

Project Variation

Barnoldswick Town Square Performance Space

1. Project Details

Project name Barnoldswick Performance Space	
Funding source	PIPIF
Approved allocation	£46,250 PIPIF Plus £13,750 contribution from Area Committee
Original proposal summary	Permanent performance space on Barnoldswick Town Square, replacing the centre bed at the rear of the square, with upgraded loose tables and chairs.
Variation requested	Recommendation to vary the project from a permanent fixed performance space/stage to a temporary or semi-permanent performance space, potentially using a sail canopy or removable canvas shade structure, supported by new seating and planters. The new cost is TBC but anticipated to be less than would be needed for a fabricated stage.

2. Original Project Purpose

The town square has regularly hosted a programme of live music, family activities and community events using a hired temporary stage and covered marquee, which had to be installed and removed for each event.

The original project was conceived as a permanent fabricated stage type design, to support these events. The approved proposal sought to provide a more sustainable solution by reducing reliance on temporary event infrastructure.

In March PBC Executive approved a “permeant performance space”

3. Reason for Variation

The variation is required because the circumstances underpinning the original nomination have changed since the project was first proposed. The Town Square has

transferred from Pendle Borough Council ownership to Barnoldswick Town Council ownership, giving the Town Council the determining role in the future use and design of the space.

The Town Council has recently completed a Town Square Assessment, including consideration of future events use. A permanent stage is not considered appropriate. The Town Square usage policy was agreed at the meeting of Barnoldswick Town Council on 24th September 2026.

The long-standing Bands on the Square programme has recently faced challenges such as planning, safety, and insurance requirements and the town council does not currently intend to bring the programme back, for these reasons as well others such as limited staffing at BTC.

This was the primary use of the temporary hired stage which the permanent stage would have replaced. Other recent events, including the UKSPF-funded winter events programme, which has also made use a stage is expected to come to an end following the closure of UKSPF funding.

As a result, the Town Council's position is that there is no longer an events programme requiring a permanent fixed stage. The Town Council also has concerns that a permanent stage could attract anti-social behaviour when not in use.

The Town Square hosts many community events and activities throughout the year and activities appropriate to the square are able to continue and the Town Councils supports an alternative concept of a performance space for these to take place.

Chairmanship at Barnoldswick Town Council has changed since the project was first approved. A request was made by the new Barnoldswick Town Council Chair to West Craven Area Committee in July 2026 to withdraw the performance space project and split its allocation across two other projects. Committee narrowly voted (the Chair cast the deciding vote) to keep the performance space in the programme on the basis that they supported live events on the town square and on the basis that it was understood (at the time) the land remained in PBC ownership – and so PBC could decide what to do on the land. Both of these foundational factors have now altered. It is also a requirement that the responsibility and liability for whatever is produced needs to be adopted by the Town Council. They cannot be made to take ownership of a design they are not in agreement with. The original proposal cannot then be progressed with.

Since the Area Committee meeting in July, the Town Council have undertaken and completed a town square assessment, in anticipation of the adoption of the square by themselves (now completed, and their usage policy adopted in September 2026). They are not asking to withdraw the project as was put to committee in June. They express continued support for it, but in a form more suitable to new circumstances.

4. Proposed Revised Scope

The Town Council remains supportive of community events and activities on the Town Square and is not opposed to the principle of the project. However, it would prefer the original proposal to be altered to a temporary or semi-permanent performance space or structure rather than a permanent fixed stage.

Original vision

Below shows a graphically illustrated design for a permanent fabricated stage as it could have looked.



Proposed alternative

One option currently under discussion is a contemporary sail canopy or canvas sun shade fixed to permanent holding posts, with the canvas element being retractable or removable when not in use. This would provide an attractive aerial covering and visually define a flexible performance area without creating a permanent stage structure.

The revised scope may also include the purchase of replacement seating, which is consistent with the original PIPIF project plan. Planters may also be included to add greenery, support placemaking and help demarcate the performance area or temporarily zone the Town Square for different audiences and activities.

Barnoldswick Town Square

Proposed Layout Plan

Community Space
for Music, Events and
Gatherings

Key



Notes:

- 1no. sail canopy from central planter
- 6no. planter benches facing the canopy
- Open layout allowing free movement
- Planting scheme to enhance the space
- Suitable for community events, music and gatherings

Scale (approx.)



Barnoldswick Town Council

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5. Benefits of the Revised Proposal

- Provides a flexible performance and activity space that better reflects current and anticipated event requirements.
- Reduces the risk associated with a permanent fixed stage when there is no longer a regular events programme requiring one.
- Supports continued community use of the Town Square through a lighter-touch and more adaptable intervention.
- Improves the appearance and functionality of the square through seating, shade and potential planting.
- Maintains alignment with the original aim of supporting town centre activity and high street footfall.

6. Budget and Funding Position

The existing PIPIF allocation for the project is £46,250. The proposed variation is intended to remain within the approved allocation, subject to confirmation of final specification, procurement route and costs following further discussion with Barnoldswick Town Council.

The change could result in a saving but this is currently undetermined.

7. Risks and Considerations

- The final specification has not yet been confirmed and needs to be agreed by Barnoldswick Town Council.
- Any permanent fixing posts, seating or planters must become the ownership of Barnoldswick town council for maintenance, safety and long-term management responsibilities.
- Should the proposal require planning permission this will need to be sought and granted.
- The revised proposal should continue to demonstrate community benefit and value for money.
- Support for the original design would void the project requiring funds to be reallocated within the PIPIF programme. The Town Council do not wish to adopt responsibility and liability for that proposal, nor can they be made to put it on their land.

8. Recommended Variation

The variation consists of the Barnoldswick Performance Space project changing from the original proposal for a permanent fixed performance space to a temporary or semi-permanent performance space, supported by associated seating and potential planters, while retaining the original objective of supporting community activity and town centre vitality. Committee is asked

1. to support the proposal and recommend the change to the Chief Executive of PBC, who in turn will consult with the Leader and Deputy Leader in making a final decision.
2. Area Committee allocated a portion of funds to the project. Committee is requested to continue to support the project with this allocation, should it be required, for the performance space, seating and planters.