



## FULL COUNCIL

Wednesday, 28 September 2022

<b>Subject</b>	Cabinet Members' Report and Outside Bodies Representatives' Report to Council
<b>Report by</b>	Councillor Steve Gallant Leader of the Council

Is the report Open or Exempt?	OPEN
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Category of Exempt Information and reason why it is <b>NOT</b> in the public interest to disclose the exempt information.	Not applicable.
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All Wards
<b>Purpose of Report:</b> To receive the Cabinet Members' Report and the Outside Bodies Representatives' Report to Council, for information.	
<b>Options:</b> Not applicable.	

## Cabinet Members' Reports to Council

<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Craig Rivett – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member with responsibility for Economic Development
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### ED&R

#### 1. UK Shared Prosperity Fund

In April 2022, the Government launched the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) to support its Levelling Up agenda. ESC has been allocated £2.75m to invest during 2022/23 - 24/25 in initiatives that will address inequality and contribute to levelling up. The funding can only be unlocked upon submission of an Investment Plan which is approved by both the council and the government.

The fund's three investment priorities:

- Communities and Place
- Supporting Local Business
- People and Skills

ESC submitted its Investment Plan in July and a decision on our submission will be made in October 2022.

Through this Investment Plan, we hope to achieve a range of outcomes such as:

- Rehabilitated premises and land in our high streets
- Support community members through the cost-of-living crisis
- Support businesses to start-up and grow
- Modernise and upgrade training centres and hubs
- Support decarbonisation whilst growing the local economy
- Provide direct support to those that are economically inactive
- Support people to engage with life skills or gain a vocational license through providing financial support

#### 2. Freeport East

The incorporation of Freeport East, creating Freeport East Limited, will be achieved in September 2022. The company will be responsible for employing the Freeport East delivery team. The new Chair and Chief Executive are due to commence their roles on 12 September 2022 and the Programme Manager post has been shortlisted with interviews due to take place in September 2022. The remainder of the delivery team will be recruited over the autumn and winter.

The Full Business Case (FBC), setting out how Freeport East will achieve its objectives around levelling up, innovation and trade/ investment, is reaching the final phase of the approval process with government. The final stage is assessment by HMT's Assessment Panel which is due in October 2022. Final approval of the FBC will result in the release of £25m of Capital Seed Funding for investment in the three Tax Sites (Felixstowe, Gateway 14 in Mid Suffolk and Harwich). Following final approval Freeport East will be required to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with government which, effectively commits Freeport East to deliver its objectives as set out within the FBC.

The first major business investment has been announced at the Gateway 14 tax site. The Range propose to establish an innovative logistics hub employing up to 1650 at this £200m development. Discussions are also underway with potential investors in the Felixstowe and Harwich tax sites.

### **3. The Towns Fund**

Business cases have been approved by Government for the delivery of all 5 towns Deal projects signalling the start of the release £24.9m of grant funding.

**Cultural Quarter** – Appointed architects Chaplin Farren in partnership with Hemmingway Design to build concepts to detail design for the former Battery Green Car park and customer services building. Grant Agreement approved with Marina Theatre to progress concept and feasibility work.

**Station Quarter** - Ongoing conservation works to the former post office due to complete by Jan 2023, concept designs completed for the future use of the building. The next step is to progress to detailed design. Concept designs also completed for station building, public consultation event took place on the 25<sup>th</sup> August, further structural surveys being undertaken.

**Seafront Vision** – Concept design work through to achieving planning permission will be tendered shortly, this work will be guided by the details set out within the seafront masterplan.

**Port Gateway** – the main element of the project is being delivered by ABP with the opportunity to create up to 250 jobs to the town. ESC are currently finalising the grant agreement with ABP.

**Historic Quarter** – the core element of this project is the redevelopment of the former Lowestoft Town Hall building which, is being delivered by Lowestoft Town Council. The grant agreement for phase 1 of the project is currently with LTC to agree.

### **4. Towns Programmes**

**Town Development Programme** (joint ED and Communities town focussed programme) Activity is currently focussed on Bungay, Halesworth and Saxmundham. Following stakeholder engagement and an evidence-based analysis of need and opportunity, investment plans are being developed. Many of the initiatives are building on the success of the People and Places work and supporting the development of East Suffolk Towns Initiative (ESTI) related projects.

**Halesworth** – Marketing workshop held in July with town stakeholders with the follow up session to be held September to ensure a more joined up approach to communication and project development. Funding secured to develop improvements to signage in Town with the stakeholder consultation beginning week commencing 12th September. The team is currently supporting the town’s ambition to develop a community hub.

**Bungay** – Funding provided through programme to expand the weekly market. Working with Bungay Community Support to establish a Warm Rooms/Food Pantry initiative within a town centre building. Also working collaboratively with the local Stakeholder Group to mitigate some of the existing fragmented approaches to project development and agree priorities.

**Saxmundham** – Working with the Town Council to scope what support is needed to deliver existing initiatives, particularly in relation to ESTI funded projects. The team are currently facilitating the asset transfer of Fromus Square and support the town council’s ambition to use this space for events and markets.

## **5. Heritage Action Zone (HAZ)**

The North Lowestoft HAZ programme ends in March 2023 and has fully allocated the grant funding of £450k to 16 priorities along the Historic High Street.

Crown Score Wall is now complete and both sides of the footpath are re-opened resulting in very positive comments on social media. Working with SCC to repair the handrail ahead of the Scores Race on 28 August.

The Small Shopfront Grant Scheme has recently launched to fund improvements to shop fronts in the HAZ area to reverse unsympathetic alterations.

Works on the Post Office conservation repairs continue, almost completed lime and stone repairs to the façade, re-roofing underway, window repairs complete. It is anticipated the project will finish this winter.

A highly successful 1940s weekend event was held in Kirkley by the Seagull Theatre. Shops reported a significant increase in sales and footfall during the weekend, and the business community are keen to find funding to make this an annual event.

A community grant was offered to Kirkley Pocket Park Group who have purchased some new planters to replace the defective tin ones on London Road South. These have been planted and installed by the local community and bring colour to the area and a positive response on social media.

## **6. First Light Festival**

Following a 2 year hiatus, due to the pandemic, the First Light Festival returned to Lowestoft South Beach on the weekend of 17 – 19 June. Despite the mixed weather the numbers attending exceeded the 2019 festival with approximately 35,000 attendees. The full evaluation report is yet to be completed, however other notable positive benefits included:

- 100% occupancy of local hotels and B&Bs over the festival weekend,
- all 16 traders at the festival reporting excellent sales,
- 20 Lowestoft based community groups and all local schools involved in the development and delivery of the event
- Over £210k of external investment secured
- 297 arts professionals and 29 arts organisations involved in event development and delivery
- 40% of volunteering roles taken by Kirkley and Pakefield residents
- Highly successful launch of the reimagined and redeveloped East Point Pavillion

The 2022 festival programme, with more than 140 free activities, built on the learning of the previous years increasing in size and scope, with a diverse mix of renowned performers, community projects and a focus on supporting and showcasing new talent. Live streaming with sign language and captioning created free access for audiences unable to engage in large scale events. The reimagined and redeveloped East Point Pavilion was a key attraction at the festival and signalled a new chapter for Lowestoft's seafront with a contemporary food and drink offer and music/ events venue.

The focus now turns to ensuring a sustainable future for the festival and its wider cultural development and engagement programme. ESC's Cabinet is being asked to support First Light Festival CIC's bid to the Arts Council for National Portfolio Organisation status. If successful in this bid, FLF CIC will secure £660k over three years and in combination with ongoing financial and development support from ESC and other funders, this will support the delivery three more annual festivals and a much wider Lowestoft based cultural development and engagement programme.

The festival and cultural programme represent a central part of the Lowestoft Town Investment Plan. In particular the positive regional and national profile this activity is generating for the town is crucial in changing the town's previous negative narrative and securing investment across all sectors.

## **Assets**

### **1. Lowestoft beach huts – both sales volumes and rental uptake.**

The Eastern Edge beach huts were completed in July 22 and have been offered for sale and for rent. Both sales and rentals have been slightly slower than anticipated. Five of the 32 lease units have been sold, which derives an income for ESC of £150,000.

Rental levels have also been lower than anticipated. The business case was predicated on around 50% occupancy of rental units – but this has not been hit at this point. In response to this, ESC has taken a number of steps:

- Revised the price of rental units
- Introduced a new rental structure – to include daily hires (the original model was weekly hire only)
- Exploring the costs of 'fitting out' some of the units to increase their appeal
- Increased marketing – including in local and regional press

Two points should be borne in mind:

1. ESC was required to carry out work on the site to stop cliff slippage. All sales of huts go to help offset the costs we incurred.
2. Other locations – such as Gorleston – have seen slow hut sales in the initial period. In each case, the huts have been sold in time. We are confident that the location and quality of the build mean that there is interest in the remaining huts.
3. We are submitting a funding bid for further improvements to the site as part of the Levelling Up Fund.

## **2. East Point Pavilion**

East Point Pavilion opened in June and has enjoyed a very successful summer. Trader units are fully occupied. Traders are smaller, independent businesses Tres Hermanas (Jo Jos), Rock the Kasbah, Oishii, Black Dog Pizza, Sir Toby's Beers and Black Dog Deli.

Footfall has been high, and a trading has been brisk during a busy summer period. First Light CIC were appointed as the operator of the building on the basis that they would create a series of events in the venue to drive visitors. They have been able to demonstrate the success of this approach over the summer, with large events, such as the 'East Pint' beer festival, and smaller, weekly live music and DJ events. Later in the year the Pavilion will host the Oktoberfest, and there are many smaller events planned through the year.

From a financial perspective – early indications are that taking are in line with forecasts. EPP will benefit from further stages of the Towns Fund public realm works – with work on the fountains expected to start in 2023 and improvements to the wider outside space.

## **Energy Projects**

### **Sizewell C**

The Secretary of State granted development consent for Sizewell C on 20 July this year. There was a six week period for the submission of a Judicial Review which seeks to challenge the lawfulness of the decision. It is understood that at least one such legal challenge has been submitted. Until the point at which a judge makes a decision to the contrary, the Development Consent Order (DCO) granted will remain valid. ESC is continuing to engage with EDF in relation to the project, including the DCO requirements, Deed of Obligation and construction programme. Due to the time delays experienced at the start and during the examination, ESC has also been considering and determining a number of planning applications in relation to some ground investigation and ecological mitigation works. Linked to the Sizewell C development, ESC is also currently considering reserved matters and condition discharge applications in relation to the Sizewell B relocated facilities hybrid application, which was determined in 2021 (DC/20/4646).

### **SPR**

The main construction works associated with the East Anglia One project are complete, ESC however continues to engage with ScottishPower Renewables (SPR) regarding the final

restoration works. Construction on the East Anglia Three project has now commenced with works occurring in relation to two construction compounds in East Suffolk and at a construction compound and the converter station site in Mid Suffolk. ESC has worked with the developer to ensure the relevant requirements are discharged in relation to the works to ensure appropriate controls are in place. The East Anglia One North and East Anglia Two projects received consent at the end of March this year, these projects are now subject to Judicial Reviews. It is understood that the matter will be heard in the courts in November this year. SPR has confirmed that activity in relation to the projects this year will be minimal and limited to non-intrusive walkover surveys. In addition to the regular engagement ESC has with SPR, I requested and held a specific meeting with the developer to discuss the current level of engagement between the developer and local community. During the meeting I requested that SPR engage more with the community regarding their project programme and also provide further updates on their website.

## **Other Energy Projects**

National Grid are proposing a number of projects within Suffolk to provide the network reinforcements to enable the connection and transportation of the low carbon and green energy required to facilitate the delivery of the Net Zero ambition. Sea Link is a new high voltage undersea electricity link between Suffolk and Kent. ESC anticipates that the developer will hold a non-statutory consultation on the project after the summer. ESC is also continuing to engage in relation to additional network reinforcement projects which are not proposing the construction of physical infrastructure within our district, but may still have indirect impacts, these projects include Bramford to Twinstead and East Anglia Green. ESC's response to National Grid's non statutory consultation on East Anglia Green is available to view on our website - [ESC-Response-to-East-Anglia-GREEN-Non-Statutory-Consultation-June-2022.pdf \(eastsuffolk.gov.uk\)](#). I wrote a joint update along with Cllr Rout from SCC in August to the relevant Ward Members, to share with local parish and town councils, in relation to the transmission projects proposed in Suffolk to keep local communities informed.

ESC continues to engage with the Offshore Transmission Network Review (OTNR) and associated consultations. The OTNR includes workstreams on three different time periods (Early Opportunities, Pathway to 2030 and Enduring Regime), ESC recently responded to an Ofgem consultation related to the longer term enduring regime proposals. Ofgem's minded-to decisions on the initial findings of the Electricity Transmission Network Planning Review recognised many of the concerns the Council had identified in our earlier response provided in December last year, particularly in relation to the aspects which seek to address environmental and community impacts and the need for transparency in the process. ESC has also continued to write to the Rt Hon Greg Hands MP raising concerns regarding the need for tangible outcomes from the Early Opportunities workstream and the need for strategic Government-led and project-level community benefits. I most recently wrote jointly with Cllr Rout from SCC at the end of July 2022. The letter expressed ESC's disappointment, that whilst National Grid's Sea Link project, National Grid Ventures Nautilus and Eurolink projects, North Falls and Five Estuaries projects, all fall within the Early Opportunities workstream, these projects have not yet been identified as Pathfinder

projects. It was requested that greater pressure be put on the developers to commit to the projects becoming Pathfinders, to ensure the delivery of tangible early outcomes 'on the ground' from the OTNR. The Rt Hon Greg Hands MP has acknowledged the concerns expressed in the letter. Whilst ESC will continue to push for tangible outcomes from the OTNR, ESC anticipate that there will be a consultation on community benefits this year which is welcomed.

Alongside engagement with the OTNR ESC is also continuing to strive to achieve greater coordination between the NSIPs, and recently held a meeting between all the NSIP developers (both consented and proposed) to discuss this issue. In addition to the strategic engagement and engagement on the transmission projects, ESC continues to engage directly with interconnector and offshore wind promoters directly affecting East Suffolk and recently responded to a non statutory consultation held in relation to the Five Estuaries project.

There are a number of NSIPs and associated examinations which ESC is also engaging with and responding to, where the project is not proposed within or off the coast of East Suffolk. This need has arisen due to potential requirements to deliver compensation for impacts on specific bird species within the district.

<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Mary Rudd, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Community Health
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I am pleased to report that Delivery of services against the Food and Health and Safety Service Plan for 2021/23 approved by full council on 23 November 2023 are broadly on track and there are no significant variances. The Food and Safety Team has been involved significant reactive work, including a Health and Safety at Work etc. Act prosecution, liaising with police and Crown Prosecution Service on a fatality, and investigating a swimming pool drowning resulting in the reprioritisation of some work.

The Food and Safety Team has successfully recruited new staff, including three from the Port Health service, to fill all the vacancies from September 2022 and has also appointed a new lead food officer.

The Corporate Health and Safety Team has been focused on supporting team leaders to effectively manage health, safety and welfare with an emphasis on those who may be young/inexperienced or have joined during the pandemic and may be more vulnerable as a result. The Council has renewed its contract to provide a technology based lone worker protection system and over 250 staff now have been issued with a new device with the most up to date software. Policies relating to the management of asbestos and the growth of legionella have been revised.



The Port Health service has engaged with an exceptionally wide range of issues from the delivery of business as usual, both in a COVID and COVID recovery environment, through to engagement with His Majesties Government on policy shaping and design activities.

This time last year, Port Health was gearing up to implement controls on EU goods entering GB. It had successfully recruited, trained and was ready to deploy this service alongside its existing service. This is no longer the case, and as a consequence of a political decision, Port Health is now in the process of closing this service. The Port Health service are actively involved with development of the future Target Operating Model (TOM) for checks which is anticipated to be released for consultation in late autumn.

<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Stephen Burroughes – Cabinet Member with responsibility for Customer Experience, ICT and Commercial Partnerships
<b>Contact Details:</b>	<a href="mailto:stephen.burroughes@eastsoffolk.gov.uk">stephen.burroughes@eastsoffolk.gov.uk</a> Tel: 07783 357940

- **CUSTOMER SERVICES & EXPERIENCE TEAMS**

We were all saddened to learn of the passing of HM Queen Elizabeth II on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> September. The protocols for such an event were quickly put together and a book of condolences was opened at our Marina Customer Service Centre in Lowestoft for those wishing to pay their respects and share their thoughts on such an occasion. The staff were superb in making this process so seamless and it just shows how well East Suffolk Customer Services steps up when such a moment arrives.

There have been several members of staff moving on to greater things and we wish them well for the future, but this is just a part of the challenging nature of this type of work environment, and we have successfully recruited new members of the team to fill vacancies supported by sound training and induction.

Our redesigned customer access and digital coaching approach is going extremely well. Historically, our CS public facing offer was only delivered at Marina CS Centre, and Felixstowe, Beccles and Woodbridge libraries 5 days a week. Since the pandemic, the analysis of the operational data has shown a significant shift in the ways public contact and use council services. We always said, we didn't want to 'sleepwalk back into the way things were' and as a result we now have a presence in more locations across the district than ever before. Together with our digital coaching approach, we now operate 2 days a week in at the Marina CS Centre in Lowestoft, but also now in Aldeburgh, Felixstowe, Halesworth, Leiston, Saxmundham & Woodbridge Libraries. This is based on demographic need but also allows us to be available for those who have specific needs and who need support in a face-to-face setting.

We are very aware of the pressures facing people and families with the current squeeze on finances with the cost of living crisis and we offer a comprehensive support service to

customers particularly for those who have limited online experience and ability or who are simply nervous about going online, that is why we have our 'digital champions' offering help and guidance to assist in building user confidence and walking customers through the online journey helping them access services with confidence. Clearly, there are residents within areas of East Suffolk who are vulnerable and challenging and that is where we offer specific customer access points to offer specific assistance where required. This gives us greater flexibility to react and adapt where demand is needed at less cost. We are continuously looking at how the service can evolve over time and greater data analysis and research helps us to do just that.

Lastly, we are excited to be able to celebrate National Customer Services Week from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> October, promoting all the amazing work such teams do across the UK. Please look out for what is happening within East Suffolk and help us to celebrate and promote the great work we do in supporting our residents.

- **COMMERCIAL PARTNERSHIPS**

The transitioning and planning of services in readiness for transferring over to East Suffolk Services from Norse in July 2023 continues apace, and there are still many challenges ahead with a huge amount of work to get through from collating data, rigour testing processes, examining functionality, making sure the various systems are fit for purpose and generally working collaboratively to ensure East Suffolk is in a strong position ready for 2023. The new Managing Director, Cassandra Clements, was appointed in July and is preparing the ground for a successful changeover. The teams have worked well through the very hot temperatures experienced during the summer, with limited impact on service. Any gaps in service such as any missed bin collections have been quickly resolved, this has sometimes been as a result of a vehicle breakdown which happens with RCV's travelling many miles and with some reaching the end of their working lives.

Our leisure partners, (Places Leisure and Everyone Active) have enjoyed a very successful summer with large numbers of customers taking to the pool during the summer weather, this is reflected in very positive growth in the numbers of customers using the facilities resulting in a surge in bookings, swimming clearly being the strongest. The partnership board meetings across both operators continue to explore East Suffolk's outreach offer to promote and encourage the importance of exercise and living healthy lifestyles and publicising what great facilities our leisure centres have to offer, putting us firmly on the map.

- **ICT & DIGITAL**

East Suffolk's Digital Towns programme marches on with more towns joining the free town centre public Wi-Fi across the 11 towns within the district together with the package of business support to digitally enable businesses. Football monitor installations have gone very well in Lowestoft and Felixstowe, and free WiFi has now been delivered in Woodbridge and Southwold. The other towns of Beccles, Bungay and Halesworth will follow shortly in this phased approach, completing by the end of this year.

These new Wi-Fi zones have been created by installing equipment in each town that will give visitors access to the internet in the main pedestrian areas. When residents access the free Wi-Fi, they will be asked to create an account and provide some basic information, and they

can also sign-up to receive marketing emails about the town. Once they sign-in to the Wi-Fi they will be directed to a landing page which will be set to the town's local website e.g. Visit Felixstowe, Framlingham, Lowestoft or Discover Woodbridge with pages being added as the role out moves forward. This will give greater visibility to the existing town promotional assets and direct visitors to relevant local information.

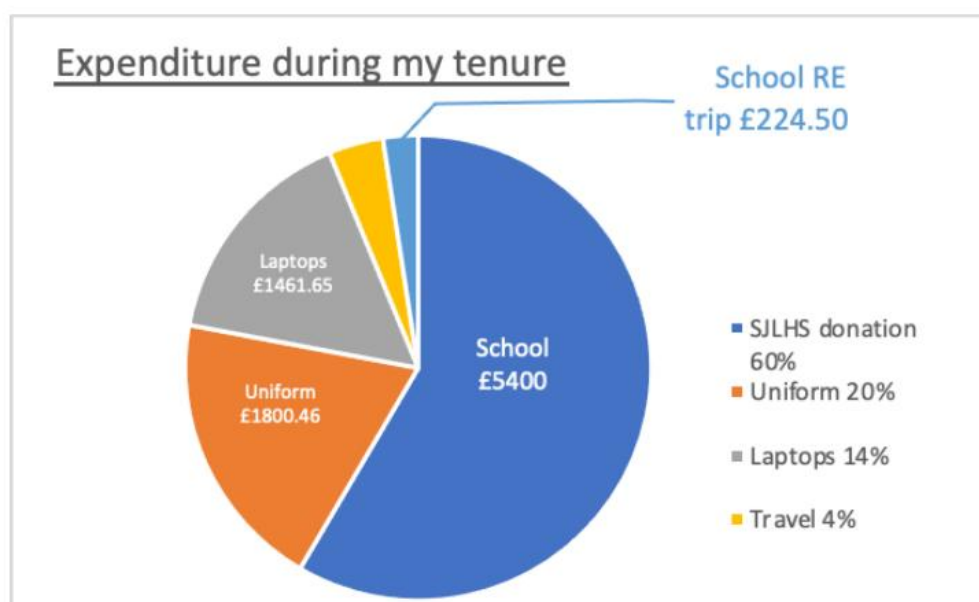
The value of our 'Digital Towns' project was highlighted at the recent First Light Festival in Lowestoft during the summer with huge amounts of data being collected and providing a unique 'digital' experience to visitors both local and visiting, just proving the value of such an investment and how it can add value to both businesses and tourists enjoying the East Suffolk Coast.

We are still 'well chuffed' with our customer rating for East Suffolk Council online services which continue to attract excellent star ratings with 4.2 out of 5.0 stars from a response of over c.12,000 ratings. Great news for a top performing council I hope you will agree!

## Outside Bodies Representatives' Reports

Fauconberge Educational Trust	
<b>Representative:</b>	Councillor Caroline Topping
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This pie chart shows expenditure since the clerk started (hence the title 'Expenditure during my tenure', September 2019). The next meeting is 6<sup>th</sup> September and at that meeting Trustees are going to be looking at whether the constitution and purpose of the Trust needs adapting as society and needs have changed in the years since the trust was established. This will obviously be done sympathetically to the original purpose of the trust, but more fit for current times.



Suffolk Waste Partnership and Coastal Partnership East	
<b>Representative</b>	Councillor James Mallinder, Cabinet Member with responsibility for the Environment
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Although reluctantly, I continue as Chair of the Suffolk Waste Partnership for one final year.

At our last meeting, the majority of discussion covered updates on our services. There is much anticipation now for Westminster to pass secondary legislation in homogenising

waste collections throughout the UK and, of course, produce responsibly, along with the deposit return scheme.

Although frustrating, in having more delays in this important legislation we have spent the time wisely and we continue to fully investigate how some of these proposals might look in reality. I will endeavour to keep this Council fully updated when more information becomes available.

### **Coastal Partnership East**

I attended the Coastal Partnership East Board meeting and was given a full update on projects and running of the group.

## **Appendices**

<b>Appendices: None</b>
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<b>Background reference papers:</b>
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None.
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