



## Media Release

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 26, 2008  
Peterborough, ON

A new structure and chair of Poverty Reduction efforts in the Peterborough community were announced today by Mayor Paul Ayotte. Now entitled the Peterborough Action Committee on Poverty Reduction, its focus will be engaging the community on the day-to-day challenges of those living near or below the poverty line.

Steve Kylie will lead the committee from now until 2010. A local lawyer and a very active community volunteer, Mr. Kylie is a member of the Rotary Club, chairs Peterborough Distribution Inc. and sits on the board of the Local Health Integration Network. During his years of public service, he has served as Chair of the 1998 Ontario Winter Games in Peterborough and has been on the Boards of St. Joseph's Care Group, the Peterborough Centennial Committee, Save the Market Hall campaign and a dozen other organizations. A legal aid lawyer, Mr. Kylie is on the Board of the local diocese's Good Shepherd Foundation.

The new framework returns to a focus on the four areas outlined in the original committee consultations during the Summer of 2007: Food, Housing, Basic Needs and Income Security. Those four subcommittees will work with an existing Communications Committee and the Peterborough Social Planning Council (mandated by the City and County to do this type of work) to engage the community in working together to alleviate poverty.

The chairs of these committees will meet every second month as a Stewardship Committee, led by Action Committee John Martyn. Recommendations from this Committee will go to a Peterborough Poverty Reduction Cabinet, led by Mr. Kylie.

*"My vision has always been to involve the thinkers, the doers and the payers," says Mayor Paul Ayotte. "This structure allows us to get to the root of the problems faster and to push other levels of government to help us make lives better for people currently living in poverty. It also turns the leadership role over to more people the community, which is the logical next step in the process as the multi-year plan evolves."*

Mayor Ayotte will sit on the Cabinet, along with Peterborough's MP, MPP, a representative of City Council (Councillor Doug Peacock), County Council (Councillor Brian Fallis, Deputy Reeve – Cavan-Monaghan Township), Chamber of Commerce, United Way, GPA EDC, the faith community and a community representative.

Each sub-committee will be chaired by community leaders committed to finding solutions in their respective areas of expertise:

- Food and Nutrition – Dr. Rosana Pellizarri, Medical Officer of Health, Peterborough County-City Health Unit
- Housing – Suzanne Galloway, Community Resource Co-ordinator with PARN – Your Community AIDS Resource Network
- Basic Needs – Brenda Dales, Executive Director, Peterborough Social Planning Council; and Mark Graham, Executive Director, Peterborough Branch of the Canadian Mental Health Association
- Income Security – John McNutt, Community Leader spearheading such programs as Junior Achievement, Community Training and Development Centre, Kawartha Ambassadors, Kawartha Choice and work in developing nations
- Communications – Lois Tuffin, Editor in Chief – Peterborough This Week.
- Research and Resource – Peterborough Social Planning Council

Shortly after being elected in November 2006, Mayor Ayotte created the Task Force on Poverty Reduction. That group turned over its work to the Mayor's Action Committee on Poverty Reduction in August 2007.

Since then, the Action Committee has led improvements in:

- Discretionary benefits for citizens on Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program, particularly for dentures, vision care, baby supplies, birth verification and a children's health benefit for warm seasonal clothing and fees for community activities.
- Bus pass rates for people on Ontario Works (resulting in a savings of \$34 per month), starting August 1, 2008.
- A revamp of the City's poverty reduction website.
- Published emergency contact cards of where to find help in the Peterborough community.
- Lobbying efforts for year-round operation of the Warming Room, shelter services for adult women and improved dental care.
- A community garden on Ashburnham Drive

Other community and agency initiatives have also arisen from collaboration resulting from connections made via subcommittee meetings, including the Homelessness Partnership Strategy program (CMHA, Social Planning Council and VON) and a proposed community drop-in centre.

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