



*Welcome to the
Community Action Bradford & District
VCSE Big Meet!*

Proud to be sponsored by:





Get social!

Use hashtag #VCSEBigMeet

***Tag us at @ Community Action on Facebook
and LinkedIn***

Proud to be sponsored by:





James Brown
CEO, Active Bradford

Proud to be sponsored by:





How does it feel to be a CEO?

James Brown

The Big Meet, 23 April 2026

james@activebradford.com

Debra Allcock Tyler

2nd edition

IT'S TOUGH AT THE TOP

The no-fibbing guide to leadership





109
days



Mind Games



- **Purpose**
- **Relationships**
- **Trust**
- **Values**



= transitions

We're stronger together, and together we're all **Active Bradford**





James Brown - Trustee





Leadership AND Followership: two sides of the same coin

Courageous followership =

- **Independent critical thinking**
- **Constructive challenge**
- **Actively engaged in shared purpose and transformation**
- **Supports decisions once agreed**



Carol Peltier
Chair, Race Equality Network

Proud to be sponsored by:





**Carol Peltier
Chair**

**Race Equality
Network (REN)**

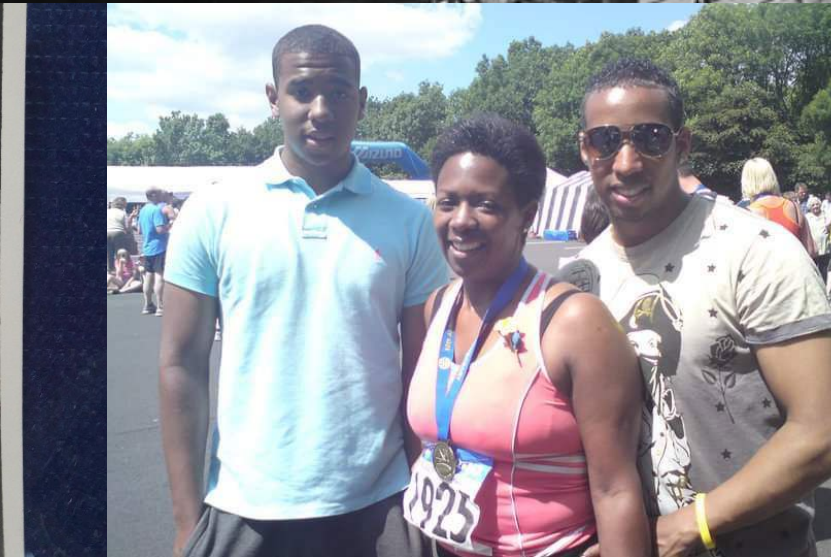


Overview

- ❖ My Parents' Journey, Where it all Started
- ❖ Who am I?
- ❖ My Starting Point: Community Health Development/Engagement
- ❖ Black Health Forum (BHF): Chair
- ❖ Race Equality Network: Chair

Who Am I?

- ❖ Mother, Nanna (5), Sister, Friend, Colleague, and Community Worker
- ❖ Parents Journey – from Jamaica to Bradford (Windrush Generation 1948 – 1971)
- ❖ My Starting Point – Community Health Development Role
- ❖ Black and Ethnic Minority Staff Network (BEMSN) Chair
- ❖ Black Health Forum (BHF)
- ❖ Race Equality Network



Black Health Forum Chair

- ❖ Previous landscape
- ❖ Basic governance, minutes, policies, and funding bids.
- ❖ Board is small and informal.
- ❖ Focused on African-Caribbean Communities – Reducing Inequalities in Health and Well-being
- ❖ Chair often wears multiple hats: governance, operations, fundraising, and frontline delivery
- ❖ Decisions are close to the ground and impact is immediate and visible.
- ❖ Relationships are personal and informal.





Leadership Style & Stakeholders

Leadership Style

- ❖ Collaborative, informal, hands-on.
- ❖ Often the “face” of the organisation.
- ❖ Decisions can be made quickly with minimal bureaucracy.
- ❖ Volunteer-led or with minimal staff.
- ❖ Direct support/supervise volunteers

Stakeholders

- ❖ Local Community Members
- ❖ Small funders
- ❖ Local councillors
- ❖ Community partners



Black Health Forum Chair Role

- ❖ Supporting the Health Needs Assessment for Black African and Caribbean Populations in Bradford.



City of
BRADFORD
METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COUNCIL





Race Equality Network Chair

- ❖ REN Large Infrastructure Organisation with 5 x Staff & CEO
- ❖ Registered charity in operation for 25 years
- ❖ Moved into governance and strategic oversight, not day-to-day delivery.
- ❖ Responsible for the performance of a CEO, staff team, and organisational strategy.
- ❖ Must ensure compliance with charity law, HR processes, safeguarding, financial controls, and risk management.
- ❖ Impact is local, regional and national and international, involving multiple communities, institutions, and political stakeholders.
- ❖ The chair becomes a system leader, not just a community leader.





Chair Competencies

- ❖ Leadership must be **strategic, diplomatic, and politically aware.**
- ❖ Chair must balance:
 - Board governance
 - CEO accountability
 - Stakeholder expectations
 - Community trust
 - Public scrutiny – accountable to over 80 grassroots member organisations
 - Hold systems and processes to account, ensure equity for the global majority communities
- ❖ Requires a more formal, structured leadership style.

Strategic Awareness

- ❖ Clear separation between Governance (Board) and Operations (CEO + staff).
 - Set direction with the board
 - Hold the CEO accountable
 - Avoid micromanaging
 - Support the CEO through complex political and community pressures
- ❖ Staff includes engagement leads and engagement workers, admin/finance
- ❖ The chair's job is to support and empower the CEO.



Stakeholders

- ❖ Local Authority: Bradford Council
- ❖ NHS Integrated Care Board
- ❖ West Yorkshire Combined Authority
- ❖ Police, Education, Housing, Voluntary Sector
- ❖ National funders
- ❖ Media
- ❖ Diverse ethnic communities with different histories and needs

***The chair must navigate competing agendas while maintaining credibility with communities.**



Governance

- ❖ Risk Registers
- ❖ Strategic Plans
- ❖ KPIs and Impact Measurement
- ❖ HR and Safeguarding Oversight
- ❖ Financial Audits
- ❖ Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Compliance





SUMMARY

- Leadership is not about titles
- Standing up for justice, even when the path is not easy
- Community resilience and purpose as a guide
- You just need Values, Determination, and commitment to lifting others as you climb.
- Together, we can build systems that are fairer, more inclusive and more representative of the communities we serve



*Join our networks and mailing list if
you haven't already!*

<https://bit.ly/Join-leaders-network>

<https://bit.ly/Join-chairs-network>

Proud to be sponsored by:





Debra Allcock Tyler
CEO, Directory of Social Change

Proud to be sponsored by:





Our Question and Answer Panel!



Proud to be sponsored by:





Buy a copy of A Battle on the Board

<https://www.dsc.org.uk/publication/its-a-battle-on-the-board/>

Thank you to our sponsors





See you in 2027!