

## **Irish Energy Storage Association (IESA) Press Statement** **on the Just Transition Report from Mr Kieran Mulvey**

The Irish Energy Storage Association (IESA) welcomes yesterday's publication of the 'Just Transition Report'. The closure of Lough Ree and West Offaly power plants is driven by Climate Action as is the work of IESA.

We particularly welcome two key recommendations:

- The DCCA, ESB and other relevant interests in the renewable energy sector should conduct a study of the future potential of Lough Ree and West Offaly plants and sites for the establishment of a dedicated "Energy Hub" in the Midlands, and
- The study would have at its focus, matters relating to energy storage, the usage of this energy to facilitate/back up other low carbon energy sources, a centre for exploring/evaluating new technologies in energy provision, and an R&D component based on the expertise available in the AIT, University of Limerick (UL) and other institutions.

These were two of the key elements in our submission to Mr Mulvey, and we look forward to engaging further with the study as it progresses.

The range of options identified in the Report, from energy to tourism to peatlands rehabilitation points to a potentially bright future for the Midlands – there is much to build on from the past but it will require imagination, vision and long-term thinking to transition this to a successful future.

While there are always opportunities for ESB and Bord na Mona to develop enterprises either solely or working together, the Report refers to where they could co-partner with the private sector on viable projects in the green enterprise space. However, what is not clear in the Report is how private sector players should be facilitated to contribute to the future development of the regional economy at these locations. It would seem reasonable that the future development of these local economies will consist of public enterprises, public/private developments and private investment. In the latter's case, access to land and/or transmission connection assets could be key factors in determining if largescale green energy technology investors/developers, data centres and R&D facilities locate close to these sites.

The Report recognises both the long and distinguished history of power generation in the Midlands and also the leading-edge work being developed over recent years in the region – particularly in the areas of energy storage and emerging energy technologies. There is a clear understanding and recognition that, while peat contributed enormously to the local economy in the past, the future energy landscape will be very different and lies in renewable energy - encompassing its many technologies including battery storage, power to gas, biofuels, wind and solar.

We commend the Just Transition team on the manner in which they approached and carried out their task, by consulting with a very wide range of interests, experience and expertise. This is an excellent document and the Just Transition team is to be complimented on this Progress Report.

**Peter Duffy**

-----  
**President IESA**

**Irish Energy Storage Association**

**Email: peterduffy@iesa.ie**

**Mobile: +353 87 2384746**

**Date: 23 May 2020**