

Manufacturing Task Force

Terms of Reference



Introduction

The Mayor of West Yorkshire

Tracy Brabin was elected as the first Mayor of West Yorkshire in May 2021 with a commitment to make our region the best place to grow up and grow old in.

During this mayoral term, the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) will work towards delivering [ten mayoral pledges](#) which will help build a better West Yorkshire. One of these pledges includes a commitment to support local businesses and champion the regional economy (see Appendix A for a list of the 10 Mayoral Pledges).

As part of this pledge, the Mayor has outlined intentions to establish a Manufacturing Task Force for West Yorkshire to “take West Yorkshire’s world class, modern manufacturing sector forward with a plan to boost exports and make sure local young people have the skills to become the engineers and designers of the future”¹.

The West Yorkshire manufacturing sector is a major player in our regional and wider UK economy. The sector currently employs more than 112,000 workers (or 9% of our total employment base), more than any other region in the Northern Powerhouse and one third larger than nationally². It has specialisms in textile manufacturing, furniture-making, and machinery. It also has a strong academic and technical education ecosystem from the Universal Technical College in Leeds to the recently reopened Engineering Centre in Brighouse which is solely specialising in manufacturing apprenticeships.

Key Priorities for West Yorkshire

Our [Strategic Economic Framework](#) outlines our key priorities for the region and will help us realise our vision to be recognised globally as a place with a strong, successful economy where everyone can build great businesses, careers and lives supported by a superb environment and world-class infrastructure. Our key priorities are:

- **Boosting Productivity:** helping businesses to grow and invest in the region and their workforce, to drive economic growth, increase innovation and create jobs.
- **Enable Inclusive Growth:** enabling as many people as possible to contribute to, and benefit from, economic growth in our communities, towns and cities.
- **Tackling the Climate Emergency:** growing our economy while cutting emissions and caring for our environment.
- **Delivering 21st Century Transport:** creating efficient transport infrastructure to connect our communities, making it easier to get to work, do business and connect with each other.
- **Securing Money and Powers:** empowering the region by negotiating a devolution deal and successfully bidding for substantial additional funds.

¹ [My-Manifesto-for-a-better-West-Yorkshire-1.pdf \(tracy4mayor.org.uk\)](#)

² [wyca-labour-market-report-2021-final.pdf \(westyorks-ca.gov.uk\)](#)

What is a Task Force?

- Task Forces are traditionally **time-limited bodies** which focus on identifying solutions to a defined problem, however there are examples of long-standing structures.
- A Task Force aims to undertake one or more of the following tasks³:

Study & Research	Undertakes research into a given problem area. This can be achieved through review of data and intelligence, exploring policy ambitions and legislation, conducting reviews of reports and other publications.
Advisory	Will identify, develop, and promote a series of realistic and achievable recommendations which are designed to alleviate the identified problem(s).
Implementation	Undertaking a role to develop strategies and action plans that will deliver the recommendations through the delivery of projects or programmes or by lobbying for change.

- The membership of a Task Force comprises of people who have the **expertise, experience, and availability** to address the problem at hand. A task force should consist of individuals with a personal experience and skill in the topic area and also individuals who have an affiliation or representative role with an organised or interested group.
- Structurally, the best Task Forces consist of **no more than 15 members**. A Task Force should not be too large as it risks members being unable to provide proper participation. Similarly, if a Task Force is too small, it may lack expertise in particular fields, not represent the diversity of the area at hand, and limit the consideration of alternative points of view.
- Task Forces can involve senior people with experience and expertise in complex subject areas. Because of this, many Task Forces operate sub-groups to divide the work among the group. This **allows subject matter experts to be able to undertake deep dives** into a problem, refine and identify solutions, and then report findings back to the main Task Force for consideration in the final action plan of recommendations report.
- By the end of a Task Force's operations, the membership should have developed a **report detailing recommendations for consideration** by a relevant decision-making body. These can take shape in the formation of a report or a detailed action plan.

³ Task Force descriptions can be found [here](#).

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Purpose

- The West Yorkshire Manufacturing Task Force (MTF) will operate for a period of eight months and conclude with the publication of a report for the Mayor and Combined Authority outlining several recommendations for consideration.
- The primary purpose of the MTF will be to collectively set out a series of action-based recommendations to support the future resilience of the manufacturing sector by improving firm level productivity, innovative capability, skills and training, trade potential, and digitalisation.

Responsibilities & Duties

- Undertake a review of the current manufacturing landscape and identify the associated strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats the sector faces.
- Work with the wider manufacturing community and connected organisations to ensure the taskforce reflects the views, concerns, and aspirations of the whole sector.
- Consider undertaking any research and intelligence exercises for the purposes of building an evidence base.
- Identify several key themes the MTF will focus on and consider establishing sub-groups.
- Develop a final report detailing action-based recommendations for consideration by the Mayor and Combined Authority.

Areas of Focus⁴

The MTF will be able to work in a sub-group structure. This provides members with an opportunity to undertake deep dives into particular areas of interest that can help shape the Action Plan. Areas of focus could include, but are not limited to:

- **Future Industry Skills Needs:** exploring the skills and capabilities that are required for the future of manufacturing.
- **Post-Brexit Supply Chains:** identifying the opportunities and challenges for manufacturing businesses in post-Brexit supply chains and exporting to global markets.
- **Productivity:** looking into solutions and best practices that can tackle our regional productivity puzzle.
- **Digitalisation & Adoption:** supporting businesses to adopt and/or make greater use of digital technologies to streamline supply-chain, customer-relations and financing systems.
- **Innovation:** increasing the innovation and R&D activity of the sector.
- **The Transition to Net Zero:** how our manufacturing base adopts to, and contributes to, tackling the climate emergency.

⁴ To be formally agreed at the first meeting of the Task Force.

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

- The Mayor of West Yorkshire and the Combined Authority are committed to upholding principles of equality, diversity, and inclusion across our work. The MTF should adhere to and promote these principles through its work and in line with the Combined Authority's [Equality & Diversity Policy Statement](#).
- The MTF should consider ways to address better representation of minorities in the sector as part of the output of its work.

Sub-Groups

- The Task Force has the discretion to establish sub-groups to focus on specific issues that need exploring in further detail by subject matter experts.

Membership

- The MTF will be a business-led voice. Membership of the MTF has been developed and agreed in collaboration with membership bodies and experts from across the region and aims to reflect the diversity of manufacturing businesses in West Yorkshire.
- A full list of membership of the group can be found as Appendix B of this document.
- The Chair and members of the MTF will be appointed by the Mayor.

Meetings & Frequency

- Meetings of the MTF will take place bi-monthly at a date agreed by the Chair.
- The meetings will be held by a combination of virtual and physical meetings.
- A meeting must have 8 members in attendance to be quorate.
- Meetings should result in the following actions:
 - The completion or discussion of one or more task.
 - To hear reports from sub-groups and provide feedback and discussion.
 - To identify future tasks that need to be completed, and who should complete them.
- Sub-group meetings will take place at the discretion of the membership of those groups but must meet a minimum of two times over the duration of the Task Force.

Accountability & Management

- The MTF will be accountable to the Business, Economy, and Innovation Committee at WYCA.
- The day-to-day work and management of the MTF will be supported by the Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) Policy Team at WYCA.
- Final action-based recommendations will be presented to a meeting of the Combined Authority. A date will be confirmed later in the year.
- An organogram outlining the reporting and challenge structures is attached as Appendix C.

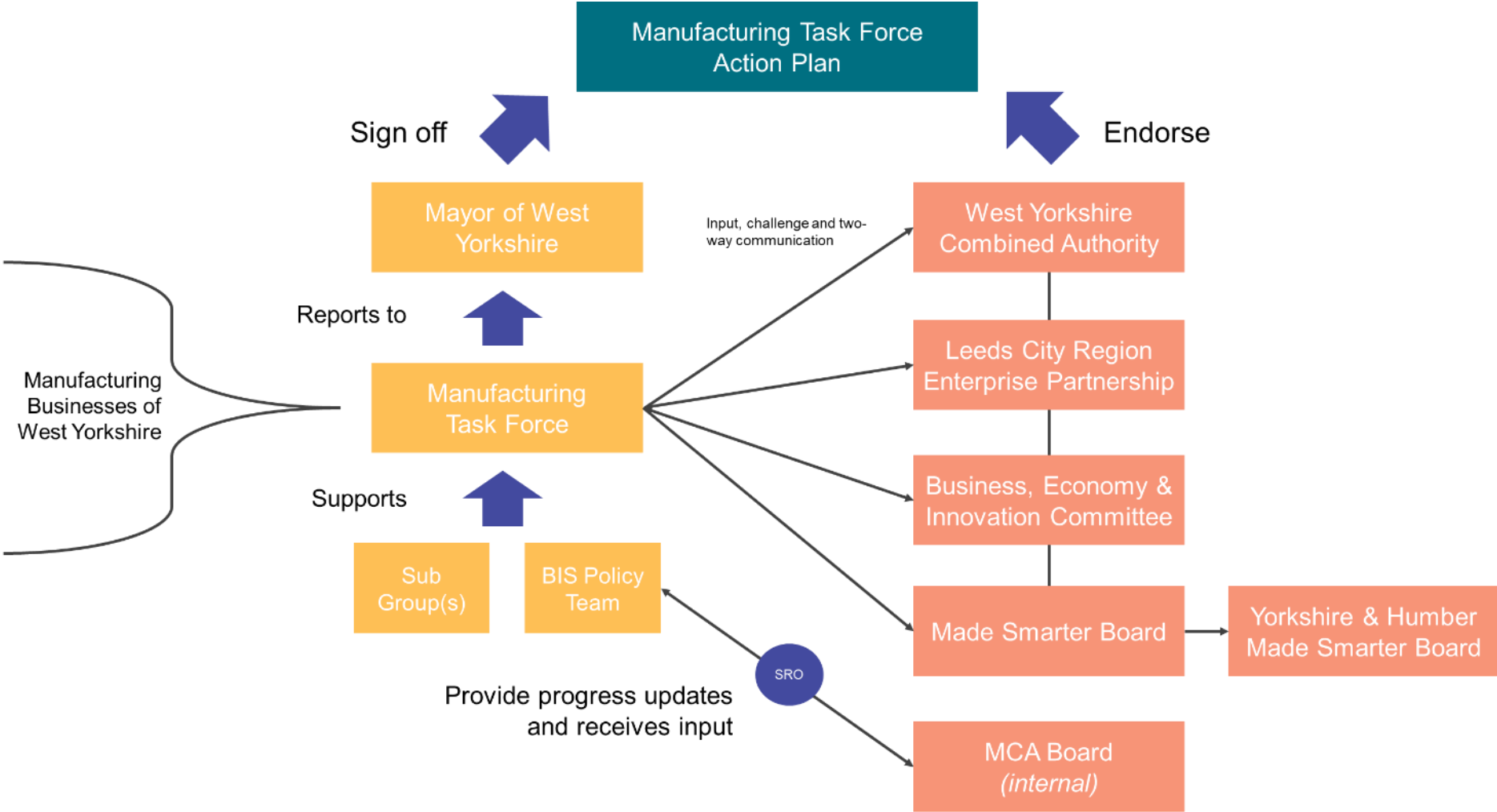
Appendix A – Mayoral Pledges

Pledge No.	Pledge
1	Create 1,000 well paid, skilled jobs for young people.
2	Prioritise skills and training to ensure everyone in West Yorkshire has the skills they need to secure work.
3	Support local businesses and be champion for our regional economy.
4	Lead a Creative New Deal to ensure our creative industries are part of the broader recovery strategy.
5	Appoint an Inclusivity Champion to work to ensure that the region’s recovery benefits us all.
6	Recruit 750 more frontline police officers and staff to fight crime.
7	Put keeping women and girls safe at the heart of my policing plan.
8	Bring buses back under public control, introduce simpler fares, contactless ticketing and greener buses.
9	Build 5000 sustainable homes including council houses and affordable homes.
10	Tackle the climate emergency and protect our environment.

Appendix B: Membership

Name of Member	Organisation / Representing	Sub-Sector	Location
Chair & Membership Organisations			
Andrew Wright	Chair of the Task Force		Leeds
Tracy Dawson	Leeds Manufacturing Alliance	Digital	Leeds
Nick Garthwaite	Bradford & Airedale Manufacturing Alliance	Chemical	Bradford
Tim Mee	Wakefield Manufacturing Forum	Equipment	Wakefield
Martin Booth	Calderdale & Kirklees Manufacturing Alliance	Fan Systems and Ventilation	Calderdale & Kirklees
Annette Hobson	Make UK		West Yorkshire
Business Representatives			
Mandy Ridyard	Produmax Ltd	Precision Engineering	Bradford
Fara Butt	The Shire Bed Company	Furniture	Kirklees
Ruth Burns	Thornton & Ross Ltd	Pharmaceuticals	Kirklees
Ian Thurley	Siddall & Hilton Products Ltd	Welding	Calderdale
Fiona Conor	Trust Electric Heating Ltd	Heating	Leeds
David Masters	OE Electrics Ltd	Electronics	Wakefield

Appendix C: Accountability Organogram



Find out more

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