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# Victory for pensioner fined over Leicester city centre anti-cuts stand

The 73-year-old had been left in limbo for months



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NEWS By [Caitlin James](#) Local Democracy Reporter

12:18, 11 Mar 2026



Heather Rawling was told to remove the table by street wardens (Image: SWNS)

A pensioner who refused to pay a fine after being caught campaigning against council cuts in [Leicester city centre](#) is celebrating after her case was dropped.

Heather Rawling was hit with a £100 fine [after she erected a campaign table in the city centre](#) on May 31 2025.

A Leicester City Council warden had said the 73-year-old was in breach of a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) which was introduced a month earlier. The PSPO was [designed to reduce anti-social behaviour in the city](#), but also placed a ban on political or religious campaigners using flags, tables, or speakers.

Ms Rawling refused to take the table down at the time and has not paid up the £100 since, arguing the law is a breach of her right to freedom of speech.

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Since then, she has been waiting for her [court summons](#), where the fine could run up to £1,000 and include a criminal conviction.

She said she would worry every time the postman came and while Ms Rawling wanted her day in court to argue against the PSPO, she said being left in limbo for months on end was "scary".



[View 3 Images](#)

[Heather's case has now been dropped by the council](#) (Image: SWNS)

However, she is now celebrating after a letter from [the council's](#) head of standards and development dated March 6 confirmed her case has now been withdrawn.

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She told the Local Democracy Reporting Service: "Why should I ask the council permission to campaign against something they're doing? It makes a mockery of it and gives them too much power."

"It's good news and a relief but only a partial victory. I wasn't just standing up for myself but other campaigners too.

"We want to see the council withdraw that aspect of the PSPO that limits campaign activity. The fight goes on!

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“We will carry on. We will start having stalls in town and if we don't get challenged, we will see that as a victory.”

after prison attack

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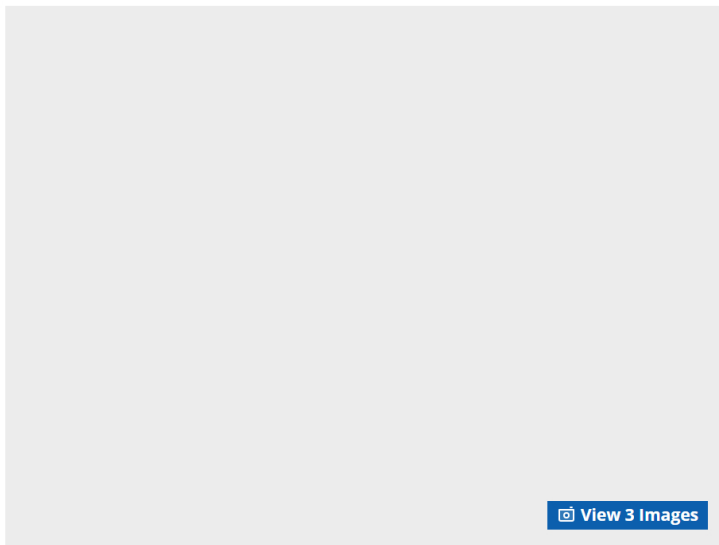


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The news of her fine's dismissal comes after six campaign groups set up stands in the city centre on February 7 in an attempt to defy the ban.



[View 3 Images](#)

[Heather Rawling \(in red\) campaigns against cuts in Leicester city centre](#)  
(Image: Heather Rawling)

On this occasion, campaigners say [city wardens made no effort to stop them](#).

While Ms Rawling questioned if this meant the council “recognises that this aspect of the PSPO is unenforceable”, fellow campaigner Josie Appleton said this incident shows the law needs revisiting.

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She said: “If the council is not going to change the law, but it is not going to enforce it, it should be reviewed at the highest level.”

She has since called on city mayor Sir Peter Soulsby to scrap the PSPO, but has not yet received a response.

A [Leicester City Council](#) spokesperson said: "Almost a year on from the introduction of the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO), anti-social behaviour in the city centre has greatly reduced, helping to create a safer and more welcoming environment for residents, visitors and businesses.

"Public feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with many people welcoming the improvements the PSPO has brought.

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"We have also listened to feedback from a few individuals who have raised concerns about some aspects of the order, including the clarity of the rules and the processes involved.

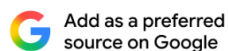
"With nearly 12 months of monitoring and evaluation now complete, we have reviewed the PSPO and identified areas where guidance can be clearer and more visible.

"Revised guidance will be published on our website in April which will provide clearer information on the process for booking event space and restrictions under the PSPO.

"This will coincide with the launch of a new public realm team, which will patrol the city centre, speaking with the public and enforcing the PSPO where necessary, to ensure the city centre remains safe and welcoming for everyone."

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Nihal16@ · 14 DAYS AGO

Well done for standing up for rights and not pay the fine .Bullying /spying on people by city wardens is not acceptable. They do same for fly tipping no clear signage only to trap and fine people.

REPLY 1 6



Jungfreu · 14 DAYS AGO

The Bible bashers were the worst offenders. Over amplification was getting out of control, it was making the clock tower area very unpleasant. Political stalls have been operating for donkey's years and have never been a nuisance. Congratulations to Heather and the Socialist Party, it was very important to make a stand against repressive measures.

REPLY 1 REPLY 5 5



Anotheridea · 13 DAYS AGO

Reply to Jungfreu

They cut back on the excessive noise around the clock tower but now plan to introduce 'music' at 4 sites around the area, why? Its much better now its quieter

REPLY 1 0



rajputi · 14 DAYS AGO

In the house commons , MP's have a table and chairs and microphone to be heard, why not the same tools for the person in the street to make him/ her point of view across

REPLY 2 4

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