

*To the children and young people of Manchester*

*The last few months have been tough. This pandemic has meant that schools and youth clubs were closed, your favourite activities stopped, birthday parties cancelled, holidays scrapped. Worse still, you've been stuck at home getting bored and wondering when you'd ever see the outside world again.*

*We're hearing that many of you have even missed your schoolwork, and every young person we've spoken to has missed their friends and wider family members who don't live with them.*

*Sure, you can do a video call, but you know and we know that it isn't the same as meeting someone face to face. You've missed a big part of your lives over these last few months and you've probably felt, like us, that things were out of your control.*

*We're writing to thank you for your immense patience during a very difficult time, for your understanding of the difficulties that everyone is experiencing, and for complying with social distancing which has saved countless lives.*

*As Manchester councillors we're responsible for ensuring that we deliver the best services for children and young people across the city. It's been hard though over these last few months to reach many of you. We have limited resources, we've all been taken by surprise at the demands the virus has placed upon us, and resources have been pushed into different areas while we try to cope with the staggering effects of this disease.*

*But rest assured that you're not forgotten, no, never that.*

*Manchester always comes together in tough times and we have. Thousands of volunteers, young and old have been helping the city cope. They've packed food, they've delivered games and activities directly to people's homes, and they've helped save lives.*

*We still need to do more; we will do more and we promise that as part of this we will work harder to connect with you and any young person who feels isolated and lonely and feels as though their future has little to offer. I can tell you now that we are 100% committed to your well-being and making sure that nobody is left behind. We're working around the clock with your schools, colleges, youth teams, and city employers to guarantee the kind of services that you deserve.*

*To every young person in Manchester we want to say that you're our top priority. You are the future of this great city and we are confident that when things do return to normal we will all be stronger, more connected, more resilient, and ready to reach the stars.*

*Regards*

*Councillor Luthfur Rahman, Executive Member for Culture, Leisure, Skills and Youth  
Councillor Garry Bridges, Executive Member for Children and Schools*