



Questions received ahead of AGM 2018

(These are formal responses to questions raised by church delegates in response to the Agenda and support documents. They are unlikely to make sense unless you have read these other documents or are aware of the issues they relate to.)

Q1. Could I request that the Baptist theology which underpins the transition changes be communicated during the year.

We will seek to publish a theological overview of NWBA's operations at the very latest by the end of 2018. We will make this available through the NWBA website.

Q2. Could I request that there be clear lines of how churches speak into the council and who represents them if the network minister system is being replaced.

While Network ministers have been a significant presence on NWBA council, they have served alongside a diverse group of people, and have never been envisaged or operated as the sole point of contact for churches. We hope that churches will continue to engage with the work of NWBA through the relationship and interaction that comes from working with NWBA team members, attending organised events and through effective relationship with ALL members of council. We would also have to say that while the Network Minister arrangement has worked well for some areas, this has not been the case for others. The proposed changes do not preclude a representative appointment, but nor do they require it – we believe this better serves the diverse reality of NWBA. One key point of interaction was envisaged as being the spring roadshows, which rely on local networks to arrange them – in reality, many have not. By moving this responsibility into the role of a staff member, NWBA can be more prescriptive in making sure these happen, while at the same time retaining the important “local connection” that these events require. Our expectation is that a larger staff team, more geographically spread will make it easier for churches to engage. Formal accountability will remain the same, through an annual report presented at an Annual General Meeting. Shifting the AGM back to a longer, weekend event, is one expression of how we are seeking to make that event more able to properly engage and hold people to account.

Q3. Can churches have the proposals a minimum of one month before the AGM next year in order to think and pray about the major changes. (This would be in response to The NWBA value of Prayerful Listeners)

The narrative version of the changes is now available, providing around six months for response and consultation. The required changes to the Articles of Association have been approved in draft form by the trustees, and will now be sent to the Charity Commission for comment/approval. We HOPE that this will be complete in time for formal approval at NWBA council in November, but would stress that we are completely in the hands of the Charity Commission in terms of timing. We have not yet fixed a date for the proposed Spring EGM, because we do not believe this is wise until the documents have achieved Charity Commission approval. It seems reasonable to request that the date is not set unless there is at least a clear month between the meeting and those drafts becoming available. Our expectation is that there would be a longer timescale, but if the meeting wishes to impose prescribed timings, these can be accommodated.