

## Who is in charge?

The Health Secretary struggles to tell us how many CEOs there are in NHS England and seeks more money to get the waiting lists down without saying how the money will be spent or by how much waiting lists will fall.

The Transport Secretary presides over a railway sending largely empty trains around the country making huge losses, told by the railway management they need to carry on with the same timetables and same cost base as pre pandemic.

The Home Secretary tells the Home Office to stop the people smuggling and trafficking, approves more resources and a new Channel Command, but the numbers keep coming.

Government has been made much less responsive by the theory of independent bodies run by civil servants or CEOs who seek to keep Ministers at arms length. NHS England, Network Rail and Border Force have their own powers and independence when it suits. When something goes wrong they expect Ministers to vote more money and take the blame.

Given the growing gap between what the public wants and what some of these independent bodies deliver, Ministers need to take more control. Change, better service and more value for money is needed. The NHS needs to get the waiting lists down, the railways need to tailor services to changed demand and border force needs to stop the illegals.

I will be writing several blogs about the productivity problem in the public sector, the myth of independent bodies and the need to reset management and aims of important services.