

## **Innovation Zero 2024 – Zemo Partnership Executive Director Claire Haigh speech at opening of Transport & Mobility Forum, 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024**

Good morning, everyone, I'm delighted to be chairing the Transport & Mobility Forum at Innovation Zero. I commend the organisers for bringing together such an impressive line-up of thought leaders and innovators.

This is an extremely timely and important event. The imperative to deliver on net zero presents the world with its greatest long-term challenge and its greatest opportunity.

Despite widespread concern about the dangers of climate change, across the world we are witnessing a growing backlash against green policies. Eight out of ten people in UK are concerned about climate change but are unsure what they should do. Challenges often come in the implementation of policies that require people to make changes in their lives.

We need an informed national public debate on net zero. It is regrettable that even the term "net zero" has been described as an unhelpful phrase; some are claiming that to deliver it will cost too much. The counter narrative is the correct one. The Skidmore review concluded that net zero is the growth opportunity of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The UK has a strong track record. The Climate Change Act of 2008 was the first ever of its kind, and we were the first major economy to commit to Net Zero by 2050. Businesses have responded because market signals have been clear. We can boast of world-leading growth in offshore wind and green energy.

But having been trailblazers we are now being outpaced by our international competitors. A race is on to win the new green industries. We must move fast to seize what are huge opportunities. An ambitious industrial strategy would act as a catalyst for new technologies and innovation and bring jobs and manufacturing to the UK.

Above all, it is critical for business and investor confidence that UK commitment to net zero remains unequivocal.

**We have some world leading targets. What we now need is a laser-like focus on delivery.**

The phase we are in now is one of implementation and scale-up. We should celebrate the success of the EV roll-out so far, but big challenges remain if we are to achieve full, mass market penetration. There are big opportunities if we get the integration of transport with energy right.

We need solutions for freight. Policy must be designed to ensure that SMEs are not penalised. We need to scale-up zero emissions buses, whilst ensuring that we protect our vital bus networks. Importantly, the carbon impact from transport is the sum of all the vehicles on the road. We must maximise the potential of low carbon, renewable fuels as part of the transition.

Critically, we must make sure that transport's transition to net zero is fair. As the challenges to the implementation of London's ULEZ extension have shown, unless we work hard to make sure the transition is perceived to be fair, we risk undermining it altogether.

We cannot plan for net zero transport emissions in isolation from wider policy areas. We must consider air pollution, the implications of roads policy, whole life cycle emissions. Climate change has been described as "the biggest market failure the world has ever seen". At the root of this is a failure to price properly for carbon.

We need to think more holistically about how we maximise the efficiency of our transport system. We need a cross-party agreement to look at new ways of paying for road use that replace lost fuel duty as the fleet electrifies. Unless we address the cost structures, we are baking in rising traffic growth and congestion at the cost of more beneficial alternatives.

In this crucial delivery phase, it is local decision makers who will make many of the key infrastructure decisions. It is easier at a regional level to break down government silos and develop integrated strategies for transport, housing, skills and economic development. We must ensure that local leaders are able to plan and invest for net zero on an integrated long-term basis.

Bringing all these elements together to achieve net zero road transport will be no small task. What we now urgently need in this phase of the net zero transition is a credible and detailed 'delivery roadmap'. As a key partner of government, Zemo Partnership has played a central role in decarbonising transport since 2003. Zemo uniquely brings together government, industry and experts together.

Unbiased by any interest group Zemo Partnership is well placed to develop the Delivery Roadmap for Net Zero Transport. As part of this work, we are convening a new Council for Net Zero Transport, chaired by Lord Deben, which will provide strategic oversight and help steer UK transport's decarbonisation transition as it moves through this crucial delivery phase. We aim to publish the Delivery Roadmap in October.

I am delighted to be chairing the Transport & Mobility Forum which covers so many areas of critical importance to the delivery of net zero transport. We will hear about:

- how to unlock the potential of sustainable transport,
- how we can ensure a diverse and renewable supply of energy for vehicles and freight;
- how we bridge the funding gap and ensure that the UK is truly competitive and internationally aligned;
- how we can mitigate carbon emissions by traffic modelling and managing our streets better;
- the potential for carbon free fleet; and finally
- how to ensure sustainable resource management – what new business opportunities do discarded batteries present?

Above all it is vital that we sell the benefits of the net zero transition.

Green growth is the only kind of growth possible. The net zero transition will mean cleaner air, better health outcomes, reduced congestion, more equitable access, and enhanced energy security.

Net Zero is our chance to build a cleaner, fairer, safer future.

So without any further ado I am delighted to introduce our first speaker:

Mark Gillan, Associate VP, Technologies and Special Projects National Transformation Institute, King Abdullah University of Science and Technology

Mark will talk about the exciting and innovative work they are doing expediting an integrated multi-modal transport solution using a living lab, coupled to a secure predictive digital twin...