

SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL
RECREATION AND LEISURE
Wednesday 6th July 2022

Officer: Helen Ball – Town Clerk

POWER IN THE QUARRY

Purpose of Report

1. To update members on discussion undertaken with event organisers regarding diesel generators
2. To review the power provision in the Quarry

BACKGROUND

As part of the refurbishment of the Quarry under a Heritage Lottery Funded Project much of the ducting that is used today was installed. Over time this has been added to, to meet the needs of a number of uses and the general wear and tear of usage as well as the ravages of long periods of flooding has brought into question the efficacy of the power supply.

Added to this, members have previously had discussions about tempering the use of diesel generators in park particularly as Council looks to seek carbon neutrality by 2030.

USE OF POWER

A number of the large events utilize the power supply in the Quarry; the Council in turn recharges use back to the event organisers. This is not an exorbitant sum and far cheaper than hiring in generators and paying for fuel.

Some event organisers use generators more than others and mention was made at a recent meeting about the fairs using generators. The Outdoor Recreation & Assets Manager has discussed this with the Showman's Guild who have already begun to address the sustainability of event power as a national body (see appendix below).

The Town Clerk and Outdoor Recreation & Assets Manager have also been discussing this provision of power with the Shropshire Horticultural Society who have been responsible for installing a number of features over the years. Between the Town Council and the Shropshire Horticultural Society Electrical Engineer, we are going to attempt to plot all power infrastructure.

FUTURE

To ensure the Town Council's continued sustainable use of power in the Quarry, there is a need to undertake a Electrical Survey to determine the scope, usage, viability and potential of the power supply and be in a position to resource infrastructure change.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the report is noted
2. That Officers look to appointing an Electrical Engineer to undertake a survey of power infrastructure within the park and that the report be presented to a future Recreation & Leisure Committee and Finance & General Purpose Committee Meeting
3. That Officers work with event organisers to review powers needs in terms of size of supply and locations
4. That Shrewsbury Town Council lends its support to the endeavours of the Showman's Guild in addressing the sustainability of event power at a national level

Sustainability: Progress with Event Power - What the Showmen's Guild is doing:

The Showmen's Guild is looking for the current fuel cost and availability issue to be on the top of the agenda of the next meeting of the Westminster Parliament 'APPG on Fairs and Showgrounds' (<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/csmallparty/211006/fairs-and-showgrounds.htm>) when it elects a new Chair, following the assignation in the autumn of the Late Sir David Amess, its former Chair.

At the same time, the lobbying for government support for longer-term solutions, with the promised funding from the Treasury on sustainable power sources is to be on the APPG agenda too.

At the recent Event Production Show (<https://www.eventproductionshow.co.uk/>) at ExCeL London, in early March, the Showmen's Guild took an active part in discussions with colleagues in the Event Industry, on issues of Sustainability; progress with event power in partnership with Vision 2025.

Vision 2025 is a growing network of over five hundred outdoor events and businesses taking climate action (<https://www.vision2025.org.uk/>).

The Guild presented the suggestion of collaboration with key players including Live Nation (<https://www.livenation.co.uk/sustainabilitycharter-old>) on exploring the introduction of Town Power (three Phase mains feed) into the co-located parks that are commonly-used nationwide. Showmen's Guild Public Affairs Manager, Desmond FitzGerald, explained:

"We initiated dialogues with Vikki Chapman, Head of Sustainability (UK & Ireland) for Live Nation re teaming-up on lobbying for Town Power in parks we both use."

This was seen as the "Holy Grail" of solutions by Tim Benson, Power guru Director of SMART Power Ltd. (<https://www.powerful-thinking.org.uk/supplier/smart-power-ltd/>) and Technical Director of Brighton's ZAP Concepts.

FitzGerald, continued:

"We followed-up the dialogue with Chris Johnson, Director and Sustainability Lead for Shambala Festival; for whom Town Power / Mains power was seen as the next priority to achieve following the already established goals of recycling and that of reducing food-based emissions globally."

He added:

"We later reiterated this discussion with Kevin Moore, Festival Director for Vision Nine Festivals."

We also continued the dialogue with several other delegates who came forward to look at this with us including James Gunson of Energy Management Solutions Ltd, who work with UK Power Networks (<https://www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk/>) on these issues.”

Whilst the Showmen have the continued use of rebated fuel access; alternative power-sources that are both sustainable and environmentally friendly are the longer-term solution and the Showmen’s Guild is anxious to lead the conversation on this; taking in the experiences that the wider industry have already, with mixed power sources combined, including, surprisingly, rechargeable-battery back-up with a new generation of technology.

This is reportedly already in place in parts of at Festival Republic’s Reading (<https://www.festivalrepublic.com/charter/>) and Live Nation’s Download and Isle of Wight festivals, according to Vikki Chapman.

Against the background of the current headwinds of price and non-availability of power resource; the Showmen’s Guild is aware of the bigger picture of its both making its rightful contribution on lowering carbon emissions and its progress, to stay welcomed by councils and local communities in their parks.

On this emerging elimination of battlelines, between the environmental lobby and commercial operators, Lewis Jamieson, Director of Communications, ‘Music Declares Emergency’ (<https://www.musicdeclares.net/>) added that: *“Climate activists are entering the mainstream and becoming part of the leadership in both organising events and sanctioning them to go ahead.”* A practical way of updating the old adage, ‘we really are all in this together.’