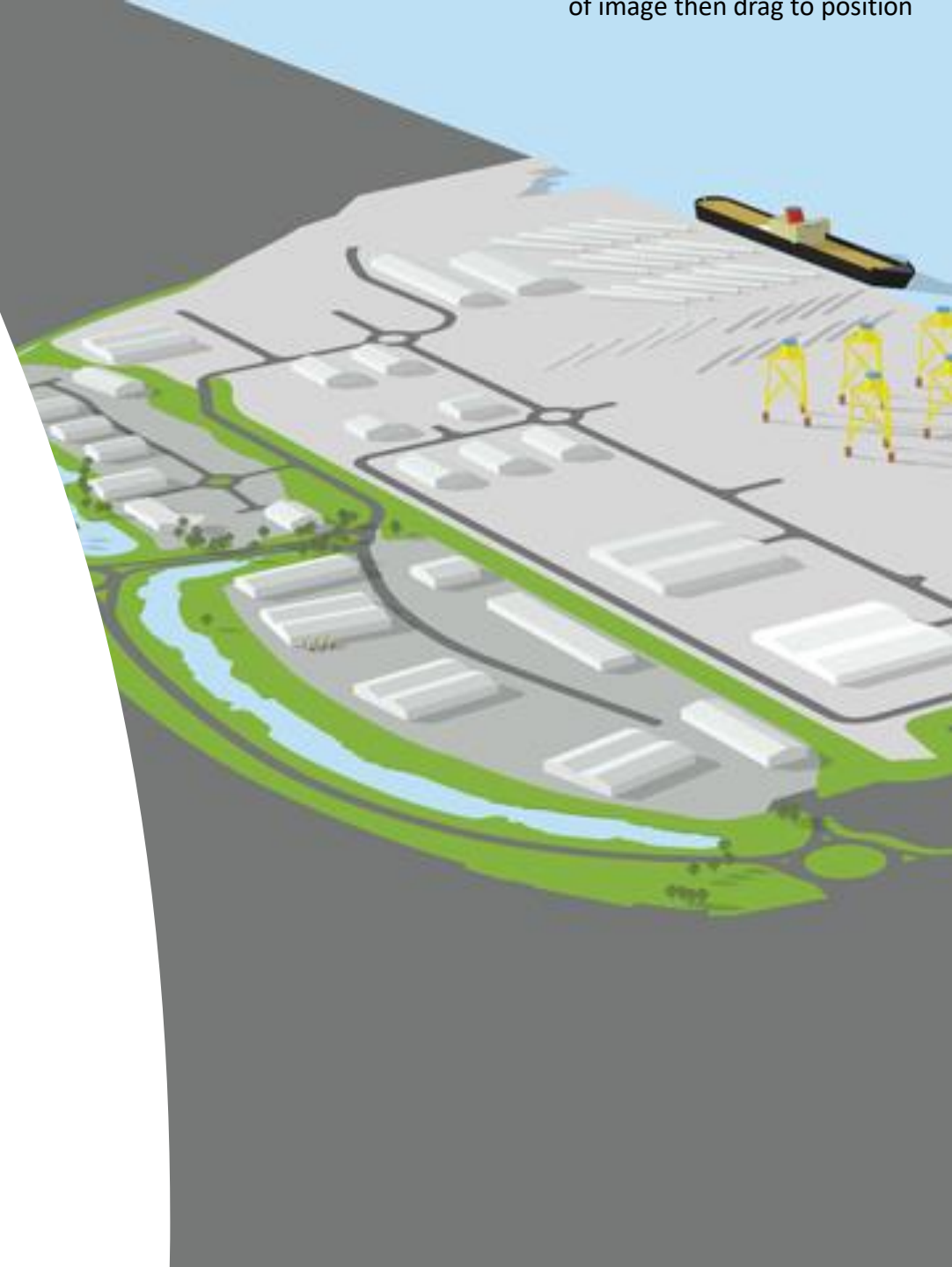


# Levelling Up Coastal Communities through the Blue Economy

Presentation to ECAC  
September 2023



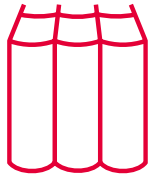
# Socio-economic challenges



**Lack of economic opportunity (low job density and low productivity) exacerbates high levels of deprivation**



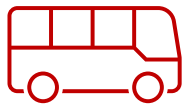
**Declining town centres impacts local pride of place and deters inward investment.**



**Low skills base distances residents from the job market**



**Residents have poor health and wellbeing, with high demand on services, which in turn impacts resources available for other investments.**



**Poor transport infrastructure and limited connectivity to economic centres (coupled with low car ownership) impacts social mobility**



**Aging population, putting pressure on services and higher demand for lower paid health and care jobs.**

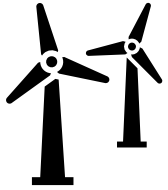


**Lack of digital infrastructure and affordability impacts residents and businesses.**

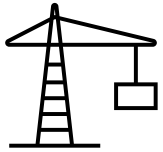


**Climate change is a major risk for coastal areas, limiting private investment. High percentage of businesses effected by flooding do not reopen.**

# Coastal opportunities – the Blue Economy



**Offshore wind** - Five Estuaries and North Falls-a key part in the government's 50MW by 2030 (Opportunities for construction, O&M, and supply chain)



**Ports & logistics** – freight and passenger supporting trade and tourism.  
Innovation in low carbon dredging solutions



**Green hydrogen** – potential to support hydrogen related innovation, the transport sector transition, and the wider farming hinterland.



**Sustainable tourism** – 36 miles of coastline, development of the national coastal path, potential to attract higher visitor spend.



- According to the World Bank, the blue economy is the "**sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and jobs while preserving the health of ocean ecosystem.**"
- European Commission defines it as "**All economic activities related to oceans, seas and coasts.**".

# Blue Economy Case Study - Freeport East

"Freeports are government-backed hubs for investment, trade, and innovation that are now open for business. Firms in Freeport areas can benefit from generous financial and soft government support and place themselves, with likeminded businesses, at the centre of private-sector led Levelling Up and decarbonisation.

## Driving Clean Growth

Freeports will help drive the UK's shift to a dynamic, low-carbon economy, helping businesses to collaborate, innovate, and develop the technologies and supply chains that will underpin our journey to Net Zero.



## Levelling Up

They will unlock much-needed investment into historically overlooked port communities and surrounding areas, bringing jobs and opportunity.

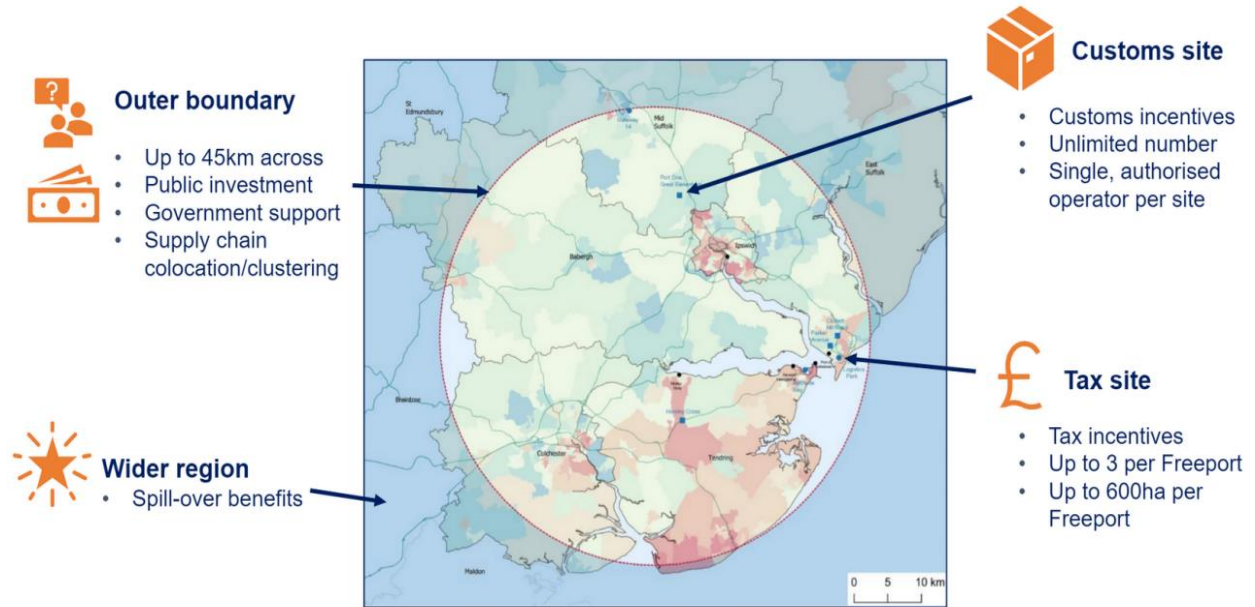


## Delivering Together

Freeports are locally led, bringing together key stakeholders including local government, the private sector, and educational institutions with central government backing to deliver for local communities and businesses.



# Freeport East

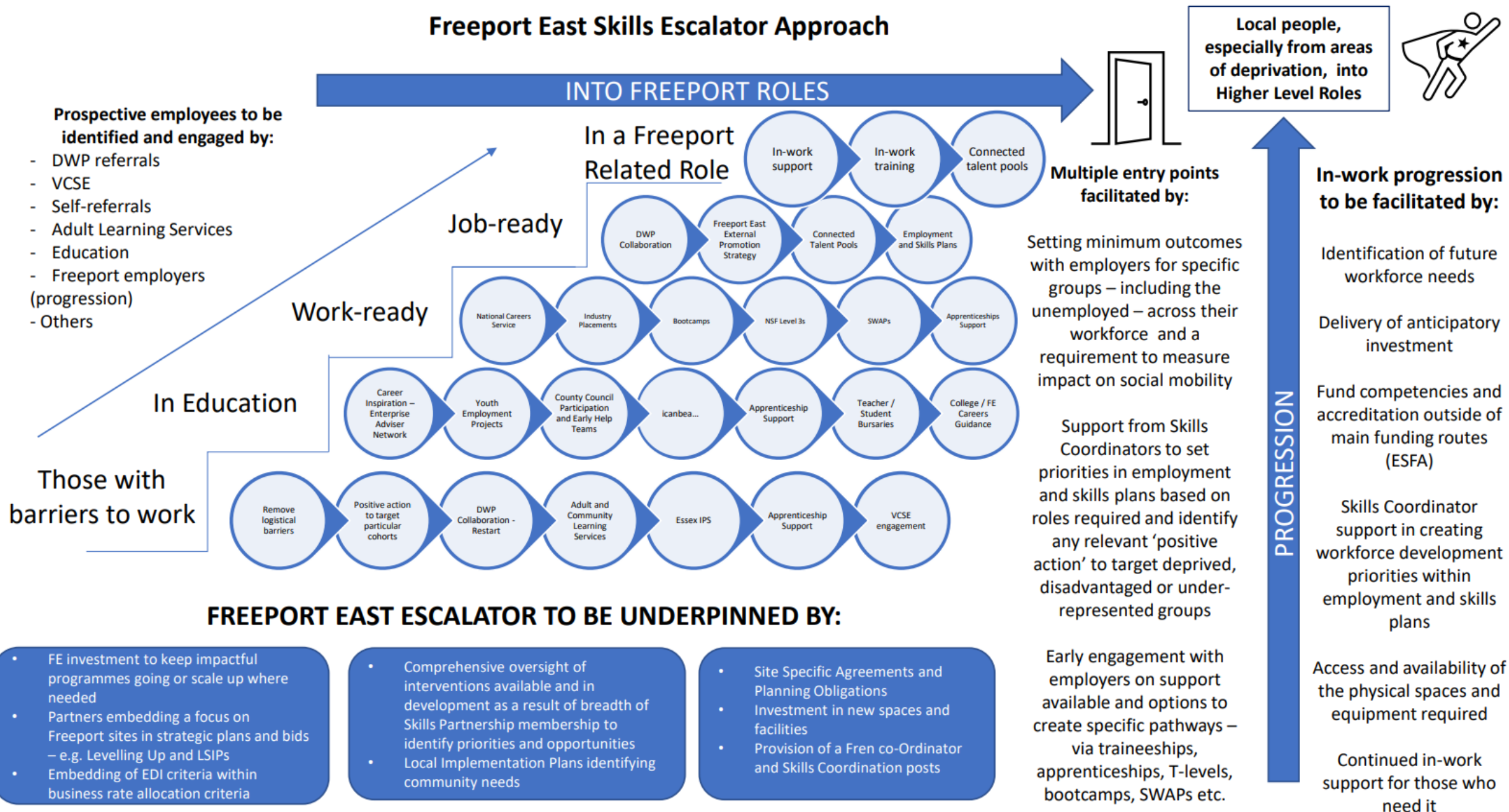


- Freeport East has a 45km boundary, covering Britain's busiest container port (Felixstowe), two major ferry ports and located close to the East Coast green energy cluster, **it is planned to create 13,500 new jobs and generate a Gross Value Added (GVA) of £5.5 billion over 10 years.**
- In Essex it will support an area that has historically struggled to support dense levels of employment, and has low productivity, by providing the critical mass required to unlock stalled employment sites and supporting the case for improvements to infrastructure; catalysing new skills and employment opportunities; and generating future investment and economic growth.

## Freeport East Priorities

- Access to higher paid jobs
- Skills & Employability
- Innovation & Productivity
- Trade & Investment
- Net Zero & Decarbonisation
- Infrastructure, Regeneration and Levelling Up

# Freeport East Skills Escalator Approach



The above provides an illustration of the model – it is not comprehensive and specific interventions will be confirmed and change over time. Please refer to full strategy for more details

# For discussion

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- *What levers do we have to develop the blue economy to support our coastal communities?*
- *What lessons can we take from the Freeport approach and use these across other key priorities in our levelling up areas?*

