# Starmer's reshaping of government raises concerns over accountability



Keir Starmer, the newly installed Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, has convened his cabinet in a bid to assert control over government operations, stating is essential for ministers to take direct responsibility for their departments instead of relying on regulators and quangos. This anticipatory move comes ahead of a pivotal speech on Thursday where he is expected to announce proposals for major restructuring within Whitehall, including the troubling prospect of significant cuts.

Starmer’s words represent a dangerous shift towards a governance philosophy that prioritises a flawed notion of a "proactive state." His insistence that the government must "go further and faster to reform the state" unveils a worrying agenda that, under the veneer of support for working people, risks undermining accountability and transparency. The so-called Plan for Change may actually signal an expansion of government overreach dressed as reform, instead of enabling genuine empowerment of the populace.

Echoing Starmer, Cabinet Office Minister Pat McFadden criticized the previous administration for expanding the civil service without requisite efficiency. However, this critique rings hollow given that it is the current Labour government, under Starmer's leadership, that is poised to pursue an agenda likely steeped in bureaucratic mismanagement.

The purported plan to cut around 10,000 civil service positions raises serious questions about Starmer’s commitment to effective governance, especially with proposals for financial incentives encouraging underperforming officials to resign. Linking the pay of senior officials to performance may seem pragmatic, but it smacks of a reactive approach rather than a genuine effort at reform.

Despite claims of a shrinking bureaucracy, Starmer's government has paradoxically initiated the creation of approximately 25 new quangos and task forces since their election win in July, including bodies like GB Energy. This glaring hypocrisy begs the question: how can Starmer advocate for a reduction in bureaucracy while simultaneously inflating it? Such contradictions only serve to erode faith in the government's commitment to true reform.

Furthermore, the cabinet discussions led by Justice Secretary Shabana Mahmood reveal alarming overreach. Mahmood’s threats to legislate against the Sentencing Council unless it complies with her demands throw caution to the wind, as they undermine the independence of critical judicial bodies — a move that could have profound implications for fair sentencing practices, particularly amid ongoing scrutiny over bias against ethnic minorities.

Ultimately, Starmer’s approach to reshaping governance through direct oversight of regulatory bodies appears more reactionary than proactive. Rather than enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of governmental operations, he risks entrenching a bureaucratic nightmare that will serve only to diminish public trust and accountability. As the opposition party, it is paramount to scrutinise these developments closely, ensuring that true reform is pursued, and that the people’s interests are genuinely represented.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/comment/one-year-commission-centre-government> - This article discusses the governance structure under Keir Starmer, highlighting the fragmented nature of decision-making and the need for a more cohesive approach. It also touches on civil service reform and the role of key ministers.
* <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/here-are-the-first-tasks-new-u-k-leader-keir-starmer-must-tackle-as-prime-minister> - This piece outlines the challenges Keir Starmer faces as Prime Minister, including assembling a government and addressing domestic issues. It provides context on Starmer's leadership and the tasks ahead.
* <https://www.taxresearch.org.uk/Blog/2025/02/08/its-going-to-be-torture-as-the-path-to-starmers-inevitable-demise-is-rolled-out/> - This blog post critiques Starmer's leadership and governance strategies, suggesting that his approach may not be effective in addressing economic and public support challenges.
* <https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/comment/one-year-commission-centre-government#Recommendation3> - This section discusses the role of Pat McFadden in civil service reform and his responsibilities in supporting the delivery of government priorities, which relates to Starmer's governance agenda.
* <https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/comment/one-year-commission-centre-government#Recommendation4> - This part of the article explores the potential restructuring of the Cabinet Office and its implications for governance efficiency and accountability under Starmer's leadership.
* <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2024/jul/06/keir-starmer-uk-prime-minister-cabinet-appointments> - Although not directly available in the search results, this type of article would typically discuss Starmer's cabinet appointments and his approach to governance, providing insight into his leadership style and priorities.
* <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2025/mar/11/stop-outsourcing-decisions-to-quangos-starmer-tells-cabinet> - Please view link - unable to able to access data