

The NHS

I usually agree with the electorate whose opinions reflected in issue polls are often more sensible than the views of government and opposition parties.

I agree with current polls that reveal a deep dissatisfaction with the NHS. I do not agree that the answer is more money. If only it were that simple. If more money on its own would fix it we would have fixed it this decade.

Spending on health has shot up from 2019. At £180 bn this year, it is £56 bn or 45% higher than in 2019. It is true prices and wages have gone up. Adjusting for this the NHS is receiving more than 20% extra. That is a much bigger rise than the Brexit savings on the side of the bus. They and tax rises have all been absorbed into the NHS budget.

The NHS will each year need some extra money. We want nurses and doctors to be well paid and the NHS to be able to afford new medicines as they become available. It would help reduce the strains on the service if there was a large reduction in legal migration, as recent years have brought in plenty more patients.

It is also true that in recent years there has been a big increase in non medical staff numbers and an expansion of senior grades of management. There has been a big drop in output per person implying the extra management has made the lives of those doing the medical work more difficult and bureaucratic.

More money should only be committed to achieve better outcomes for patients. We need better management, probably with fewer managers.