

## Change the Protocol

I did not vote for the final Agreement with the EU for three reasons. The first was all my experience of the EU taught me if you do sign an Agreement with them they ceaselessly try to enforce it selectively and in a biased way against you. It behaves badly to all its neighbours and tries to boss them as if they were member colonies of the project. Secondly I thought the NI Protocol a mistake . Thirdly I wanted to end all EU say over our fish. On fish and the Protocol the government tried to assure MPs these were provisional or transitory arrangements which would be changed. The Protocol contains a clause to allow alteration and the fishing agreement was transitional.

As I expected the EU has sought to use the Protocol as a battering ram against our U.K. Union or as a device to keep the whole U.K. prisoner of the single market and its rules. The EU always sides with the nationalists in Northern Ireland and with the Republic of Ireland as an EU member state in a way which continuously undermines the Good Friday Agreement. That peace settlement in NI requires the consent of both the nationalist and the Unionist communities in NI to any political development or decision. The EU claims to want to uphold that Agreement yet does everything in its power and some things beyond its legal authority to alienate the Unionist community and split it from the U.K.

Unionists now refuse to form and work in a devolved government at Stormont all the time the EU interprets the Protocol in a one sided way to throttle GB/NI trade. The EU's bigoted inflexibility, refusing to agree that GB/NI trade should not face any internal barriers crossing the Irish Sea has damaged business in NI and made Unionists feel cut off from the rest of the U.K.

The Secretary of State for NI and the PM must now legislate in the U.K. to make clear that GB/NI trade will be governed as England/Wales or London/Liverpool trade is governed, in accordance with those statements in the Protocol to respect our internal market. The U.K. legislation should include making it an offence to seek to pass on any goods traded under the GB/NI provisions to the EU to uphold their main requirement in the Protocol. This will be enforced by the U.K. as we currently enforce anti smuggling measures.

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## Public views of net zero

If someone believes the most pressing issue facing the planet is excess carbon dioxide, and if they believe each one of us and every country has to do more to prevent "climate disaster" you would expect them to vote Green,

the one party who put this issue above others. They demand much more is done immediately to bring about these changes and criticise the other parties programmes which allow continuing use of fossil fuels without the restrictions and tight shut down timetables the Greens would like.

In the 2019 General election in the U.K. just 2.7% of voters voted Green. In last week's local elections the Greens were in seventh place in numbers of Councillors elected.

You would also expect those who want rapid action for fear of disaster to rip out their gas boilers and scrap or sell their petrol or diesel cars. Again, it is a tiny minority that has taken both these steps.

When I ask constituents for their views the overwhelming majority accept that CO<sub>2</sub> is a greenhouse gas. They are not sufficiently persuaded of the urgency to make a sacrifice to get rid of the car or find the big sum to replace the boiler. Some argue that all the time India and China carry on expanding their coal based systems world CO<sub>2</sub> will rise whatever we do. A minority do not believe man made CO<sub>2</sub> will do the damage envisaged, or it may be offset by less sun intensity or water vapour and cloud changes or other variables. Many await better technology answers and cheaper and better products to help them eliminate their own CO<sub>2</sub>. Today many see the price and availability of gas and oil as more pressing issues that concern them.

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## [The Treasury should give back some of its windfall profits from energy taxes.](#)

The biggest winner from sky high oil and gas prices is the government. Half the pump price you pay is duty and VAT. The VAT has surged as oil prices rose. If your petrol came from North Sea Oil the government has also taken another slug of tax from the oil producer, charged as a windfall profits tax at double the standard corporation tax.

Those who shout for a windfall profits tax on oil companies to give back to consumers should demand such a hand back from the government instead as they are ripping you off for driving and home heating with their taxes. BP made an overall loss of a colossal \$20 bn in the first quarter. Yes the company made more on selling petrol but it had to write off its huge investment in Russia. In 2020 thanks to lockdown the group also lost \$20bn for the year as a whole. Labour did not suggest then giving them a subsidy or tax rebate to help them out.

I have tried before to get the oil companies to put the government take on the pump and show it is many times the oil companies profit. They did not

want to do so. That is a pity as it leaves some motorists thinking the bulk of the high price is extra profit when the bulk of the high price is a government tax rip off. No government is about to stop these taxes on petrol so they could at least give some of their windfall back to consumers as tax cuts on other taxes.

If the U.K. gets a reputation for still higher and erratic taxes it will put off investment and make it more difficult to increase domestic supply. Surely the best answer to our struggles is more home output?

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## [A Written Answer from the Treasury](#)

I have received the below written answer from Ministers at the Treasury:

Treasury has provided the following answer to your written parliamentary question (158849):

**Question:**

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what analysis he has undertaken on the potential impact of recent tax rises on consumer confidence and retail sales. (158849)

I received the following answer. It is extraordinary there is no reply on the huge plunge on consumer confidence and a reassertion of out of date OBR forecasts.

Tabled on: 25 April 2022

**Answer:**

**Lucy Frazer:**

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) publish monthly statistics on retail sales. According to latest data, retail sales volumes in Great Britain decreased by 1.4 per cent on the month in March 2022 but remain 2.2 per cent above February 2020 levels. The ONS does not publish official data on consumer confidence.

The Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) set out its latest assessment of the impact of tax changes on the economy in the Economic and Fiscal Outlook, published at Spring Statement 2022. In its latest forecast, the OBR expects household consumption to grow by 5.4 per cent in 2022.

Further details can be found in the OBR's latest Economic and Fiscal Outlook published in March 2022:

<https://obr.uk/efo/economic-and-fiscal-outlook-march-2022/>.

The answer was submitted on 28 Apr 2022 at 10:47.

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## **The Treasury and Bank will make the economy worse**

The Bank and the Treasury have decided to take it out on us because they allowed inflation to go too high. The latest forecasts from The Bank suggests the growth of the economy will slow to zero and unemployment will rise. Both organisations are reaching for their austerity playbooks when they should be looking to help expand capacity and offset more of the real income falls.

The government needs to wake up and tell them they are wrong. The Chancellor should stop the tax rises and explain to Treasury officials why their debt and deficit based advice is wrong and will make the deficit worse, not better.