**Nick Owen Publishing**

**POST-MORTEM MEETING MINUTES CONFIDENTIAL**

**Website Incident: "The Flaming Bin Hack"**

**Date:** 21 November 2025

**Time:** 10:00–11:32
**Location:** NOP Meeting Room 2 (formerly the storeroom)
**Chair:** Eleanor Wheeler
**Note-taker:** Alex Moore

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## 1. Attendance

- **Eleanor Wheeler** (Senior Editor / Acting Crisis Lead)
- **Nick Owen** (Founder & Publisher)
- **Julian Pilkington-Sterne** (Marketing Executive)
- **Paul Warren** (Illustrator / Creative Side-Observer)
- **Alex Moore** (Publishing Assistant)
- **IT Consultant via Zoom** ("Rob", last name unclear due to connection issues)

**Apologies:**

- Maja (claimed she "refuses to attend anything involving passwords ever again")

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## 2. Purpose of Meeting

To review:

- What happened during the website breach
- How it was handled
- Lessons learned
- Steps required to prevent future "semi-literate cyber events"

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## 3. Timeline Summary

**08:07** – First report of website malfunction (Julian, "in a state of spiritual distress")
**08:10** – Homepage replaced with hacker manifesto
**08:11** – Flaming bin image appears
**08:14** – Eleanor issues company-wide alert
**08:19** – Nick attempts to "reason with the situation" (unclear what this entailed)
**08:35** – Hack escalates to pop-ups ("UNKNOWN IDIOT DETECTED", etc.)

**08:47** – Website taken offline
**09:52** – Temporary maintenance page restored
**11:20** – Full homepage reinstated
**14:10** – Hacker attempts to comment on NOP Instagram post ("NICK U CANT HIDE"), comment swiftly deleted

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**4. What Went Well**

- **Rapid Internal Communication:**
  Staff responded quickly, though Julian's 17 consecutive emails in 14 minutes were described as "energetically unhelpful."
- **Website Restored Within the Day:**
  Despite the intruder renaming buttons to "BUY NEVER," no lasting structural damage occurred.
- **Media Handling:**
  BBC Today Programme interview considered "mostly professional," though the post-interview microphone incident has been noted for internal reflection.
- **Public Response:**
  Significant increase in website traffic following news coverage.
  *(Julian claimed this counts as a marketing win; this claim is not universally accepted.)*

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**5. What Did Not Go Well**

- **Password Vulnerability:**
  The password "NOP2023!" was deemed "comically guessable" by the IT consultant.
  Nick expressed surprise, stating: "I thought the exclamation mark made it advanced."
- **Brand Damage:**
  The flaming bin logo went viral on Twitter within 40 minutes.
  Paul has since *sold three prints of it* without company approval.
- **Internal Disagreements Audible on Radio:**
  The off-air dispute that was actually on-air has been categorised as "undesirable but predictable."
- **Julian Attempted to Rebrand NOP as 'A Phoenix Rises' mid-crisis:**
  This idea has been tabled indefinitely.

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**6. Root Cause Analysis**

- **Primary Cause:**
  Weak password and outdated admin panel security.
- **Secondary Cause:**
  Hacker "with high emotional energy and low spelling accuracy."

- **Tertiary Cause:**
  Lack of two-factor authentication, described by the IT consultant as "astonishing in 2025."
- **Quaternary Cause:**
  According to Paul, "the metaphysics of resentment," which has been noted but not formally actioned.

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## 7. Actions Agreed

### Immediate

1. Introduce mandatory password changes for all staff.
    - **New minimum requirement:** at least 16 characters, 1 symbol, and *no references to NOP, tennis, or biscuits.*
2. Implement two-factor authentication across all systems.
    - Julian asked: "Even Instagram?"
    - Answer: "Especially Instagram."
3. Commission external security audit.
    - IT consultant to provide recommendations once he has "a stronger WiFi connection."
4. Remove all remaining traces of the flaming bin.
    - Except for Paul's prints (already sold).

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### Medium-Term

1. Develop crisis protocol titled "If This Ever Happens Again, Do Not Panic."
2. Staff media training:
    - Exercises on "What To Say When The Mics Are Still On."
3. Review NOP's digital branding assets and ensure none can be easily replaced by household waste icons.

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### Long-Term

1. Explore hiring an in-house digital officer, ideally someone under the age of 30 (per Eleanor).
2. Consider adding humourous disclaimers to the website:
   "This site contains poetry. Proceed at your own risk."
3. Install firewall rules that automatically block any user whose username contains:
    - "88"
    - "reform"
    - "truth4"
    - or more than one exclamation mark.

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**8. Any Other Business**

- **Nick:** Asked why the hacker singled out his eyebrows.
  No conclusive explanation was found.
- **Julian:** Proposed merchandising the flaming bin image “ironically.”
  Proposal unanimously vetoed.
- **Paul:** Offered to run a workshop titled *“Turning Trauma Into Art.”*
  Decision pending.
- **Alex:** Asked whether we can finally move meetings out of the storeroom.
  Answer unclear.

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**9. Next Meeting**

**Date:** TBC
**Agenda:** Implementation progress, final security recommendations, and whether NOP’s new password policy has been successfully adopted by Nick.