



£1.3m Awarded for Unipart Advanced Manufacturing Technology in Coventry

Minister Visits Site That Will Create Over 90 New Jobs in Advanced Engineering Facility

Mark Prisk MP, Minister of State at the Department for Communities and Local Government, met with employees at Unipart's Coventry manufacturing site for the announcement of a £1.3m grant for advanced technologies at the site.

Mr. Prisk was joined by Sir Peter Rigby, Chairman of Coventry and Warwickshire LEP and Chairman and Chief Executive of SCH Group and Martin Yardley, Chief Executive of Coventry and Warwickshire LEP and Director of City Services and Development, Coventry City Council.

Unipart Eberspächer received the grant as part of the government's Growing Places fund, which is designed to help Local Enterprise Partnerships boost economic growth by enabling the creation of new jobs. Ten companies across Coventry and Warwickshire – including Kautex Unipart Ltd -- are to share £4.8 million in grant money from the LEP.

Sir Peter Rigby, chair of the Coventry and Warwickshire LEP, said the standard of applicants had been extremely high and it had been a tough choice.

"This funding will kick-start a number of initiatives to boost jobs and create economic growth sooner rather than later and the projects will be started as soon as possible.

"These companies very much represent the best of our engineering and manufacturing capabilities, and therefore perfectly reflect the thrust of our City Deal bid."

Unipart Manufacturing Group managing director Carol Burke said the Growing Places funding would create 90 new jobs at the Unipart Eberspächer site.

“The funding from the GPR2 will lead to our company investing £13 million in the site where we manufacture high-tech fuel system components for the next generation of Europe’s automobiles, leading to improved fuel economy and performance,” she said.

“Receiving this additional funding will mean we can accelerate our plans much more quickly and invest in technology and the skills of people from Coventry and Warwickshire to add to the area’s manufacturing reputation.”

The new facility at the Unipart Eberspächer site will manufacture high tech fuel system components for next generation automobiles in Europe that will provide drivers with major improvements in fuel economy and performance.

Initially providing the parts for Ford vehicles, UEES expects to manufacture half a million parts per year - that’s one part every 32 seconds – at a 25,000 sq ft brown field site that has been refurbished to clean room standards to accommodate the new advanced production operations.

The new development is part of a £30 million investment by Unipart Group in its manufacturing facilities. The site has capacity to quadruple production which would make it one of the largest manufacturers of high pressure gasoline direct injection fuel rails in the world.

Unipart Manufacturing Group (UMG) manufactures a number of products in the UK including exhaust systems and fuel systems for vehicles, heat exchange devices and parts for the rail and aerospace industry.

According to UMG Managing Director, Carol Burke, the announcement of the new manufacturing facility at the Coventry site marks an important turning point for the business.

“A few years ago our manufacturing in the UK was facing a cliff edge. Vehicle production had fallen off significantly and that was affecting our existing customers and our prospects for new business,” she said.

“We made a strategic decision at that stage to invest in developing products that required advanced engineering capability and were in emerging technologies. One of those product areas was gasoline direct injection (GDI) technology which had a predicted high growth trajectory across petrol vehicle manufacture in Europe and in Asia.

“The technology called for precision made products that required new manufacturing, development and test techniques and called for investment in new facilities and equipment. Unipart as a group was forward thinking enough to recognise the opportunity and gave us the headroom to enter the market.

“The result has been not just a success today, but an opportunity for future growth in Europe and in the Far East.”



Simon Stowe, Planning Engineer, demonstrates the hi-tech component assembly process to Mark Prisk MP, Minister of State at the Department for Communities and Local Government

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Editors' Notes:

Unipart Eberspächer Exhaust Systems (UEES) is a joint venture between the Unipart Group of Companies and Eberspächer GmbH providing the automotive industry with exhaust systems, fuel systems and engine components for a wide range of vehicle manufacturers throughout the UK and Europe. It employs over 300 people at the Coventry site.

About The Unipart Group

The Unipart Group employs over 10,000 people worldwide and has an annual turnover of around £1billion. It has operations in the logistics, manufacturing and consultancy areas across a wide range of industry sectors including manufacturing, rail, automotive, retail and technology. All Unipart sites operate according to the Group's integrated business system known as The Unipart Way. This is a philosophy of working underpinned by tools and techniques that inspires efficiency, flexibility and outstanding customer service in any process.

