



Manufacturing Strategy for South Yorkshire (Sheffield Region)

Our Vision

For the Sheffield Region to be recognised as one of the top five premier high value manufacturing regions in Europe in by 2020 and one of the top ten in the world by 2025.

Executive Summary

In 2007 Sheffield City Council published a document titled “Modern Manufacturing – An Economic Asset for Sheffield and the City Region”. Fundamentally the document showed why manufacturing is so important to the Sheffield region and made the case that we should invest heavily in modern manufacturing industries and their business environment as a way of increasing the region’s prosperity. This theme was further underpinned nationally in the government’s Manufacturing Strategy published in 2008. One of the recommendations of the Sheffield document was to create “The Manufacturing Forum” comprising the Cutlers Company, The EEF and all three South Yorkshire Chambers to “champion manufacturing across South Yorkshire and the neighbouring areas of North Nottinghamshire and North East Derbyshire, including Chesterfield” – commonly known as the Sheffield Region.

The Manufacturing Forum was formed in 2008 and to date has engaged in a series of events to promote manufacturing, its companies and its objectives. Its impact has been limited however because it has never had a properly defined a widely accepted strategy for manufacturing in the region around which the Forum and other stakeholders in the region can align and act. **This document outlines a strategy for manufacturing over the next 20 years** and an implementation plan to achieve that. At no stage does the Forum claim to be a deliverer of that strategy – that is best done by manufacturers themselves properly supported by regional bodies like Chambers, Business Link, Manufacturing Advisory Service, LSC, NAMTEC, Electronics Yorkshire, etc.

The Manufacturing Forum is a High-Level Strategic Coordinator, a custodian of the strategy and a strong communicator of the sector’s requirements. It does not replace some of the more local groups within the Chambers, for instance, which need to become stronger to act as focused delivery agents for identified actions. It does attempt to measure the size and complexity of the manufacturing sector and to track the net changes to it as the actions are carried out, and it will

propose actions and events for the stakeholders and requirements for the funding bodies at local, regional and national level – but it will not deliver the results itself.

The Forum does Attempt to Define Manufacturing. Too often in the past metals and engineering have dominated all discussions about manufacturing in this region. We cannot ignore that advanced engineering and materials (AEM) is still the largest group within the manufacturing sector but areas like creative and digital, food processing, glass, medical devices and chemicals are also strong and equally important.

Introduction

The Sheffield Region (which comprises South Yorkshire, parts of North Derbyshire and North Nottinghamshire) forms an economic entity historically based on manufacturing. The region can justifiably lay claim to be the home of high value materials manufacturing in the UK where its products have become synonymous with quality and excellence, as captured by the “Made in Sheffield” brand. Investments in the wider manufacturing disciplines over the last 10 years have widened its scope outside materials, and maintaining that momentum over the next 20 years is critical to the future prosperity of the people who live and work in the area.

Manufacturing Resurgence

Nothing stands still and this statement is just as pertinent to manufacturing. Driven by globalisation, manufacturing is undergoing a revolution. To maintain its position it is absolutely critical that manufacturing in the region leads that revolution. The region starts with the advantage that it already has a strong manufacturing base and heritage – however any complacency about this could become a massive disadvantage unless the sector psychologically and practically recognises the absolute need to strategically and continuously renew itself and takes action to achieve it. An understanding of what its customers will need in the future and responding to those needs are a critical success factor.

Manufacturing Vision

This short paper draws upon many other pieces of work and attempts to outline a simple vision for what our manufacturing industry needs to be in 10/20 years’ time in order to be successful. Success means that we are the best region in the UK, are in the top 5 regions in Europe and one of the top 10 regions worldwide. To achieve this, we need critical mass, comprehensive capability and to be seen as a technology and development leader.

The Manufacturing Forum

It is a vision that The Manufacturing Forum will use to focus its activities and exert influence on all regional, national and international partners in an attempt to align them round a common programme of work. The Manufacturing Forum will provide leadership, but as the implementation section below clearly demonstrates, it will need massive input from many other areas. The reason why The Manufacturing Forum can do this, however, is because of its impartiality. It covers all areas of manufacturing, it is apolitical, it is not subject to creation or removal at the whim of any third body, and it transcends political boundaries – in short, it is here for the long term.