

Public rally to save jobs

by Bethan Dorsett

THREE thousand people are campaigning to save council workers' jobs from the axe.

They are backing calls led by park groups and politicians to save workers in environmental services including green space and cemetery maintenance.

Originally, 27 posts were set to go under a proposed shake-up but trade union officials have negotiated this figure down to 14, though the threat of compulsory redundancies remains.

Unison branch secretary Paul McDermott is thrilled to have the public's backing through a petition.

He said: "It's a wonderful response from people in Trafford who clearly care about their services and their staff."

The petition figures were released at a council meeting at which Labour also hit out at further cuts in the library service which could lead to 19 job losses.



PETITION: Councillor Barry Brotherton, Councillor Jane Baugh, MP Paul Goggins launch their campaign at Walkden Gardens, Sale

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Councillor Jane Baugh said: "You are putting hard-working staff who have given years to improving our parks on the dole."

"You should value these staff - they deserve it."

Tory councillors responded by accusing Labour of political point scoring, pointing to the fact the party had at one stage threat-

ened to make 300 people redundant when it was in control.

Councillor Jonathan Coupe said: "It's clear Labour are not interested in staff, they are not interested in services - only political points."

They also responded to criticism over the decision to employ two executive directors at salaries of up to £110,000 each to replace

outgoing chief executive Gary Pickering.

One executive would be in charge of economy and regeneration.

Council leader Councillor Matt Colledge said the post would attract investors.

He said: "This is about jobs."

"We have got a duty to the borough to bring in jobs and keep unemployment down."

Family fun at duck race

A SPORTING extravaganza to send you quackers is being held on Saturday.

A duck decathlon featuring 10 silly avian-themed races is guaranteed to get families

flocking to Victoria Park in Stretford, where more traditional sports like tennis and football can also be enjoyed.

The less energetic may want to try their hand at the

tombola or peruse the second hand book stall at the free event organised by the park's Friends group, which starts at 1pm at the Victoria Road park.