[Blackburn with Darwen Community Network](https://www.communitycvs.org.uk/category/action/bwd-community-network/) is a new partnership of Voluntary Community Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) organisations and groups in Blackburn with Darwen which has been set up to support positive change within the local area and to work in partnership with the Borough Council, the NHS, and other key partners to prioritise the things that matter to our communities and to the VCFSE Sector.

**Purpose of the BwD Community Network**

* Take Action for what we want to achieve.
* Create a Shared Plan with key priorities.
* Coordinate work across organisations and networks.
* Involve people who are not normally asked or listened to (“seldom heard voices”).
* Demonstrate our value by gathering information about the sector and about volunteers.
* Promote what everyone does.
* Nominate people to be the voice of the Community Network within the wider society.

The focus of the network’s efforts is to create positive social, economic and environmental change within Blackburn with Darwen and the neighbourhoods that make up Blackburn with Darwen. The Network is a constituted body with its own Board that was formally established in April 2024. Community CVS provided the secretariat to support the Community Network in its endeavours.

We are currently developing a 6P VCFSE Strategy for Blackburn with Darwen (People, Prosperity, Planet, Peace, Place and Participation) to guide our efforts up until 2030. A 6P Conference was held in June 2024 and we have plans to share a draft strategy for consultation over the autumn period.

If you have what it takes to lead a new Board and a new Network to make a difference to communities across Blackburn with Darwen we would love to hear from you.

**BLACKBURN WITH DARWEN COMMUNITY NETWORK BOARD**

**Role of BwD Community Network Chairperson**

**Remuneration:** The role of Chair is not accompanied by any financial remuneration,

although expenses for travel may be claimed.

**Time commitment:** We would estimate time commitments being a minimum of one to two days per month.This will include a minimum of 3 Board meetings per year, but potentially more at the discretion of the chair and Board. The Board is currently meeting on a monthly basis on a Tuesday morning 10.00 am to 12.00 noon. The Chair is also expected to represent the BwD Community Network at various events and meetings with key stakeholders such as the quarterly network meetings and the annual conference. The chair is expected to meet with Community CVS to plan board meetings, network meeting and the annual conference.

**Job Description:**

**Objective:**

* The Chair will hold the Board and Network Members to account for leading change within the terms of its constitution and the strategy that is developed.
* The Chair will ensure that everyone adheres to the Principles of the Network (which are detailed in the Constitution).
* The Chair will demonstrate an inclusive leadership style, ensuring that each and every Board Member is supported to discharge their duties and responsibilities for the effective governance of the Network.
* The Chair will also ensure that the Board functions as a unit and works closely to achieve agreed objectives.
* The Chair will act as an ambassador and the public face of the BwD Community Network

**Core responsibilities:**

**Strategic Leadership:**

* Being willing and able to lead the BwD Community Network
* Provide leadership to the BwD Community Network and its Board, ensuring that the Network has maximum impact for the benefit of residents in Blackburn with Darwen
* Ensure that Board members fulfil their duties and responsibilities for the effective governance of the Network
* Ensure that the Board operates within the constitution, and provides a clear strategic direction for the BwD Community Network
* Ensure that the Board is able to regularly review major risks and associated opportunities, and satisfy itself that systems are in place to take advantage of opportunities, and manage and mitigate the risks
* Ensure that the Board fulfils its duties to ensure sound financial health of the Network, with systems in place to ensure financial accountability (for any funds that CVS manage on its behalf).

**Governance:**

* Ensure that the governance arrangements are working in the most effective way for the BwD Community Network
* Develop the knowledge and capability of the Board
* Encourage positive change where appropriate
* Address and resolve any conflicts within the Board
* Ensure that the Board is regularly refreshed and incorporates the right balance of skills, knowledge and experience needed to govern and lead the BwD Community Network effectively, and which also reflects the wider population
* Work within any agreed policies adopted by the BwD Community Network

**External Relations:**

* Act as an ambassador for the cause and the Network
* Act as a spokesperson for the organisation when appropriate
* Represent the BwD Community Network at external functions, meetings and events
* Facilitate change and address any potential conflict with external stakeholders

**Efficiency and effectiveness:**

* Chair meetings of the Board effectively and efficiently, bringing impartiality and objectivity to the decision-making process
* Ensure that Board members are fully engaged and that decisions are taken in the best, long-term interests of the BwD Community Network and that the Board takes collective ownership
* Foster, maintain and ensure that constructive relationships exist with and between the Board members
* Give direction to Board policymaking and to ensure that meetings are well planned, meaningful and reflect the responsibilities of trustees
* Ensure that decisions taken at meetings are implemented.

**Personal Specification:**

**Abilities**

* Demonstrate a strong and visible passion and commitment to the BwD Community Network, its strategic objectives and cause
* Exhibit strong inter-personal and relationship building abilities and be comfortable in an ambassadorial role
* Demonstrate tact and diplomacy, with the ability to listen and engage effectively
* Strong networking capabilities that can be utilised for the benefit of the BwD Community Network
* Ability to foster and promote a collaborative team environment
* Ability to commit time to conduct the role well, including travel and attending events out of office hours

**Experience:**

* Experience of operating at a senior strategic leadership level within an organisation (Public, Commercial or VCFSE Sector)
* Successful track record of achievement through their career
* Experience of facilitating and leading Non Executive Boards or Partnerships to achieve positive change
* Experience of external representation, delivering presentations and managing stakeholders
* Significant experience of chairing meetings and events

**Knowledge and skills:**

* Broad knowledge and understanding of the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sector (VCFSE) and current issues affecting it
* Broad knowledge of Blackburn with Darwen and the current issues affecting it
* Good understanding of the public policy landscape and the opportunities and challenges for the VCFSE Sector
* Strong leadership skills, ability to motivate staff and volunteers and bring people together
* Good understanding of governance and delivery of goals through partnership working

**Terms:**

The BwD Community Network Chair (and board members) will serve a three-year term to be eligible for re-appointment for one additional term.

**APPLICATION PROCESS**

Deadline for applications is **12.00 noon on Monday 25th November 2024.** We expect applicants to submit a curriculum vitae (CV) with a covering letter that explains why you are the right person for the role and addresses the points raised in the personal specification.

Please return your application to donna.talbot@communitycvs.org.uk. If you want to discuss the opportunity please do not hesitate to contact Garth Hodgkinson (CEO – Community CVS) garth.hodgkinson@communitycvs.org.uk or Donna Talbot (Membership Development Officer – Community CVS) donna.talbot@communitycvs.org.uk

More information on the Blackburn with Darwen Community Network is included on the CVS website – see link below:-

[www.communitycvs.org.uk/action/bwd-community-network/](http://www.communitycvs.org.uk/action/bwd-community-network/)

Community CVS provides the secretariat for the Blackburn with Darwen Community Network with Garth and Donna being the main supporting officers. Philippa Cross from the Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Integrated Care Board and Richard Brown from Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council are nominated supporting officers from the NHS and the local authority.