

AM 641/23

NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

AUTHORITY MEETING – 26 JANUARY 2023

Proposal for Project with National Parks UK

Report by: Paul Walton, Head of Environment and Rural Economy

1 Summary

The New Forest National Park Authority is a member of National Parks UK (NPUK), a partnership of all 15 National Parks in England, Wales and Scotland. NPUK provides a voice for the UK National Parks nationally and at internationally level through interface with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and other protected landscape bodies across the world.

As a result of this involvement the NFNPA and other National Parks have the opportunity to engage with Giant Panda National Park in China. This paper provides a briefing on the project and seeks agreement from the Authority to proceed.

Recommendation:

Members to approve:

- i) Members approve the development of an MoU between the New Forest NPA, other National Park Authorities and the Giant Panda Park, China, to enable the sharing of experience and management practice between the respective parks;
- ii) Authority be delegated to officers to take all action as necessary with regard to entering into the arrangements as outlined in the report, including negotiating and executing agreements to this effect.

2 Collaboration with Giant Panda Park, China

2.1 Following engagement in the recent COP26, COP27 and COP15 meetings through leading an internationally agreed Protected And Conserved Areas Joint Statement On Climate Change And Biodiversity Crises (attached as Appendix 1) and the profile this provided, UK National Parks have been invited to collaborate with Giant Panda National Park through a Memorandum of Understanding between the parties. The Giant Panda National Park was officially established in 2020 and is one China's first national parks to be set up chiefly for a single species. NPUK contact with the Giant Panda National Park came via the Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office, who saw an opportunity to share experience and management practice between our respective parks. In light of the recent commitment by governments at the COP15 for biodiversity to protect 30% of the planet for nature by 2030 and restore 30% of the planet's degraded ecosystems, the MoU represents an opportunity to both share our collective experience, learn from each other, and to support the Government in developing relations with China over environmental policy.

- 2.2 National Parks throughout the United Kingdom work collaboratively on international partnerships and these responsibilities are embedded into existing duties of responsible staff. In the autumn of last year for example the NFNPA hosted visits by delegations from Colombia, Denmark and Belgium. While there are no visits currently planned either to or from China there are many shared challenges between the parks, such as visitor management and working with resident communities on species and habitat management.
- 2.3 If Members support this arrangement, they are asked to approve the development of an MoU between the New Forest NPA, other National Park Authorities and the Giant Panda Park, China, to enable the sharing of experience and management practice between the respective parks and to delegate authority to officers to take all action as necessary in this regard.

Recommendation

Members to approve:

- i) Members approve the development of an MoU between the New Forest NPA, other National Park Authorities and the Giant Panda Park, China, to enable the sharing of experience and management practice between the respective parks;

and
- ii) Authority be delegated to officers to take all action as necessary with regard to entering into the arrangements as outlined in the report, including negotiating and executing agreements to this effect.

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