

Public sector output

The disappointing GDP figure for December was dragged down by a fall in output at Health and Education. There were fewer GP appointments, less test and trace and vaccination work. Fewer pupils went to school. It is worrying that after such a large extra recruitment of NHS managers and non medical staff in the last three years output should be falling. More support staff alongside the extra doctors and nurses need organising and motivating by the managers so more is achieved.

Hospitality and leisure was also weaker than the Christmas season deserved. It is true Premier League games were lost to international competition, but also the case that business suffered from train strikes which prevented or deterred many people going to city centres where much of the leisure and hospitality is located.

I have pointed out before that public sector productivity has now failed to grow for 25 years. The covid years have been especially bad. We do need to find managers that can improve all that, and can tailor jobs for talented staff that are worthwhile and well remunerated within the large budgets available.