

☒ **There are vast concerns about the amount of single use plastic which ends up in landfill, in our seas or simply blowing around your area when it's windy and the re-cycle bins blow over. Rightly so.**

But have any of us actually stopped and thought about who is responsible? Presently we have a 5p ?Tax? on single use plastic bags at Supermarkets. The revenue is supposed to go to local Environmental Causes. Have you heard of any of your local Supermarkets giving large sums of money to local Environmental Causes? Has your cause benefited in any way shape or form? I fear generally the answer is no.

Let us put a slightly different angle on this.

When you go to the Supermarket to buy a lettuce, have you ever found the words ? I don't want that one, the half plastic cover has come off? slipping inadvertently through your clenched teeth? I'm guessing not, unless you happen to be shopping at your workplace after shift and have been subliminally programmed. They will tell you that the plastic covering is to preserve freshness. All lies, I afraid. It's all about profits. If they can force their suppliers to insert said lettuce in a half plastic covering before boxing them for them all the better. They will also be obliged to stick the label on the plastic for them which carries the four digit product number and a bar code. How does this increase profit? Well they don't need staff training for the checkout operators to tell the difference between an Iceberg, Red Leaf Lettuce or indeed a Spring lettuce . Because they've burdened their supplier with the packaging and presentation the staff simply need to lay the tray on the shelves and let the customers take what they want. Bonus, they can send the cardboard back to their suppliers to dispose of and they'll never see the plastic again. Win -Win.

Extend this concept to plastic cocktail sticks, plastic straws, plastic coffee cups, plastic once only use water bottles, plastic meat trays and coverings, frozen goods bags.....

The next proposal as a ?tax? on once only use coffee cups. When an organically waxed degradable paper cup would do the job just as well.

So who should pay? Not you the consumer, I'm quite sure. You didn't request all the excess plastic packaging.

So how is this for an idea? Make the coffee chains and supermarkets pay the ?tax? themselves and guarantee that they cannot pass the cost to you, the consumer. Stand at the checkout and simply say ?Not I don't want a 5p bag or a bag for life, I want a paper bag with handles free of charge? and stand your ground. Or in the coffee shop simply say ?It's

to go, in a paper cup if you please?. You might be defeated on the first few visits, but if you start stripping all the plastic off your goods and leaving them behind they will soon get the message. Especially if we all do it....

There is no room for profit over people. There is less room for profit over the planet....