

Stretford & Urmston

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# Messenger

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## How did you do?

# 'Protect our park life!'

## Massive petition lands on the council's desk

By Chris Griffin

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A 3,000-PLUS petition has been submitted calling for a rethink by council chiefs on plans to axe 27 parks gardeners jobs.

Thousands of residents, park users and members of friends groups and bowling clubs have signed the document, which is thought to be the largest ever petition submitted to the council.

They claim the plan - which would see parks being maintained by teams of mobile gardeners instead of on-site staff - will lead to a fall in standards in the borough's green spaces.

Council bosses, though, are adamant the level of service and standards will not deteriorate.

Labour councillor and parks spokesman Jane Baugh said she hoped the high level of opposition would have an impact.

She said: "The proposed loss of these staff and their expertise is devastating news. The parks belong to the people they are essential to our very way of life bringing pleasure exercise and fun to all ages.

"We hope that this petition, which reflects strong public opinion against these cuts, will be listened to. The public have spoken out loudly and clearly that they do not want



**Protestors make their feelings known**

these changes."

The council claims the changes would put in place teams that would deliver a better service.

A council spokesman said: "We can confirm we've received over 3,000 signatures opposing the replacement of permanent on-site

staff in parks with mobile teams. This is currently being verified and a suitable response will be provided in due course."