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**Mazda Motors UK appoints new HR Director**

* Liesa Neal has been appointed HR director of Mazda UK, effective 1st July 2017.
* Based in Dartford, Kent Mazda Motors UK employs 136 people.
* Shortlisted in Autocar’s 2017 Great British Women in the Car Industry top 100 female ‘Rising Stars’.

Liesa Neal has been appointed Human Resources Director of Mazda Motors UK Ltd, following Mazda UK’s current HR Director Chris Clark’s appointment to Mazda’s global HR team in Hiroshima. In her new role Liesa will oversee all development and training, recruitment and coaching for both Mazda UK and Mazda Ireland, ensuring the continued development of Mazda’s most valuable resource, its people.

Having joined the Mazda UK HR team in 2005 as a Training & Development Advisor, overseeing performance management processes and implementing Mazda’s learning and development initiatives, Liesa was also involved in the integration of Mazda Ireland into the UK structure and took the lead in all HR activity to support employee engagement and confidence.

She has been instrumental in coaching individuals on their personal and career development aspirations, supporting the business through two restructures and introducing the first phase of Mazda’s ‘Core Curriculum’ training programme. In 2016 she took on the role of Academy Manager, leading the team delivering Mazda’s ‘Challengers@Retail’ training programme to the Mazda dealer network, supporting and influencing the strategic aim of the programme to take Mazda to the top of non-premium in customer experience by 2018.

Liesa was also recently shortlisted in Autocar’s 2017 Great British Women in the Car Industry Top 100 female Rising Stars award. “I am delighted to welcome Liesa to the senior management team, Liesa has played an important and influential role in Mazda’s development over the years and will strengthen our management team,” commented Jeremy Thomson, Managing Director Mazda Motors UK.

Adding, “I am also pleased to note that with Liesa’s appointment, 30 per cent of our senior management team are women. Liesa joins our National Sales Manager, Laura Brailey and our Marketing Director, Claire Andrews in the team. At 30 per cent we lead the industry and are keen to continue to develop talent where we find it.”

Julia Muir, CEO of Gaia Innovation Ltd and Founder of the UK Automotive 30% Club said, “I would like to congratulate Liesa Neal on her much deserved appointment. Mazda UK is the first of the UK Automotive 30% Club members to have a 30% female senior executive team, and it is testimony to the gender inclusive culture and meritocracy that Mazda UK has developed over many years. Jeremy Thomson should be commended for successfully recruiting, promoting and retaining very talented and capable women like Liesa in business critical leadership roles in sales, marketing and HR.”

Chris Clark leaves Mazda UK for Mazda Corporation at the end of July and will move to Hiroshima where he will take on the role of Group Manager in the Global HR team at Mazda Corporation, which involves dealing with all global HR initiatives across the world.

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