

■ **CORRECTIONAL SERVICE:** Councillor believes federal government should keep local officials in loop

Hector warns offenders may come to Kingston



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The Whig-Standard

Mayoral candidate Dorothy Hector wants to know if the federal government is planning to move offenders from Hamilton to a Kingston halfway house facility at Frontenac Institution.

“If the (inmate) population changes, it’s going to cost us a full-time police officer, and all the implications of social services for these people,” Hector said.

“We may not get the nice guys. A lot of these statutory releases are sex offenders.”

Hector said she isn’t opposed to the facility in Kingston, but she believes the federal government and Correctional Service Canada should be keeping city officials in the loop.

“I support the halfway house. It’s a needed element of rehabilitation,” she said. “When they are

statutory released, they are going to become part of our community. If they’re from somewhere else and they have no connectivity to the community it’s problematic — it’ll be idle hands.”

Hector, who currently represents Lakeside District on city council, said she would ensure, as mayor, that the lines of communication were clearer between the city and senior levels of government.

Hector alerted Kingston and the Islands MP Ted Hsu to the issue earlier this year.

Hsu wrote to federal public safety minister Steven Blaney in June, asking if the Phoenix Unit for offenders at Frontenac Institution would be expanded to house offenders from the Hamilton Correctional Community Centre, which is slated to close.

“I am concerned that the influx of new halfway house offenders

may be at a higher risk of reoffending if they are originally from the Hamilton or Greater Toronto Area, and therefore separated from their social supports,” Hsu wrote.

Hector said she was “disappointed” with Blaney’s response.

“He won’t tell us what the Phoenix Unit will be used for. He will neither confirm nor deny that more halfway house offenders are on their way here and he gives no indication that there will be local consultation,” she said.

Phoenix was opened at Frontenac after residents complained about sex offenders living in their neighbourhood on Portsmouth Avenue.

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