

Government convenes latest Honda Swindon Taskforce

Business Secretary Andrea Leadsom held the latest meeting of the Honda Swindon Taskforce today (10 February 2020).

Meeting in Swindon, the Taskforce brought together civic leaders, local partners and MPs, Honda, Unite the Union, sector representatives and government officials to discuss support for employees affected by Honda's decision and how best to stimulate more economic growth in Swindon.

Business Secretary Andrea Leadsom said:

Honda's decision to close manufacturing operations in Swindon was a significant blow to the local community. Since it was set up, the Honda Taskforce has worked hard to support the workforce and the supply chain, as well as to find a positive way forward for developing the site.

We are clear that Swindon remains a vital location for advanced manufacturers to invest – in large part thanks to the skills of the dedicated local workforce.

The Taskforce reviewed support work undertaken to date and discussed future priorities and work going forward, including:

- announcing that Swindon will benefit from the £3.6 billion Towns Fund supporting an initial 100 Town Deals across England
- announcing that Swindon Borough Council will benefit from the £1 billion Future High Street Fund
- a new Institute of Technology for Swindon delivering higher technical education in STEM subjects including digital, engineering and manufacturing, health and life sciences
- the £16 million supply chain programme, designed to raise workforce capability and increase the productivity of the UK's automotive supply chain, that is available to Honda suppliers

Swindon and the surrounding area is a particularly attractive place for investors, as Swindon College will lead one of 12 prestigious new Institutes of Technology, whilst a new £16 million programme is providing support to SME businesses in the automotive supply chain.

The Taskforce and the government remain fully committed to providing ongoing support to local leaders, Honda employees and the wider supply chain.

The Honda Steering Group that supports the Taskforce also continues to meet, focusing on helping to mitigate impacts on the Swindon workforce as well as those operating within the supply chain.