

REPORT TO WPBC ELDERS

TO: Windsor Park Baptist Church Elders

FROM: Bruce Anderson (Treasurer), John Tucker (Elder), Joanna Lima (Constitution Reviewer), Rebecca Pavis (Constitution Reviewer), and Grant Harris (Senior Pastor) ("**Constitution Review Committee**")

DATE: 8th November 2025

SUBJECT: **WINDSOR PARK BAPTIST CHURCH REPORT ON REVIEW OF CONSTITUTION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AMENDMENTS**

1. The Windsor Park Baptist Church ("WPBC") Constitution was last amended on 20th May 2007, 18½ years ago – it was overdue for a review. The Charities Commission requires that the Constitution is reviewed at least every three years.¹ In addition, the Baptist Union of New Zealand ("BUNZ") has requested that Baptist churches amend their constitution to add a clause referring to BUNZ's newly installed Serious Misconduct Process.
2. The Constitution Review Committee (the "Committee") met in August, September and October 2025 to review the current Constitution with the aim of modernising the language to make it easier to read and understand; to modify sections to reflect our current practices; and to align with BUNZ's requested changes and its recommendations as noted in BUNZ Model Church Constitution. Following a review of the current constitution, the Committee has prepared a proposed amended constitution.
3. The Committee also considered changes which ultimately were not made at this time but are still worth noting. Some of these changes may be more appropriate in the future – see below under 'Future changes' where applicable, as well as point 4 below.

Introduction	Changes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Remove the "Vision" sections in the Introduction.
	Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● The committee's view was that the sections on the Vision of WPBC, while important, are not necessary for a legal document such as a constitution. The introduction section provides useful context to help readers understand what a constitution is.
	Future changes: Nil

Clause 1	Changes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Add "<i>atonement</i>" to clause 1.3.3.● Reorder <i>beliefs</i> to follow a logical sequence.● Remove duplication of <i>baptism</i>.
Our Name and Beliefs	

¹ [Charities Services | New requirement to review your governance procedures](#)

	<p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is an important section in the Constitution, and the Committee has been intentional about the order of beliefs and changing this accordingly.
	<p>Future changes:</p> <p>The Committee discussed the phrase <i>“have been saved by personal faith in Jesus Christ”</i> and agreed that it would be more accurate to say, <i>“have been saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, his life, death and resurrection.”</i> The Committee recommends this change is considered in the future.</p>

<p>Clause 2</p> <p>Aims and Purposes</p>	<p>Changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change <i>fellowship</i> to <i>“growing in deeper relationships with each other.”</i> Expand clause 2.1 to include, <i>“worship, prayer, teaching, encouragement and support.”</i> Modify clause 2.2 to express God's love <i>“to one another and the community”</i> and include <i>“intentional evangelism.”</i> Change <i>“the task of mission”</i> to <i>“engage in the mission of God.”</i>
	<p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The committee felt that the language here could be modernised and expanded to more clearly convey our aims in an active and encouraging tone The Committee acknowledged that overseas mission is important, but we need to be clear that our mission is principally in New Zealand in terms of our charitable status.
	<p>Future changes: Nil</p>

<p>Clause 3</p> <p>Structure</p>	<p>Changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change autonomous and adopt model constitution wording here <i>“With Jesus Christ as the head of the church, the church is governed by its members in accordance with this constitution, working closely with regional and national Baptist Union staff.”</i> Remove references to Deacons as we no longer have that role here. 3.2 - change the word <i>‘or’</i> to <i>‘and any’</i> to make this clause clearer.
	<p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee noted the importance of changing the term <i>“autonomous”</i> (which suggests the church is self-governing) rather than Christ-led. Decided to adopt Model Constitution wording here. Wording of the constitution reflects the responsibility of the Elders working together with the Senior Pastor. There was discussion regarding the language used in this section and whether the constitution needs to be more prescriptive on the leaders or a leadership team. The Committee ultimately took the view that the

	constitution should remain flexible in this section, rather than be overly prescriptive about certain roles.
	Future changes: Nil

Clause 4 Membership	Changes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Add that there needs to be "<i>evidence of following Christ.</i>" ● Reorder sections of this clause for better flow. ● Add reference to Members Pledge (to highlight the commitment made) without embedding that pledge in the constitution. ● Modernise language from <i>membership roll</i> to <i>membership list</i> and remove strict requirements for removing members to streamline process.
	Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Committee observed that "evidence of following Christ" is mentioned in the BUNZ model church constitution and decided it was important to include ● It's important to have a current and accurate list of members to avoid issues with non-participating former members when we need a quorum for voting.
	Future changes: Nil

Clause 5 Leadership	Changes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Clarify that "<i>All pastors and elders must be church members.</i>" ● Committee agreed to remove all references to deacons as this role no longer exists at Windsor Park. ● Committee agreed to remove the church secretary role (clause 5.3) as it is not currently used. ● Remove prescriptive "terms of call" language. ● Specify that call is affirmed by membership and that terms/conditions are set via individual employment agreement. ● Change number of elders to a maximum of 12 (including the Senior Pastor) and not specify a minimum number. ● Clauses around the treasurer and budget to be amended to be consistent current practices and allow flexibility.
	Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Committee noted the importance of reflecting our actual practices i.e. we no longer have deacons. ● Committee noted the importance ministry leaders and staff being members, and that Elders have final accountability. ● There was extensive discussion around the traditional "terms of call" approach compared with Individual Employment Agreements ("IEA"). We have IEA's for all staff except the Senior Pastor. Acknowledged importance of aligning with employment law and maintaining spiritual calling, observing that these are not in tension with each other.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Committee discussed the need for having enough Elders available to make regular meetings, to meet the demands of a growing church and overlapping board responsibilities. ● The committee reviewed the nomination and election procedures and felt no major change necessary. ● Noted that the formal treasurer role is not always filled and it is a role that is appointed by Elders. Elders have financial accountability and approve the budget.
	Future changes: Nil

Clause 6	Changes:
Church Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A slight restructure of clauses 6.1 and 6.2 to make better sense.
	Comments: Nil
	Future changes: Nil

Clause 7	Changes:
Church Disputes and Discipline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Add "<i>disputes</i>" to clause heading as this section is not just about discipline. ● Add provision for BUNZ intervention in exceptional cases of division or dysfunction and remove threshold for 25% of members requesting this. ● Amend to specify elders' responsibility to seek BUNZ advice when necessary (even in the case where misconduct or a dispute doesn't cause major division). ● Add Serious Misconduct Process as required by BUNZ.
	Comments:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● BUNZ have a process to follow in the case of Serious Misconduct. WPBC is to follow this in the event of serious misconduct, and it is included in our constitution for this purpose.
	Future changes: Nil

Clause 8	Changes:
Declaration of Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adopt clearer BUNZ model language by changing "<i>all land</i>" to "<i>Any land or any property including church buildings and manses.</i>" ● Add that BUNZ ultimately owns the land as trustee for WPBC in accordance with statute.
	Comments:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Improving clarity by expanding meaning of land and better reflecting the relationship between WPBC and BUNZ in respect of property.
	Future changes: Nil

Clause 9 No Private Pecuniary Profit for Any Individual	Changes:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Incorporate wording as per BUNZ model for charitable status section.
	Comments:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It is important that this section is clear about the requirements and expectations for WPBC to maintain our charitable status.
	Future changes: Nil

Clause 10 Amendments to the Constitution	Changes:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Current 65% or 75% voting thresholds are to be replaced with a single 67% threshold. ● Replace entire section with the clauses from the BUNZ model constitution.
	Comments:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● BUNZ now requires constitutional change notices to be sent to members electronically and announced over two Sundays before any vote. The committee agreed this is more inclusive. ● Committee noted current system is overly complex and should be simplified. ● It is noted that the committee is recommending a significant change of this clause. An amendment section is normally only amended with great caution. However, it is being replaced with the BUNZ model constitution clauses in order to achieve a clearer and more straightforward process, which is ultimately easier for WPBC members to follow and apply.
	Future changes: Nil

Clause 11 Winding Up Provisions	Changes:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Noted that the voting threshold for winding up would be increased to 67% (consistent with threshold required for amendments).
	Comments:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The committee noted the importance of explicitly referring to our charitable status in order to comply with Charities Commission requirements to maintain charitable status. ● The committee observed that BUNZ model constitution provisions were more complete i.e. assets must be used for "<i>religious purposes</i>."
	Future changes: Nil

4. Other changes/items considered but not recommended at this stage:
- (a) Te Tiriti o Waitangi – the committee considered the importance of including a reference to Te Tiriti o Waitangi in our constitution and ultimately concluded that further consultation with church members is required before inclusion. The committee noted that Te Tiriti o Waitangi references may be better suited for our values or mission statement than our constitution. This should be revisited in the future.
 - (b) Members' Pledge – this is referred to in the Constitution. The committee discussed whether the Members' Pledge should be included in the constitution, noting some Baptist churches do. Ultimately, it was decided it is more appropriate to keep it as a separate document to allow flexibility and for future changes to be made to it, without constitution amendment.
5. In order to amend the constitution as per our proposed document, it will need to be approved by 75% of members at an AGM/special meeting, as per clause 10.4 of the **current** constitution. The process in clause 10 of the current constitution needs to be followed to amend the constitution. A quorum of 40% of members will be required to make our proposed amendments.

The Constitution Review Committee

Bruce Anderson

Joanna Lima

Rebecca Pavis

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