Twitter Thread by Jon Worth



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To those saying that those who have got their public health advice wrong earlier in the pandemic should put up their hands and apologise... a little cautionary lesson from another sector

A short ■

1/

Public health is not my thing

But Brexit is

And throughout 2019 and 2020 I have been trying to make predictions as to what will happen in that story. Lives do not depend on this, only my professional reputation (marginally) does

2/12

The three series of #BrexitDiagram I made in 2019 were extraordinarily accurate

Series 1/2
https://t.co/wOSzIXxJ2M

Series 3
https://t.co/E4fKeGoa5n

Series 4
https://t.co/yRsQ8mLGj1

Each series got that stage of Brexit right

3/12

The 2020 series was nowhere near as good - at one stage I had No Deal Brexit at 78% chance in early December - and that was not what happened

https://t.co/WNM4ip9HXs

4/12

I own this error - I was wrong

I know *why* I was wrong - I thought the European Parliament would fight more on Provisional Application, and I thought agreeing everything in a week wouldn't work. I wasn't right

The Manston crisis / borders closing changed something too

5/12

But what happened in the public reaction?

Last year did anyone go "you predicted it all right at every turn"? No, not a bit. People were grateful for how the diagrams explained everything, but praise for my prediction ability was not forthcoming

6/12

Now plenty of people are happy to rub my nose it it for getting this round wrong - even though I acknowledge I got it wrong publicly, and know why I got it wrong, and should be better in future

7/12

And some of those critics have even questioned whether I should even make judgments on *anything* else - having got 1 of the 4 phases of Brexit wrong

8/12

This also explains why much of the public political 'analysis' we read is not very clear and categoric in its recommendations or predictions - because it means it is then harder to be shown to have been wrong later

9/12

It was similar re. my UK tactical voting advice in 2019 - the vast vast majority of the advice was correct, but the attacks for having only relatively late changed Kensington to the correct recommendation outweighed the whole positive feedback

10/12

Putting your hands up and saying "I got that wrong" is damned hard, and having felt the reaction on something as minor as a Brexit prediction, I dread to think of the what the reactions would be if you had to do that on a matter of life and death

What's the solution?

I don't know.

But expecting people to own up to an error, when the price for doing so seems greater than the acclaim ever received for having got it right looks to be a long shot.