



Committee and date

Council

21 January 2010

Item No

18

## THE MERE AT ELLESMERE ADVISORY BOARD

**Responsible Officer** Valerie Beint, Director of Community Services  
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### Summary

The report outlines the changes to the management structure of The Mere at Ellesmere, in particular the establishment of The Mere Advisory Board, which will comprise of elected members from Shropshire Council, Ellesmere Town Council and community interest groups.

Cabinet are required to nominate three Shropshire Councillors to the Mere Advisory Board.

### Recommendations

- A. That Council approves the appointment of three members to the Mere Advisory Board as prescribed in the Terms of Reference.
- A. That Council adopts the new Terms of Reference at Appendix 2.

### Report

#### 1. Background

The Mere at Ellesmere redevelopment project has provided an opportunity to review the strategic and operational management of the site. A new staffing structure has been developed and the development of the Boathouse building has created a more joined up customer experience than was offered previously.

To date the Mere Advisory Board has informed and supported the strategic management of the Mere.

#### 2. The Mere Management Structure

A structure for the management of the Mere is proposed within Appendix 1 and new Terms of Reference for the Mere Advisory Board within Appendix 2.

The Mere Advisory Board will support the operational management of the site by advising and approving plans and assisting in the formulation of policies and overseeing the strategic management of

The Mere. The board will comprise three elected members each from Shropshire Council and Ellesmere Town Council plus three members from community interest groups.

The Advisory Board will sit within a broader management structure that includes the following:

- The Friends of the Mere Group which will be a forum for community involvement in the management of The Mere.
- The Mere Management Group which will be responsible for the day to day management of The Mere.
- The Tenants Liaison Group that will be the forum for regular contact with and between tenants.

The advantages of this approach are outlined below and have been endorsed by the existing Mere Committee and Ellesmere Town Council.

- The structure allows key operational decisions to be taken swiftly by Shropshire Council and Ellesmere Town Council, who have a legal responsibility for the site.
- The structure provides a broadly based advisory board with both democratically elected members and relevant experts. The Board will provide a place for the “big issues” to be debated including the preparation and review of management plans and annual work plans.
- The structure creates a group of Friends and supporters and encourages active community involvement in the day to day management of the site.

### **3. The Mere Advisory Board Composition**

Membership will comprise:

- Shropshire Council elected Members x3 – Including the Local Member, Portfolio Holder for Culture and Leisure plus one other, or their delegated representatives
- Ellesmere Town Council elected Members x3
- Community interests groups x3 – Representatives will be drawn from local community interest groups including the Friends of the Mere Group, the Wildlife Watch group, North Shropshire Tourist Board, Ellesmere Chamber of Commerce and the Shropshire Wildlife Trust.

### **4. Next steps**

Once Shropshire Council members have been appointed to the Advisory Board, the community interest group members will be finalised. Ellesmere Town Council has appointed their three members.

The first meeting of the Mere Advisory Board is scheduled for 4 March 2010.

**List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)**

The Mere at Ellesmere Outline Business Plan, January 2006

**Human Rights Act Appraisal**

There are no known implications

**Environmental Appraisal**

There are no known implications

**Risk Management Appraisal**

The proposed management structure will make it easier to take day to day decisions while supporting and responding to wider community and other interests.

**Community / Consultations Appraisal**

The development of The Mere Advisory Board has been the subject of stakeholder consultation.

**Cabinet Member**

Cllr Steve Charmley – Portfolio Holder for Culture and Leisure

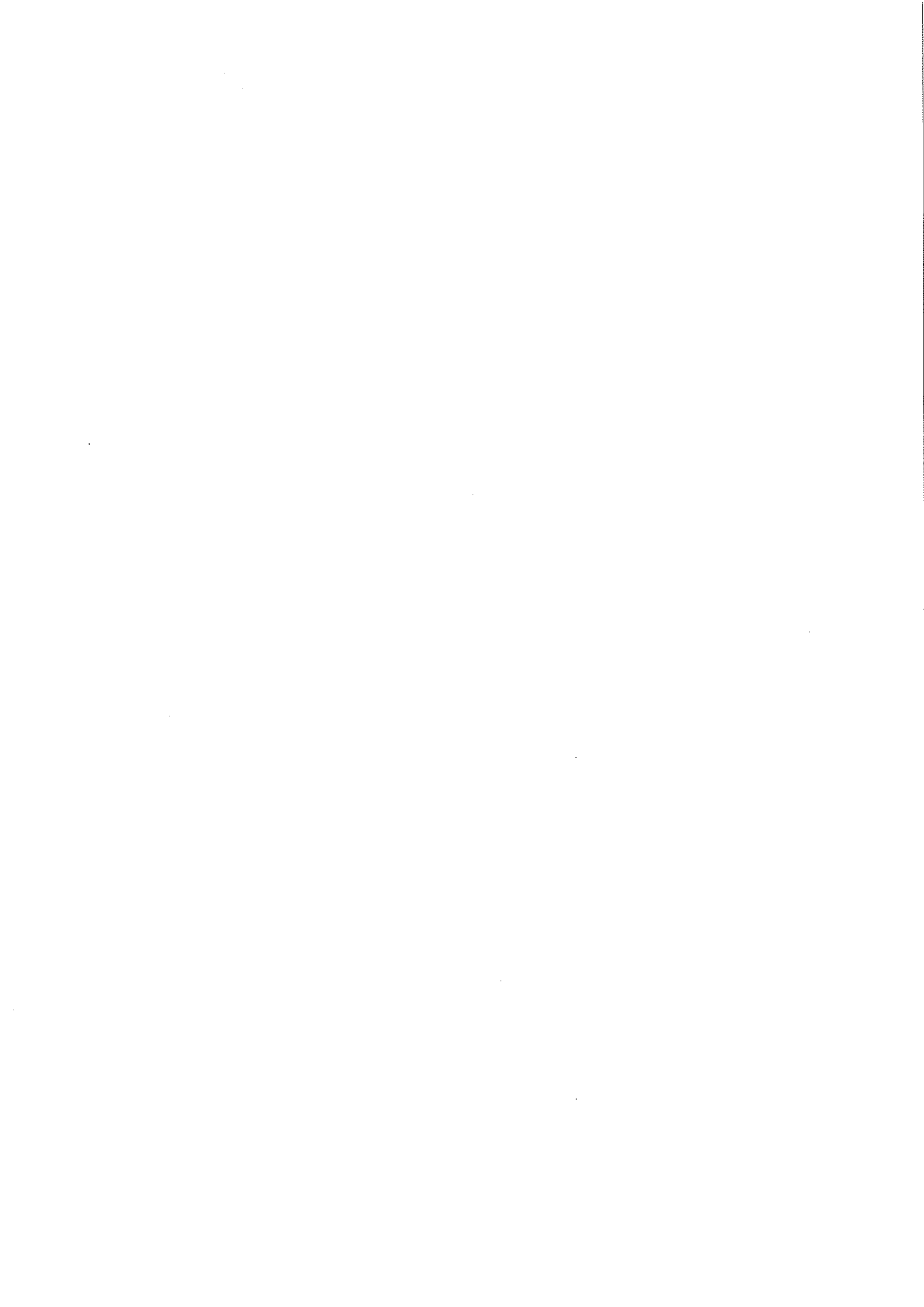
**Local Members**

Cllr Ann Hartley - Ellesmere

**Appendices**

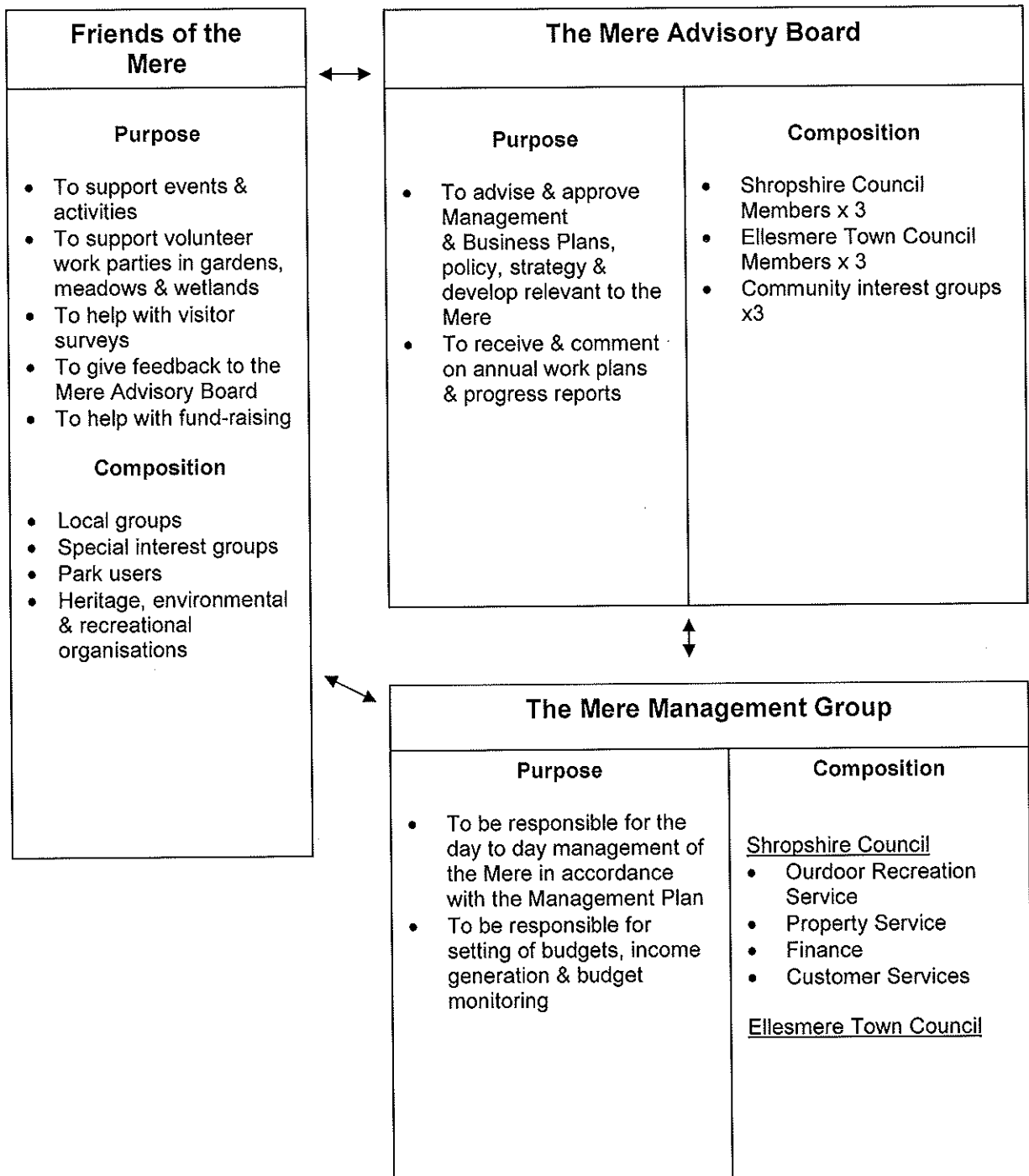
Appendix 1, The Mere at Ellesmere Management Structure

Appendix 2, The Mere Advisory Committee Terms of Reference



# APPENDIX 1

## The Mere at Ellesmere Management Structure





**The Mere at Ellesmere Advisory Board  
Terms of Reference**

**Title**

1. The Mere at Ellesmere Advisory Board (hereafter referred to as 'the Board').

**Role and Responsibilities**

2. The Board will advise and support Shropshire Council and Ellesmere Town Council in the development and management of all land, buildings and other assets within the area know as the Mere at Ellesmere (hereafter referred to as 'the Mere'). This includes land and properties owned by:

- The Mere Charitable Trust – Established in 1975 the trust is administered and managed by Shropshire Council, who is the sole trustee. The Trust owns the majority of land within the park including the Mere itself, Cremorne Gardens, the Promenade, the Moors, the Wardens Bungalow and the Kiosk.
- Shropshire Council and Ellesmere Town Council – jointly own the land on which the major buildings are situated including the Boathouse Restaurant, the Visitor Centre and the three Boathouses.
- Shropshire Council – solely owns Castlefields and Garden Terraces.

3. In carrying out its duties the Board and all of its members will work to support the delivery of the following mission statement:

*"The Mere Advisory Board will work with partners and the local community to develop and manage the Mere at Ellesmere, a regionally significant park of cultural value within a nationally significant landscape. The park is a well used community facility and visitor destination of regional importance: a place of value to wildlife, local residents and visitors alike.*

*Through the provision of access, facilities and interpretation, visitors to the Mere at Ellesmere will be provided with a unique and enjoyable experience and the information to help them explore the landscape and local attractions for themselves".*

4. In greater detail the Board will:
  - Advise on the development of management, business plans, policies and work plans for the Mere.
  - Advise and assist in the development and implementation of new projects, initiatives and funding opportunities.

- Receive regular progress reports.
  - Receive and exchange information from members and others on matters relevant to the Mere.
5. The Board will engage in constructive debate and seek consensus wherever possible. The Board may take a vote on matters but will have no executive decision making powers.

### **Membership**

6. Membership of the Board will not exceed nine members. Membership will comprise:
- Shropshire Council elected Members x3 – Including the Local Member, Portfolio Holder for the service area and one other or their delegated representatives
  - Ellesmere Town Council elected Members x3
  - Community interests groups x3 – Representatives will be drawn from local community interest groups including the Friends of the Mere Group, the Heron Watch group, North Shropshire Tourist Board, Ellesmere Chamber of Commerce, the Shropshire Wildlife Trust, etc
7. Elected Members of the Board will be nominated by their organisations. Other members will be appointed for a term of three years by a panel made up of elected Members. Members will need to demonstrate a positive commitment to supporting the future development of the Mere. There is no limit to the length of time a member may serve provided that their ongoing appointment is confirmed by the appointing panel.
8. The chair will be appointed from one of Shropshire Council and Ellesmere Town Council.
9. In addition Shropshire Council and Ellesmere Town Council officers will be in attendance at meetings to present reports and to receive guidance. Officers have no voting rights.

### **Administration**

10. Meetings will be held three times a year and more frequently where necessary.
11. Shropshire Council Legal and Democratic Services will support the management of the Board including its agendas and minutes.