

To: Scrutiny Committee
Date: 3 February 2026
Report of: Deputy Chief Executive – City and Citizens
Title of Report: Noticeboard Update

Summary and recommendations	
Decision being taken:	To update the Scrutiny Committee following its request to review the processes and budgets concerning noticeboards.
Key decision:	No
Lead Member:	Cllr Nigel Chapman, Cabinet Member for Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies
Corporate Priority:	All
Policy Framework:	None

Recommendation(s): That the Scrutiny Committee resolves to:
1. Note the report;
2. Agree any recommendations to Cabinet.

Information Exempt From Publication	
N/A	N/A

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
N/A	N/A	N/A

Introduction and overview

- As part of its discussion on Citizen and Community Engagement Policy in the September 2025, the Scrutiny Committee requested ‘clarity regarding the processes (and budgets) concerning noticeboards’.

2. There are circa 80 noticeboards across the City Council's communities. These are maintained by volunteers. The system is not overseen by a designated officer and there is also no dedicated budget to maintain their physical state.
3. This report presents 4 options for consideration. Some of the information in the report is based on work that is a number of years old, however officers have reviewed it and consider it represents a reasonable picture as to the current situation. Officers have not undertaken a fresh survey of noticeboards.

Current Situation

4. Each noticeboard has an appointed "noticeboard manager". They are responsible for general upkeep and keeping the content relevant and up to date. There are some gaps in coverage. Where there is an active noticeboard manager or community group notice boards are well-used, up-to-date and well maintained. There is no complaints or recourse system.
5. The City Council maintains the online data base of the contact details of each noticeboard manager, should interested parties want to display a public community notice. A list of vacant noticeboard manager roles is also available on the City Council's website, but there is no further specific advertising of these roles.
6. Many of the noticeboards carry the City Council's logo, and indicate they are owned and operated by the City Council.
7. There is no resource available to oversee or maintain these noticeboards. Boards are funded in an ad hoc manner through the use of CIL, member ward budgets or other miscellaneous funding.
8. The City Council is presently exploring software that can support communities to reach more people more effectively ie. Digital noticeboards.

Issues identified

9. In undertaking the review, some issues identified were:
 - There is no support for noticeboard managers from within the City Council. Control of noticeboard content is limited.
 - As a result, some noticeboards are well maintained, for others the content is out of date and relevance can be patchy especially in more deprived areas.
 - There is no centralised process for enabling content onto the noticeboards from community stakeholders.
 - There is no active management or re-recruitment of noticeboard managers.
 - Some of the noticeboards are in a poor state of repair and there is no process or budget to replace or maintain them.
 - The location of noticeboards needs to be reviewed.

Options to consider

10. As a way forward, members are presented with the following options to consider:

Option 1: Do nothing

- Pros
 - No additional ongoing costs

- Cons
 - Reputational risk
 - Safety risk from some hazardous noticeboards
 - Missed opportunity

Option 2: Withdraw support, de-brand and hand over to Noticeboard Managers

- Pros
 - Council would no longer have any associated risks
 - No additional costs
- Cons
 - No control over the content and communication via these boards
 - There could be a bigger impact in more deprived areas
 - Number of boards is likely to decline

Option 3: Continue with noticeboards, with City Council actively managing and operating the boards

- Pros
 - Still community run, but with a clear and identified support system from Oxford City Council.
 - More oversight and control of boards.
 - An introduction of a recognised process and channel for new notices to be put onto boards.
 - Opportunity to include online channels to reach communities
 - Noticeboards will be safe, and well-maintained.
- Cons
 - Capital and ongoing revenue budget required.
 - The role of the 'Noticeboard Officer' remains variable

Option 4: Outsource noticeboard management

- Pros
 - Noticeboards remain
 - Potentially at a lower cost
- Cons
 - Handing control of content from local communities to a third party.
 - Council still responsible for replacement and maintenance cost.
 - Risk of contract failure from supplier.

Financial implications

Capital and Revenue Costs of Installation, Replacement or Repair

11. It has been estimated that bringing the noticeboards up to standard would incur a capital one-off cost of circa £60k. This could include a small quota of additional noticeboards where required.
12. Maintaining these boards would require an ongoing revenue budget of circa £15k.

Capital Cost of Option Analysis

13. £15k to review the options including the opportunities for outsourcing and using online tools to reach communities

Ongoing Revenue Management Cost of Options 3 and 4

14. £20k for either internal management costs for overseeing the operation or for outsourcing.

Costed Proposal

15.

Activity	Capital One-off £k	Revenue Ongoing £k
Feasibility study to explore options	15	
Installation, replacement or repair of noticeboards	60	
Internal or outsourced management		20
Ongoing maintenance of noticeboards		15
Totals	75	35

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