.2 Developmental and proactive**

3.2.1 Transition Cornwall+ will use a collaborative process to develop advocacy positions on issues that are important to citizens as a whole. This may include surveying members to determine priorities, creating an ad hoc work group to develop the position, and soliciting feedback from the membership before the position is submitted.

3.2.2 Transition Cornwall+ will strive to build consensus on all of the advocacy positions it develops.

**3.3 Endorsement**

3.3.1 An advocacy position may arise from any one of the Steering Group, Action Group or external group.

3.3.2 A requesting Action Group must write the advocacy letter, including references, and send it to the Steering Group for review. External groups should provide a form letter if possible.

3.3.3 Advocacy letters will be circulated for review by the Steering Group for input to determine whether it aligns with our priorities and mandate, and decide if the advocacy position or letter of support can be sent as a collective response from Transition Cornwall+.

**3.4 Urgent and responsive**

3.4.1 Transition Cornwall+ Steering and Action Groups will determine its capacity for this type of advocacy as each opportunity arises. It may call upon members to develop the advocacy position.

3.4.2 The Steering Group must approve the position before it is submitted. Because of the need for a timely response. Every effort should be made to consult with the Steering Committee and the Action groups as well as relevant partners before taking a position. Consultation can be carried out by meeting when possible but also by e-mail and telephone.

**4. Communication**

4.1 All Transition Cornwall+ advocacy positions will be submitted on Transition Cornwall+ letterhead, with the signatures of the relevant members of the Steering group or an Action Group

4.2 Where possible and appropriate, ensure that we communicate in both French and English

4.3 Transition Cornwall+ will post advocacy positions on its web site and may also use e-mail, Facebook sites or related social media to post its advocacy activities.

4.4 Separate Guidelines provide direction for communications through the website or social media.

**Graphic Model of process**

*To come: A simple visual or checklist so working group members can follow along when they want to bring something forward.*