

Political interference, budget issues delay Bay war on waste campaign

Johnnie Isaac

isaacj@timesmedia.co.za

POLITICAL interference and budget constraints were the two reasons given by a Nelson Mandela Bay official yesterday for the slow recruitment of workers for its war on waste campaign.

The campaign was launched on March 28 by deputy mayor Mongameli Bobani,

who used to be the political head of the city's public health directorate.

But Bobani was removed from the portfolio last month by mayor Athol Trollip, who has since taken over the role himself.

Speaking at a public health committee meeting yesterday, waste management acting director Annalisa Dyakala said political interference and a small budget

had hampered the campaign from kicking off properly shortly after its launch.

Workers were meant to be hired through the municipality's Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP).

"We had interruptions which led us to not follow what was supposed to be followed," she said.

Dyakala said this had left most councillors unhappy with the choice of work-

ers hired across the city. "That has caused the delays in implementing this project."

Dyakala said the plan had been to follow the EPWP process and recruit through each ward's database of unemployed people.

She did not reveal any more information or when the political interference took place.

EFF councillor Thozama Mhlongo said

the party was excluded from the EPWP.

"What about our people? Ward councillors don't recognise them and even if they are in the database they are at the bottom," Mhlongo said.

But Trollip cautioned councillors against employing only members who belonged to their political parties.

"Ward councillors are for all the people living in the ward."