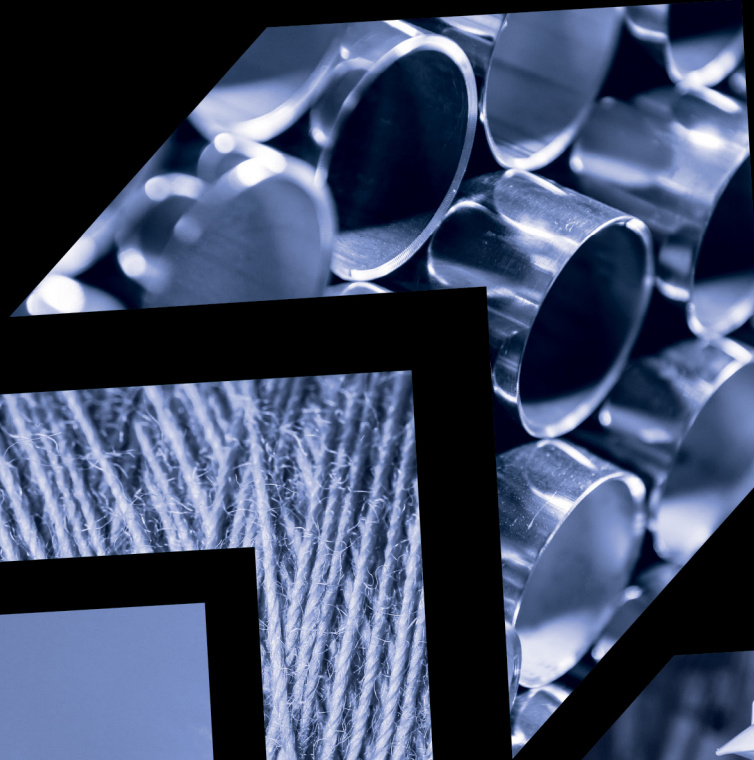


Manufacturing Task Force

Recommendations Report
July 2022



Foreword

Andrew Wright

Chair of the Task Force



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew Wright".

West Yorkshire has more manufacturing jobs than anywhere else in the north, employing over 112,000 people. Since the first industrial revolution, we've been trailblazers of manufacturing and it's time for us to build on our proud heritage.

The Task Force consists of manufacturing leaders from every part of the region and important industries and representative organisations have all made valuable contributions.

We want more investment in advanced manufacturing to improve productivity of existing manufacturers. We want practical advice for businesses on how to set a path to net-zero carbon emissions. We want new businesses to choose West Yorkshire as the place to setup. Above all we want to attract the best talent into the sector by inspiring young people to consider manufacturing as a career choice, offering the best training in the country and doubling the number of apprenticeships starts by the end of the decade.

To make this happen and to ensure the necessary progress is made, the regional manufacturing alliances from across the region will come together with a single leader coordinating activity and driving good practice. Mayor Brabin will also appoint a manufacturing champion to ensure that the focus on manufacturing is maintained.

Take some time to read the detailed recommendations which follow, and I hope that you will join us putting your shoulder to the wheel for the renewal and reinvention of the sector which has for so long been the basis of West Yorkshire's success.

Andrew Wright

Chair of the Manufacturing Task Force

LEP Board Member and Deputy Chair of the Business, Economy and Innovation Committee

Executive Summary

Our vision is to be the best place to be a manufacturer in the UK; bringing together our unrivalled strengths and heritage to lead the next industrial revolution, powering it with the next generation of talent.

Why does West Yorkshire need a Manufacturing Task Force?

Manufacturing is an important sector for our region. West Yorkshire has more manufacturing jobs than anywhere else in the north – with thousands of workers in sub-sectors ranging from textiles, furniture-making, food and drink, chemical works, electronics and precision-engineering.

The things we make in our region are as diverse as our region itself. From national and international food brands, sets for the music industry, world-class textiles to chemicals and components for the aerospace and automotive industry. We make it all here in West Yorkshire.

We know we have a rich history in manufacturing but want to ensure that we have a strong future. We are delighted that Mayor Tracy Brabin has asked us to form this Manufacturing Task Force. We are confident that we will work together to champion a thriving, competitive and sustainable manufacturing sector in our region.

To do this, we will need an approach where we work together as a sector and with our partners to tackle some of the pressing challenges we face. This includes:



Becoming greener. If we are to be a net-zero carbon region by 2038, we need to decarbonise our businesses, our transport and our behaviours. Manufacturing is a large part of our economy and must be one of the leading sectors to champion the net-zero agenda.

Innovating to become more competitive nationally, regionally and globally. Our regional manufacturing sector is 13% less productive than the UK average and only 7 in 10 of our businesses engage in innovation. If we want to grow our economy, we must double our efforts to build a productive and innovative West Yorkshire, strengthen sector-specific support through means such as business support programmes or via greater collaboration with sector-specialist bodies and membership groups.

Exporting the products we make. New trade deals offer new opportunities for businesses and our region, yet only 16% of our businesses export. We also have the opportunity to showcase West Yorkshire as one of the best places to invest in setting up a business.

Addressing our skills needs and providing high quality employment opportunities. We want our region to be a place where there are no barriers to learning, progressing and succeeding in work. We also need to invest in talent and develop skills that in the long run will grow our economy and support staff progression.

Underpinning success

The recommendations we are putting forward will bring about an exciting decade for manufacturing in West Yorkshire.

To connect this piece of work and ensure success and delivery, we are outlining three overarching recommendations in this report:

- To form a West Yorkshire Manufacturing Alliance (WYMA)
- To create a Manufacturing Champion for the region to promote and support the sector's interests and advise the Mayor and Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership Board
- To develop a regional Manufacturing Strategy

What we did

All thirteen members of the Task Force have been meeting since November 2021 and have spent that time researching and reviewing data, consulting with other businesses and stakeholders and discussing what we can do to help the manufacturing sector over the next decade. We're a business-led group with experience and a vested interest in making a difference for our sector.

To focus our thinking, we've worked in sub-groups looking at a number of areas from productivity, innovation, net-zero, trade, inward investment and skills.

Who we are

We are a diverse range of manufacturers and experts from across the region. We have been developing a series of recommendations to help the sector tackle the challenges and seize the opportunities over the next few decades.

Facts about our sector

Our regional economy exported more than **£5 billion** in 2020

The number of manufacturing businesses in West Yorkshire has grown by **6%** since 2016

Over **7%** of West Yorkshire businesses are manufacturers (**5,580** out of 80,835)

Demand for manufacturing skills currently exceeds pre-pandemic levels. From 1,750 in January 2020, to **3,200** in January 2022

14% of high growth businesses in West Yorkshire are manufacturers – compared to 9% nationally

1,100 apprenticeship starts in 2020/2021 in manufacturing/engineering:

10% of all West Yorkshire apprenticeships are in manufacturing companies

- Over **813** apprenticeships in engineering were taken up in 2020/21 in West Yorkshire
- Over **287** apprenticeships in manufacturing technologies taken up in 2020/21 in West Yorkshire

Of the 1.64 million jobs in West Yorkshire, **112,000 (9%)** are in manufacturing – almost 1 in 10

Manufacturing estimated to be the biggest source of CO2 emissions intensity (by sector) in West Yorkshire – around **3,200** tonnes

Mission 1

Enabling growth through productivity, innovation and technology adoption

By 2028, more manufacturers will be engaged in innovation and will have boosted their productivity levels.

The Task Force recommends:

- Rollout of new regional productivity and innovation programmes in West Yorkshire that increase the levels of technology adoption and support to innovate.
- Establish a West Yorkshire Productivity Index (WYPI) to support increasing firm-level productivity.
- Encourage more businesses in West Yorkshire to use effective methods of employee engagement to increase staff wellbeing, retention and creativity.
- Strengthen engagement with national innovation agencies to support activity in the sector via the West Yorkshire Innovation Network.

Mission 2

Manufacturing for Net-Zero

By 2028, more manufacturers will be engaged with net-zero focused support programmes in the region and be well on their way towards net-zero carbon.

The Task Force recommends:

- Develop an online emissions tool and decarbonisation planning support programmes for West Yorkshire's SMEs.
- Create a support programme to help businesses fund capital infrastructure requirements.
- Lobby the Department for Transport to develop policy interventions to support businesses wishing to make an early move towards e-transport, hydrogen, and associated charging infrastructure.

Mission 3

The place to be and buy from

By 2028, more manufacturers will be exporting, and the region will see increased inward investment in the sector.

The Task Force recommends:

- Establish an Export Support Scheme to help SME manufacturers understand the export potential of their business and the actions they need to take to begin exporting.
- Increase promotion of our manufacturing assets and strengths through thought leadership opportunities, sector showcases, international forums and trade missions.
- Boost regional capacity and resources to focus on securing increased inward investment opportunities for SMEs into West Yorkshire, while also retaining a focus on attracting large business investment to the region.
- Explore opportunities to help SME manufacturers to develop a clearer understanding of the supply chain needs of larger businesses and critical infrastructure projects such as new nuclear, rail, wind and hydrogen.

Mission 4

Skills for manufacturing

By 2028, the number of people accessing the manufacturing and engineering sector via apprenticeships, internships and other technical qualification routes will have doubled, the workforce will be more diverse, and more businesses will be capitalising on employment and skills support.

The Task Force recommends:

- A focus on inspiring the next generation, changing the perception of careers in manufacturing, exciting young people and their parents/carers and teachers.
- Greater collaboration between Manufacturing Alliances and partners to share best practice with one another and opportunities for all to take part in local events and regional skills weeks.
- Introduce new or expanded regional employment and skills programmes and initiatives, such as:
 - A programme that aims to provide opportunities to support progression in leadership positions for women and minorities.
 - The Apprenticeship Levy Transfer Service for West Yorkshire to encourage transfer to key sectors including manufacturing.
 - Careers information and campaigns that are locally rooted and relevant to people of all ages.
 - Careers activities for young people.
 - Short courses to retrain and upskill people in the sector.
 - Working with the region's skills and training providers to ensure they have the right offers in place for businesses and ensuring that we put in place the right skills for the future and are able to respond to an increasingly digital world and the net-zero challenge.
 - Increasing the number of graduates working for manufacturing SMEs, supported through internships or bootcamp style short courses.

Find out more:

westyorks-ca.gov.uk/manufacturingtaskforce/

West Yorkshire Combined Authority

Wellington House
40-50 Wellington Street
Leeds
LS1 2DE

All information correct at time of writing (July 22)