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Sent by Email

Dear Larissa

Support for Sheerness Levelling Up Fund application

EKC Group would like to express its strong support for Swale Borough Council's application to the Levelling Up Fund which will enable the much-needed renewal of Sheerness and provide the local community with a range of opportunities and services to enhance their lives.

A key project in the bid is the extension of Sheppey College, which is owned and operated by EKC Group. As the Further Education and Skills Group for East Kent, we welcome this development which will create a new range of exciting skills and employment pathways for the Isle of Sheppey. We have also committed to providing £400,000 of match funding to the project. The College extension will include:

- A Junior College for 14-16 year olds, which will provide much-needed direct entry technical education opportunities for this age group. This directly supports our Vision for the Isle of Sheppey. As you know we already operate three successful Junior Colleges in Broadstairs, Folkestone and Canterbury, which make a real difference to creating clear technical pathways for 14-16 year olds, where this is appropriate for

them. This also enables more young people to progress directly to a T Level qualification at age 16.

- New facilities to support the introduction of a Creative and Digital offer. We know from previous experience that Creative and Digital provision helps to raise the aspirations of young people and creates a range of opportunities for progression to HE and employment. These are all key issues that need addressing on the Island. This provision will also help to meet the skills needs of local and regional employers in a growing sector of the economy, in addition to meeting the skills needs in a number of cross-sector functional roles, such as product development, web development, graphic design, marketing, and advertising. Our programmes will provide students with opportunities for real-world commissions from local businesses to ensure that they gain valuable hands-on experience to prepare them for careers. The Kent and Medway Workforce Skills Evidence Base supports this approach to skills in the industry.
- A new Student Centre to support an improved student experience.
- Supply chain operator apprenticeships
- General teaching spaces, which will also enable delivery of adult programmes in areas of need, including:
 - Logistics and data analysis
 - Essential skills programmes in numeracy, literacy and digital
 - Community Learning provision, which will support improved engagement with adults and families, and support progression to further learning

EKC Group also strongly supports the other key elements of the Levelling Up Fund bid, including new, enhanced and integrated leisure, health and fitness facilities. The overall programme will also create a new gateway and destination for Sheerness, and instil much-needed civic pride in the local community.

We look forward to working with you to bring this exciting project to fruition.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'G. Razey'.

Graham Razey OBE
Chief Executive