

Tabled

Item no
Report
no

7.1(a)

Supplementary Leader's Report Refuse Collection Dispute

City of Edinburgh Council
30th June 2005

1. REFUSE COLLECTION DISPUTE

- 1.1 I have, over the past few days, been gathering information on the dispute by refuse collection staff in retaliation to route changes. I have received information from the Executive Member, Councillor Cairns, and the Director explaining the approach taken by management in the department.
- 1.2 Following on from the separation of trade waste collection, there was a substantial reduction in the tonnage being collected on the domestic waste routes. It was always intended to restructure the routes once the impact of the change to separate trade waste collection was known. For the record, there is no cut sought as a result of the changes being introduced, the changes were made to allow trade waste collection to be accounted for separately, thereby clarifying the overall cost of this services.
- 1.3 When this change was introduced, early monitoring revealed that crews were completing their set work much earlier than anticipated. It should be explained that refuse collection crews work on a task and finish basis, and the times when vehicles returned to depots are continually monitored.
- 1.4 Crews work a four day week, from 6:45 pm to 4:30 pm. Figures collected revealed that the average time for the return of a vehicle was reduced to 12.42 pm, from a 6.45 am start. The tonnages collected by individual crews have dropped dramatically. In May 2004 each vehicle collected an average tonnage of 23.7 tonnes per day. By March 2005 that had reduced to 12.5 tonnes per day.
- 1.5 This service has always operated on the basis of a full day's work for a full day's pay. It is not unreasonable in my view that management task the decision to rearrange the routes. Again, I would stress that this decision was not about cutting costs, it is about delivering a key council service efficiently and cost effectively.
- 1.6 I have asked Councillor Cairns and the Director to arrange a to meet with staff representatives to seek agreement on the principle of a full day's work for a full day's pay. I have also asked for them to seek an assurance that the staff will work normally through the G8. It is a matter of great regret that with many staff in the council working around the clock, this part of the workforce is involved in an

unnecessary dispute at a time when everyone's attention is in helping to secure a successful outcome to the G8 Summit.

- 1.7 I hope elected members will share my view that this situation is unsatisfactory for thousands of residents and, of course, for the council.