

Drivers wrongly fined for using bus lane over 1,000 times says councillor

Drivers in Edinburgh were wrongly fined more than 1,000 times for using a bus lane earlier this summer, a councillor has said.

The council has been urged to quash up to £110k in charges handed out over May and June when traffic restrictions were “not legitimately in place”.

A short bus lane, operating at peak times, was introduced on Lanark Road west-bound between Spylaw Bank Road and the Gillespie Crossroads in a bid to improve the reliability of services.

A traffic order which allows the authority to enforce the regulations expired on May 20 but was not replaced until June 17.

And new figures show that despite this gap motorists continued to be fined in the intervening four weeks – 1,087 times.

Depending on the number of drivers who paid within 14 days – which cuts the charge from £100 to £50 – it’s estimated between £55k and £110k could have been collected erroneously.

Conservative councillor Jason Rust, who requested the data from officials, said: “It is not appropriate at all if residents have been fined during a period when the regulations were not legitimately in place.

“I do not see how the council can countenance residents and visitors being unfairly fined in this way. These fines should be quashed now.”

As of earlier this month, £124,130 had been collected in fines since May when a camera set up to catch anyone flouting the rules was switched on.

It comes as the council prepares to trial ‘7-7-7’ bus lanes operating bus lanes from 7am to 7pm, seven days a week on some city roads from early next year.

Cllr Rust said there was a “complete lack of evidence basis for the proposed new 7-7-7 on Lanark Road”.

He added: “It seems that there are issues to sort out with the existing enforcement before the council ploughs ahead.”

Edinburgh Council have been contacted for comment.

By Donald Turvill Local Democracy Reporter