

Can I start by saying a thank you for coming. It is great that so many people are expressing an interest in the troubled families programme and as was mentioned earlier the vast range of skills and experience in this room is tremendous.

The other really brilliant thing is that the troubled families programme has been extended and broadened for another 5 years. It creates a real opportunity to take the learning from the first phase and develop that to a wider group of people such as yourselves. Bristol has been asked to be an early adopter of the next phase which we started on the 1<sup>st</sup> September. The national rollout will be next march.

In the last couple of years our attention has really been focused on two significant aspects in Bristol. The first was implementing and developing our family intervention team service. Starting with almost no provision we have built that up into a highly skilled workforce supported by a range of specialists who are making a real difference to families.

The second aspect is structural change and the transformation of services relating to children, young people and families this has included remodelling all of our early help provision into three virtual teams, , the implementation of first response our multi agency contact centre and now as we speak the remodelling of our social care teams. Once completed Bristol will have the infrastructure and approach to deliver services in a more efficient and beneficial way for families who live in the city.

Having completed the first phase of the troubled family programme, it does quite naturally make you take a moment to reflect on what has worked well, not so well, are we making a difference.

The statistics you saw at the end of the video were an analysis of 76 families worked intensively with by our Family Intervention team. When we did that analysis we had no idea what it was going to say. I have to say I was taken back when I saw them, I knew what was happening was good, I knew the quality of the work, I knew the quality of the staff and I think I can say it because I haven't done the work they have but for me the difference they have made to families lives is impressive, its impactful and it is the evidence we need to push through continuing to work in this way.

Emma set out the aspirations of the extended programme. I share those aspirations. I wanted us to finish the first part of the programme so we could put our total focus on to this next piece of work. One of those reasons is because the new programme empowers local authorities and partners. It creates better opportunities for us to choose the families we work with. It creates better opportunities to transform the way we work and it is exciting!

It also creates the opportunity for us to promote the positive aspects of whole family working so that others who are in a position to adopt that method of working can see the benefits and move in that direction

Bristol is an emerging city and it has hopes and aspirations. I, we, the city wants to narrow the gap between those who have and those who do not. We have challenges; the public sector is under the cosh. Those challenges however focus the mind. Limited resources need to be used even more wisely than before. We need to do things differently, we know joint working, joint communicating, joint thinking all adds up to more for less. Nothing is sacred anymore and opportunities are available for the brave.

There are many different organisations and institutions working out there but there is one that does more than any other, this institution looks after the elderly, the frail, provides for the needs of the child, supports celebrates and aspires for the young to achieve. Is always there 24/7 365 days a year – the family.

The family institution is fundamental to our way of life, to our success as a community, as a nation. Therefore when those families are in need, not functioning as they should we need to be there to support them.

That support should not come as a result of a lottery that somehow your family and its plight is spotted by a professional and you are referred to a service. It should be based on need, priority, risk, harm vulnerability and be considered thinking. It should also be based on public agency knowing and understanding the resources we have, understanding how those resources can be best used, aligning the skills of professionals to the needs of families. A family with highest need should be able to get to a professional with the right skills and expertise.

Of course there is a place for referrals but we need to be more proactive. We need to be ahead of the game, professionals should be able to understand the risk, vulnerability and recognise the trajectory and do something about it before a crisis is reached even if that family doesn't realise the perilous journey they are on.

The troubled families programme is a fantastic opportunity to bring about the change in approach, to move from reactive intervention to proactive intervention.

When I reflect back to the start of the troubled families programme one of the realisations that came for me was when we set about trying to identify families with complex needs I realised we had lifted a stone from which there was no turning back. The scale of families who have multiple and complex needs is far greater than I think was realised. In fact those families who we believed were easier to change were more complex than we realised, those families who we thought were complex turned out to be even more complicated.

It was also self-evident that families in real need didn't always hit the necessary criteria. The extended programme fully recognises that and the new criteria is a very real reflection of the core issues families who need support present

We have been working hard throughout the summer to design the process necessary to identify those families who match the new 6 criteria. Recognising that to be in the programme they have to meet at least 2.

1. Parents and children involved in crime or antisocial behaviour.
2. Children who have not been attending school regularly.
3. Children who need help.
4. Adults out of work or at risk of financial exclusion and young people at risk of worklessness.
5. Families affected by domestic violence and abuse.
6. Parents and children with a range of health problems.

In the first phase we started with no one and then added families we identified who met the criteria. This was in my view a flawed and limiting process as it meant we were not considering all needs across the city.

This time we have started with everyone and are in effect taking people who don't meet the criteria out so we are left with all of those families that have these issues. So for example we started with 190,000 homes, we established 54,000 homes had children, we then obtained the various data sets and have reached a point whereby we know the numbers of families who meet these criteria – so we can see who meets 6,5,4 etc. In its own right that is an indicator of very real needs, families who meet 4, 5 or 6 of the new criteria are almost certainly in need of significant support.

It does mean that we are identifying many more families than we need too and we don't have the capacity to work with these numbers. However, it does mean that we start considering everyone in the city and get a better understanding of the challenges they face. It gives us a better strategic view and that supports improved identification of need, a better understanding of the support services needed and improves our ability to get the right resource to the right family at the right time. It also enables us to factor in other information like cost, risk, vulnerability and early intervention so that our targeted services are used to maximum effect.

So, firstly we are reviewing those families that meet multiple criteria 4,5,6 and who clearly need support, we are looking to see if that support is there , whether it is sufficient and needs strengthening or if it isn't there can we provide it.

We are also developing work on predictive analysis. A small team of people are working on developing our understanding of these families and using predictive analytical software to try to identify those people who will have a high risk of becoming more troubled as part of our early intervention strategy.

Predictive analytics is well established in the commercial sector we see it all the time, our supermarkets, on line, it drives advertising. It is a tool. I think a good analogy is if you are looking along a dark tunnel you light a match to see what is ahead, predictive analytics is turning that match into a torch, it doesn't tell you everything but it helps to guide you in a clearer more focused way.

We have a lot of data but we don't use it wisely enough, and we need too. If 500 families demonstrate certain vulnerability and you only have the capacity to work with 50 – how do you choose the 50? At the moment that is based on referrals, that requires motivated professionals to refer and the first 50 past the line are worked with. Is that the 50 we should have chosen based on most risk, highest cost, and greatest vulnerability? I suggest not.

Predictive analytics is not an isolated tool where the computer says 'no' it is an aide to decision making, it is about using our data in a smart way to provide evidence to support decision making. To be effective it is one of three things coming together information, predictive analytics and professional judgement. It is about adding value, based on evidence, to provide better decisions about allocating resources.

It isn't be all and end all, we are inexperienced at using it, we need to learn lessons and develop our understanding but if the troubled families agenda is going to lead the way shape service transformation then this is the type of pioneering work we need to embrace, be brave and push through.

For me it takes us from being a reactive service to a proactive service. Proactively identifying families to work with because of either the issues they face now or the trajectory they are on

Many of you that I have met will know that I spent 30 years as a police officer before becoming the troubled families' coordinator. Despite living the life of a police officer -crime programmes and characters and have still been a favourite of mine – Sherlock Holmes being one of them - a story relating to him is quite pertinent to what I want to say

**Sherlock Holmes and Watson went on a camping trip. After sharing a good meal and a bottle of wine, they retire to their tent for the night.**

**At about 3 AM, Holmes nudges Watson and asks, "Watson, look up into the sky and tell me what you see?"**

**Watson said, "I see millions of stars."**

**Holmes asks, "And, what does that tell you?"**

**Watson replies, "Astronomically, it tells me there are millions of galaxies and potentially billions of planets. Astrologically, it tells me that Saturn is in Leo. Theologically, it tells me that God is great and we are small and insignificant. Meteorologically, it tells me that we will have a beautiful day tomorrow. What does it tell you, Holmes?"**

**Holmes retorts, "Someone stole our tent."**

What it tells me is that in life we can sometimes make things so complicated that we don't see the obvious.

Over two years in this role and I think that there is one thing that dominates the whole agenda and it all boils down to one word.

I have no experience in this field, I am not an academic, I am not an authority on the subject, and I have never worked as a key worker for a family. I am just a practical guy who sits back, watches listens and tries to work out what works and what doesn't work.

I have played a part in national evaluation, I have read academic papers I have listened about various models of operating and I have spoken to families and after all of that one word dominates all of my thinking which I think makes all the difference.

But I can tell you despite it being as obvious as Sherlock Holmes losing his tent we will struggle to get people to recognise its worth and protect it as the golden nugget it is.

In my view that word is TIME

TIME

Time to spend building a relationship

Time to understand a family's strengths and weaknesses

Time to understand their needs aspirations

Time to be there for long enough to achieve sustainable change

Time to coordinate other agencies

## The time to make a difference

There are those that see the scale of families needing help and support, emotionally they struggle with the concept of choosing who gets help and who doesn't, they feel that we should try to give everyone at least a little bit of help. I understand that. But we must find the balance between meeting real and immediate need and the ability to deliver sustainable change so that families become independent of the state and live their lives in a positive manner contributing to the community rather than drawing resource from it. That means for some families we need to find time, we need to make sure keyworkers case loads are set at a level which mean they can make a difference. Even if that means not all families can access that service

As part of the new programme we will need to write a family outcome plan. This sets out in relation to all of the criteria what we are trying to achieve to deliver significant and sustainable change. This is an important document because it contains our ambition.

Yes we can write it so it is easily achievable, claim all the money from the government and run but I want it to shape our future. I want us to understand what significant and sustainable change looks like, feels like means to families. Our ambition isn't totally borne out of desire it is also out of necessity. Some families need to change the safety net of the state has bigger holes in it than before and they are likely to get bigger. Employment is going to gain in importance in shaping whether a family can move forward positively. Reliance on benefits is going to be less of a cushion.

We also need to raise our ambition in respect of other important issues domestic abuse is a cancer for which we do not yet seem to have found a cure. The effect of our interventions seems limited, we know next to nothing about how to work with perpetrators. This is an area of work that needs to be developed.

Children's mental health is another area whereby you just get a sense we are doing too little, too late and not all of the right people are finding their way to the support they need.

Parenting is critical and we need raise our game on this aspect we need parents of families of this nature to change how they parent. Amidst many complexities and multiple problems to me this is as clear as Sherlock holmes tent has gone missing. There are significant numbers of families who will never bring about the changes needed if they don't change their approach to parenting. Our and their success is fundamentally based on the need for them to change.

We can't make people change we can only work with them. If you offer a 100 parents a parenting course the vast majority would turn it down. Going on a course on its own isn't enough, going on a course three or four times is a waste.

We need to improve the offer and make it a package, longer term, more supportive. It starts with someone engaging parents, building trust and confidence which leads to encouraging the desire change their approach to parenting, developing the willingness to learn more by going on an evidence based course - support whilst attending to see though a course not because you get a gift at the end but because you see that it will change your life. In addition and importantly significant 1-1 support after the course to embed what has been learnt. This package needs to bring about significant and sustainable change.

We are going to invest in this, we will fine tune this model until we get it to a point that it makes the difference we need it to do.

Improved parenting needs to be a cornerstone, a fundamental and pivotal influence in changing the outcomes for families in the future.

The troubled families programme if used wisely and properly provides an opportunity to push at these fronts.

Another area which needs to develop is information sharing about individuals. There is a careful balance and I believe that we should be open and honest with people about what we are doing with their personal information. It is essential however that if we are all going to work together in a more joined up way we need to share information about people

If we are going to work holistically with families then those we charge to be sat at the kitchen table working alongside that family need to know the issues that family faces. It is no use for a keyworker to be trying to work with a family if they are not sighted on drug and alcohol abuse treatment. If we are trying to look across the city and identify which families need the most support because of the broad range of issues they face then agencies and providers need to collect their information, be transparent and honest with their clients and make them aware as to how the information is going to be use. If some providers don't like that then they can choose if they want to tender for the work. If we are going to work in a joined up way it is no use if health visitors call at families homes and declare that the family is universal partnership plus. Their definition of a family with multiple and complex needs and requiring a multi-agency support but then won't make the information available to other agencies. There are important partners who would tell you they are sat around the table but are they really?

We are being asked to work with 4200 families over the next five years, families with multiple and complex needs. We have a range of services and a certain level of capacity. We have the evidence that suggest if we work with families in a certain way we can make a difference. Now we have the structures in place we can develop and embed a whole family approach across a range of public services and ensure those services are attuned to the needs of families with complex problems. We can use the information we hold wisely and target those who most need that support with the most appropriate support. We can make a difference!

If I can finish by quoting Kofi Annan the UN secretary general who made a comment which perhaps reflects a lot of what I hope to achieve over the next few years with the troubled families programme:

"There is no trust more sacred than the one the world holds with children. There is no duty more important than ensuring that their rights are respected, that their welfare is protected,  
that their lives are free from fear and want  
and that they grow up in peace."