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CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT - 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021 for AGM 19 November 2020

At the time of writing this report, the Marlborough Youth Trust (MYT) has been operating out of MySpace for well over two years. That time has gone by so quickly.

In the 12 months to which this report relates, MySpace has undergone some amazing transformations, with far greater community use of the facility. Most of this use has had a youth focus as a result of intentional selection by the trust, including long and short-term hire of spaces within the building, hosting of groups and organisations including catering of food and drink, youth enterprise ventures and the sale of attractive goods like honey, and the regular deployment of the MYT's portable climbing wall to the fee-paying public, to help bolster the MYT coffers.

Our manager, Jo Lane, has worked tirelessly to ensure that MySpace helps to earn income for the trust while still maintaining its youth-centric focus, and therefore helps to pay the bills. She and her team have also done extremely well in securing several contracts with funders that have helped to ensure the longevity of the trust's services to youth and made the employment of staff more secure.

Evolution of the trust's business model has included the appointment of a Financial Administrator who plays an integral role in ensuring that the ever-changing budget is kept under control with all the transactions, payments, wages, grants, expenses and pots of funds accounted for and sorted. The trustees made a conscious decision to help develop a young parent's skill set in this field, and Laura Simpson has not disappointed, showing great aptitude and attitude in doing a great job.

MySpace has continued to see significant numbers of predominantly youth visitors through the door, with visitor numbers continuously exceeding 1,000 individuals per month.

Covid-19 restrictions once again caused some disruption to MYT business-as-usual in the early part of 2021, but a more noticeable effect of Covid-19 have been the fact that MYT staff have had to make last-minute modifications to youth events and planned programmes to fit with restrictions on numbers and to allow for social distancing and other Covid-related protocols. This has led to a mix of very well patronised events, and some that have not been so successful. Another effect of Covid-19 that was evident in early 2020 but has become more obvious in the last financial year, is the mental health toll on a significant number of youth. For some it is anxiety or stress caused by

the lack of certainty that Covid-19 causes, for others it is depression or unhappiness as a result of their predictable lives being thrown into disarray, including disruption in learning, challenging employment market, social disruption and more. The staff at MYT have worked hard to ensure that youths identified as having a struggle, or who seek help, are supported and assisted into connections with the right help for them.

A Snapshot of Marlborough Youth Trust in 2020 - 2021:

YEP - Youth Employability Programme. Thanks to continued financial support from the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) and the dedication of MYT staff, particularly Max Sweeney, MYT has been able to continue to deliver this valuable programme as a Level 3 Accredited Service Provider. As a result, the trust meets the requirements to be funded as a service provider for MSD and this also potentially opens doors to funding for other youth service provision. MYT collaborates with REAP, local colleges, Work and Income NZ and seeks youth for the programme from within the pool of youth already engaged with My Space. MSD continues to support YEP because of its value including the fact that a number of youths engaged in the programme successfully achieved employment and all the participants reflected positive changes in presentation, confidence, skillset and attitude.

YES – Youth in Emergency Services Programme. I'm pleased to report that his very successful programme is once again funded and although it didn't run in the period to which this report relates, has run successfully in the current financial year after a great deal of hard work was put in by Jo and her team to make it happen. I look forward to seeing the outcomes for the 2021 YES programme as they become available.

MYTAG - Marlborough Youth Trust Advisory Group. This group ensures the voice of youth is heard within MYT and the community. The group also provides an opportunity for youth to have a hand in planning, developing and running youth initiatives, while also receiving training, soft skills and developmental opportunities. New MYTAG members underwent a selection process again during the 2020-2021 financial year with a far greater focus on skill sets and dedication to tasks. Part of the reinvention of MYTAG involved re-written contracts in which the participants sign a commitment to their involvement in supporting MYT. A panel of existing MYTAG's, capably led by MYTAG Jackson and youth workers, interviewed and selected the candidates. This group is funded by the Ministry of Youth Development.

EVENTS – MYT youth workers, supported by MYTAG and other volunteers, run four main youth events annually as part of a Minor Services contract with District Council. On 27th September 2020 the very popular 'Spring Fest' event was held at the Marlborough A & P Showgrounds with some 450 youths attending. The event attracted an older group of youth for the first time, although the audience was still diverse, and the youth performers were popular and well supported by the crowd. A Christmas Outdoor Movie was held in Seymour Square on the 12th of December 2020. Around 120 attended, mostly young families which met the aims of the organisers, intending to provide a fun, safe event where youth organisers could volunteer to give back to the community.

The 'Beach Fest' event was held on Shelly Beach in Picton on the 31st of January 2021. Around 200 youths were entertained by local youth performers in a night-time setting, combined with food and other entertainment. Organisers were let down a little as some vendors didn't turn up and another event at the nearby sailing club and an event in Picton contributed to slightly lower numbers. 'Youth Week 2021' was a week-long mash of different events all celebrating the Youth Week theme, held from the 10th to the 14th of May 2021. It included the screening of a musical, a climb and tug-of-war night, Lazer Tag, an Amazing Race presentation, Basketball tournament, youth measles clinic and a Rave Cave dance event. Over 250 youth attended over the course of the week.

THRIVE TIPU - YOUNG PARENTS GROUP – Thrive Tupu has provided a safe, constructive environment that helps and teaches young parents and their children to be better families for five years now. The group is accredited by Ministry of Education as a pre-school educator. This group, With a change of Coordinator during this financial year, the group has taken a positive step up and with the help of trained volunteers they have successfully helped to improve outcomes for increasing numbers of both young parents and their children in a supportive, socially interactive setting. Thank-you to our trustee, Helen McLean for all the work she does to support this initiative.

MYSACE OVER 18's YOUTH GROUP – This group of youths, formed by MYT Youth Workers after a group of youth regularly turned up seeking support and fellowship at MYT, is in its third year. While it provides an opportunity for older youth to get together in a constructive and fun group where Youth Workers can also offer mentoring and in some cases, referral to professional counselling or other agencies, the group has been quieter lately and work is being done with a skilled volunteer youth worker to reinvigorate the group.

MYT QUEER GROUP – This amazing group of diverse young individuals have been a source of motivation, support and self-determination within MYT. They are organised, know what they want and set goals and targets. There are 30 plus youths involved and guided by our wonderful youth worker, Max, with capable assistance from two of the group.

CACTUS – You wouldn't think that youths would respond positively to being marched, run, exercised at pace and tested physically and mentally after a very early morning start, yet CACTUS has continued to be a staple of MYT, developing self-belief, courage, teamwork, reliability, leadership and fitness in youth and having a positive effect on the attitudes of those involved. The programme is popular with and continues to attract college-age youth. Marlborough Lines continues to be a major corporate sponsor and funding is also provided by District Council. A lot of work was put into preparing to restart the Picton CACTUS programme during this financial year and it looks like this will happen in early 2022. Thanks to Sarah McAlister for all the good work she's done in coordinating the CACTUS programme.

Covid-19 has presented plenty of challenges to MYT during this period, but despite this our tenacious team have pushed on through and can be really proud of their achievements on behalf of the youth of Marlborough.

We couldn't do our mahi without the dedication and support of our trustees who are all volunteers and 'time-poor,' but willing to give back to the community for the benefit of youth. I'm extremely proud of the sheer amount of time and effort put in by our Manager Jo Lane to ensure that MYT and MySpace remain the go-to youth organisation in Marlborough, with enough good work going on to attract community and national awards. Jo's efforts are put into effect by our awesome Youth Worker team, Maxine and Soni, Supported by Sam and Laura, with help from Ruby and Taylah. We are all indebted to our awesome MYTAG's and more than 50 volunteers that help ensure that MYT has the skills and manpower to get things done.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Russ Smith', written over a circular stamp or mark.

Russ Smith
Chairperson
Marlborough Youth Trust Inc