

## PRESS RELEASE

### Met Police required to compensate Cherry Groce's children for 1985 shooting

The High Court has ordered the Metropolitan Police Commissioner to compensate Cherry Groce's children for the harm caused to them as a result of the raid by armed police officers on their family home in 1985.

At a hearing before Mr Justice Jay in the High Court on 24 May 2016, the Commissioner's attempt to avoid any liability for that harm was roundly rejected.

Mrs Groce was shot and seriously injured in front of her young children during the 1985 raid, and she died 26 years later in 2011 as a result of those injuries. In July 2014, an inquest jury found that the shooting – and her death – was the result of serious and multiple failures at multiple levels of the Metropolitan Police: findings which were accepted by the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, who then offered a personal apology for the way in which the Met had *"failed to meet [its] responsibilities and in doing so caused irreparable damage to a mother and her family"*.

Having done so, the Commissioner then sought to avoid the implications of that apology, and for reasons that have never been properly explained he declined an invitation from the family to resolve their claim through mediation. He is now left with little option but to do so as a result of the High Court hearing, having been compelled to submit to judgment in favour of the family, with damages to be assessed. As the judge stated in open court at the conclusion of the hearing, *"these Claimants deserve to be compensated"*.

Cherry Groce's son, Lee Lawrence said:

*"The police deserved to be held accountable for what happened to us: what my sisters and I went through was real. We were children in the house at the time they came and shot our mother: we were exposed and witness to a traumatic experience which had a profound effect on our lives. The only choice we were left with was to stand up for what is right or to let it go."*

*"We chose to stand up and insist that the Commissioner had to answer for the wrong done to us. We invited him to accept responsibility for the irreparable damage that had been caused to us as admitted by him. It is to his shame that he tried to evade that responsibility, and he chose to force us to go to the court where he described our claim as 'an unfair and contentious attempt to gain from the shooting'."*

*"For our part, throughout this process, all we have asked is to be treated fairly, and we have maintained our dignity and integrity. We now look to the Commissioner to do the same, and we hope that he will find the courage and the strength to do so, even at this late stage."*

Raju Bhatt of Bhatt Murphy for the family said:

*"The Commissioner was invited to resolve the matter through mediation in the wake of the 2014 inquest, but he declined to do so for reasons that have never been properly explained. In the wake of his unbecoming and unsuccessful attempt to escape from his responsibilities, he now has another opportunity to accept this family's invitation to do the right thing by them. They have their renewed invitation to him to resolve this matter through mediation, and they hope and expect that he will do so in good faith."*

Raju Bhatt and Mark Scott of Bhatt Murphy act for Mrs Groce's family.

**For further information, please contact:**

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