

## Press Release

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### **‘Progress on Stephen Lawrence improvements to community policing not sustained,’ Dr Neville Lawrence tells London Met symposium**

*The father of Stephen Lawrence, the London teenager who was stabbed to death in 1993, was joined by Metropolitan Police Commissioner Cressida Dick, and Professor John Grieve, founder and Head of London Met’s John Grieve Centre for Policing and Community Safety at a London Met symposium last week.*

‘Changes have stopped being made’ in the fight against racially motivated crime, Dr Neville Lawrence told an audience of senior police officers, community leaders, campaigners, policy makers, academics and delegates at London Met last week.

In an emotive speech, Dr Lawrence called for more to be done to tackle the ‘growing problem of knife crime’ and spoke of the loss he still felt: “The day after my son’s murder, I thought it would be in the papers the next day and I thought there would be an outcry. But there was nothing.

“I still visit my son’s grave and see people he grew up with having their own children and all I can think is whether he would have had his own.”

The audience was gathered for a high-profile symposium, organised by the John Grieve Centre for Policing and Community Safety at London Met, to examine the progress that has been made twenty years on from the start of the Macpherson report into the murder of Londoner Stephen Lawrence.

Dr Lawrence was joined in the opening panel by Cressida Dick, London Metropolitan Police Commissioner; and Professor John Grieve QPM, Head of the John Grieve Centre for Policing and Community Safety. Paul Giannasi, Police Hate Crime Policy Lead, then took the conference through the state of progress on the 70 recommendations made 20 years ago.

The speakers acknowledged that there remained a great deal to be done, but that remaining problems tended to disguise the fact that there have also been very many changes for the better, and that were a direct result of Dr Neville and Baroness Lawrence’s persistence in seeking justice.

Ms Dick cited the range of measures that the Met Police have undertaken to tackle the problems posed by knife crime such as increasing stop and search by around a third, putting extra effort into community engagement and assured the audience that change was an ongoing process: “We have a zero-tolerance approach to racism in policing and we will go on relearning the lessons from the Macpherson enquiry and improve as an organisation,” she commented.

The conference then developed ideas mainly from community groups, on what changes would be beneficial, not only to police-community partnerships, such as that forged by the Jewish protection group, CST, but also by improving opportunities and raising aspirations for young black people through mentoring and training.

### **Leading research in knife crime**

The symposium also served as an informal relaunch of the John Grieve Centre for Policing and Community Policing, based at London Metropolitan University.

The Centre's founder and Head, Professor John Grieve, said: "The John Grieve Centre has made some valuable contributions to the policing society and we hope to continue to do so, in the first place, by publishing our analysis of the response of the delegates at the conference through the app supplied to everyone at the event."

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### **About London Metropolitan University**

London Metropolitan University has been providing education to people from all backgrounds since 1848, with the creation of the Metropolitan Evening Classes for Working Men. Six schools teach cutting-edge, relevant courses across the arts, sciences, business, law and humanities. Accelerator – London Met's specialist business incubator – helps graduates get their enterprises up and running and was named among the Top Five 'Most Active' accelerators in Europe in 2015, highlighting its contribution to London's booming start-up industry.

London Met is home to world-leading academics who regularly give expert comment to the media. The University scored well in the 2014 Research Excellence Framework, being ranked 4th in the country for Area Studies and performing strongly in Education and Social Studies.

The University is strongly focused on employability. In 2018, London Met recorded its highest ever graduate employment score, with 96.7% of all graduates in work or further study six months after graduation. It was also ranked above all five Russell Group universities in London for teaching quality in 2016.

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