



Mid and East Antrim Borough Council

Manufacturing Task Force

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**Mid & East
Antrim**
Borough Council

The Manufacturing Task Force (MTF) is an **industry-led** initiative established by Mid and East Antrim Borough Council (MEABC) to **support and stimulate** the manufacturing sector in the borough.

Following direct engagement with almost 100 local manufacturing leaders and stakeholders, the MTF identified five priority focus areas within manufacturing:



SME



Skills



Productivity



Supply Chain



Research & Development

The MTF has two primary objectives:

- 1 Support the creation of new and replacement jobs in the borough.
- 2 Help restore confidence and ambition within manufacturing in the borough, underpinned by an inspiring vision and drive to become the most entrepreneurial, innovative, and forward-thinking local economy in Northern Ireland.

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The MTF brings together a team of manufacturing and business experts from a number of industry sectors to determine how to best capitalise on our strengths, build on our existing capabilities and deploy new technologies to improve manufacturing competitiveness. The MTF provides a collaborative approach to dealing with common challenges faced by all manufacturing companies.

Graham Whitehurst,
Chair of MTF

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MTF Structure

Steering Team

The MTF is driven by a collaborative steering team which meet quarterly.

Purpose:

Provides direction, governance and oversight of sub group activity;

Leads on supporting strategic projects such as Belfast Region City Deal and Heathrow Logistics Hub.



Four Active Sub-Groups

These are tasked with focusing on the delivery of strategic action plans aligned against the four priority focus areas below. SME support now being managed through Stakeholder Engagement Forum.

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Skills

Purpose

- Support upskilling and reskilling programmes to address company needs directly;
- Promote manufacturing and engineering as a career;
- Support skills academy establishment and new course development.

Activity

- 80 responses to local skills survey;
- Commissioned local skills survey to inform industry requirements in April 2019;
- 'Year of Engineering Event' held November 2018 to promote sector attractiveness to young people;
- Prof Brian Cox Science Summer School scheduled for November 2020 - First of it's kind in Northern Ireland;
- Secured £25K from Invest NI for Collaborative Growth Programme to address shared skills requirements.

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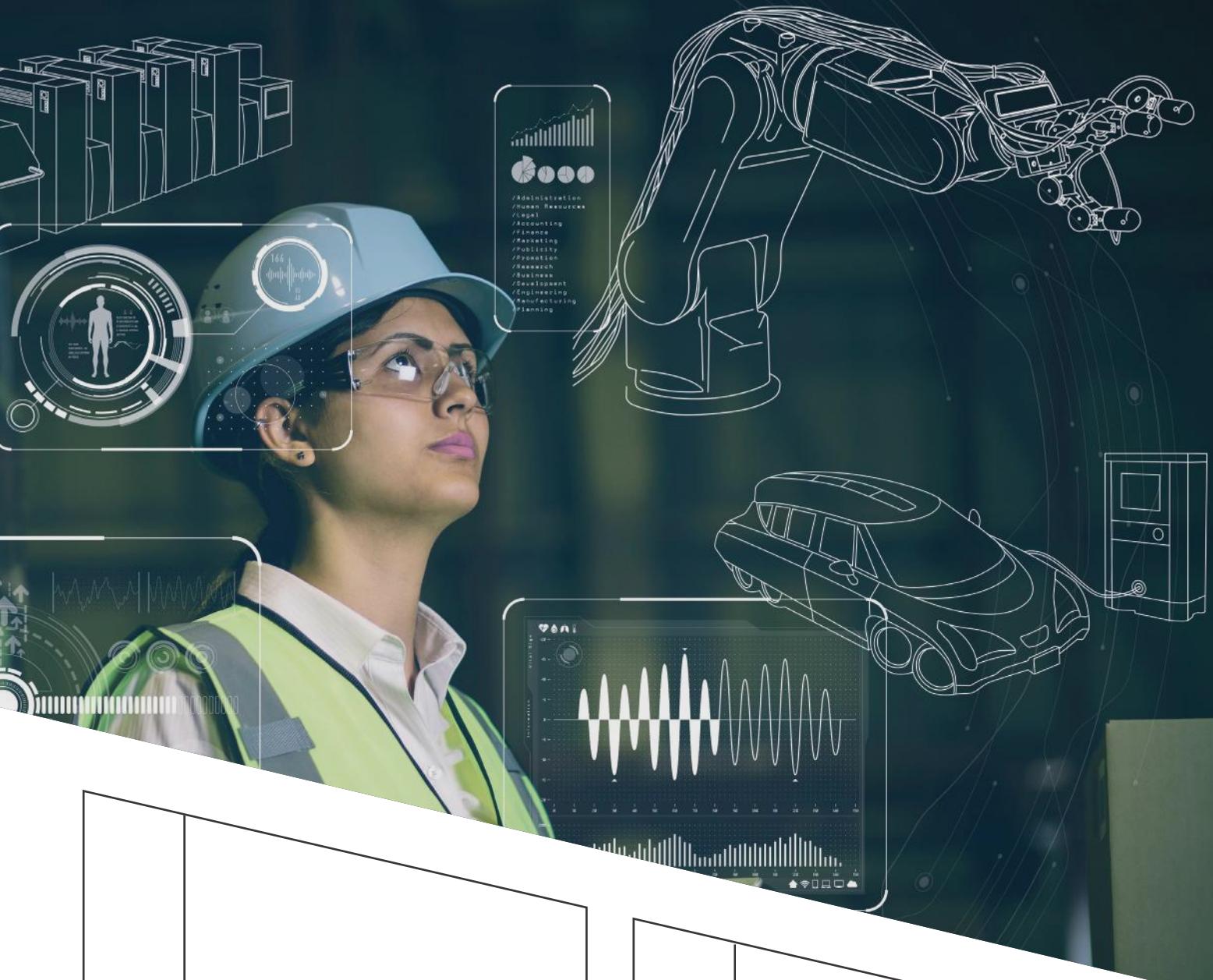
Productivity

Purpose

- Develop company understanding of Industry 4.0 principles and technologies to increase competitiveness;
- Explore ways to collaboratively increase productivity in local companies.

Activity

- Undertaken Digital Readiness Level Assessments and Knowledge Transfer Network (KTN) 4 Manufacturing Surveys with 5 companies;
- Secured £25K from Invest NI Collaborative Growth Programme to scope out a collaborative approach to Industry 4.0 and digital readiness with the aim of increasing productivity and competitiveness in the area.



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Supply Chain

Purpose

- Increasing the digitisation of the Supply Chain in local companies;
- Increasing the available talent in Supply Chain and Procurement.
- Connect large buyers to local suppliers.

Activity

- Established an Assured Skills Academy in Supply Chain & Logistics through NRC;
- Established a Higher Level Apprenticeship in Supply Chain;
- Developed the BuySupplyNI portal for supporting local procurement.

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Research & Development

Purpose

- Build collaborative links between private, public and education sector partners;
- Submit applications to relevant R&D projects to support the sector.

Activity

- Submitted an industry led bid under the Innovate UK Strength in Places Fund; If successful, this award could lead to an UKRI project award in excess of £30m to focus on zero carbon manufacturing in industry.

Why join the MTF?

- Be part of the effort to support the manufacturing and engineering sector in Mid & East Antrim;
- Collaborate with other companies to address shared challenges and investigate joint opportunities;
- Opportunity to grow your business through programmes and funding support;
- Be first in line to benefit from new skills initiatives and have access to talent;
- Ability to influence the direction and priorities of the MTF to align with your business requirements;
- Opportunity to learn about and participate in larger strategic projects such as Belfast Region City Deal and Heathrow Logistics Hub.

Priorities for MTF Phase II

- Directly engage with local companies to help with their Coronavirus recovery plans
- Organise 6 collaborative events
- Increase company representation by 50%
- Secure £170k for collaborative growth projects
- Secure £50k for pilot projects

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Mid and East Antrim Council has an ambitious integrated economic development strategy for the area to help encourage business growth across the borough this includes the Manufacturing Task Force Team, a working group committed to supporting and fostering growth.

Operations Manager,
Moy Park

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Supporting your Business through COVID-19

Mid & East Antrim Borough Council is here to support your business through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Council will be hosting a series of webinars in relation to key aspects of business support. In addition, the www.BuySupplyNI.com portal has a new section now focusing on PPE Supplies and Equipment to help your business get back to work. Go to the website to register today.

Please contact the dedicated business support team on 028 25633 562 to find out more.

For more information contact the
MEABC Investment & Place Team:
E: Karen.Hastings@midandeastantrim.gov.uk

