



## Court Sanction of Scheme of Arrangement

Released : Jan 30, 2025

RNS Number : 3236V  
Smith (DS) PLC  
30 January 2025

**NOT FOR RELEASE, PUBLICATION OR DISTRIBUTION, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, IN WHOLE OR IN PART, IN, INTO OR FROM ANY JURISDICTION WHERE TO DO SO WOULD CONSTITUTE A VIOLATION OF THE RELEVANT LAWS OR REGULATIONS OF THAT JURISDICTION**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**30 January 2025**

### **RECOMMENDED ALL-SHARE COMBINATION**

**of**

**DS Smith Plc ("DS Smith")**

**and**

**International Paper Company ("International Paper")**

**to be effected by means of a scheme of arrangement under Part 26 of the Companies Act 2006**

### **COURT SANCTION OF SCHEME OF ARRANGEMENT**

On 16 April 2024, the boards of DS Smith and International Paper announced that they had agreed the terms of a recommended all-share combination of DS Smith and International Paper, pursuant to which International Paper will acquire the entire issued and to be issued ordinary share capital of DS Smith (the "**Combination**") to be effected by way of a Court-sanctioned scheme of arrangement (the "**Scheme**") under Part 26 of the Companies Act 2006 (the "**Act**"). The circular in relation to the Scheme (the "**Scheme Document**") was published on 11 September 2024.

Further to the announcement made on 7 October 2024 in relation to the results of the Court Meeting and General Meeting and the announcement made on 24 January 2025 in relation to the satisfaction of the Conditions, DS Smith is pleased to announce that the Court has today issued the Court Order sanctioning the Scheme.

The Scheme remains conditional on delivery of the Court Order to the Registrar of Companies, which is expected to occur after the Scheme Record Time, being 6:00 p.m. on 31 January 2025. It is anticipated that the Effective Date will be 31 January 2025. There has been no material change to the expected timetable of principal

events for the Combination set out in the announcement made by International Paper and DS Smith on 24 January 2025.

The last day of dealings in, and for the registration and transfer of, DS Smith Shares, will be 31 January 2025. No transfers of DS Smith Shares will be registered after 6:00 p.m. on 31 January 2025.

Applications have been made for the suspension of: (i) trading in DS Smith Shares on the London Stock Exchange's main market for listed securities (the "**Main Market**"); and (ii) the listing of DS Smith Shares on the Official List of the Financial Conduct Authority (the "**Official List**"), and such suspensions are expected to take effect from 7:30 a.m. on 3 February 2025.

Applications have also been made for: (i) the de-listing of DS Smith Shares from the Official List; and (ii) the cancellation of the admission to trading of DS Smith Shares on the Main Market, and such de-listing and cancellation will, subject to the Scheme becoming Effective, take effect from 8:00 a.m. on 4 February 2025.

Full details of the Combination are set out in the Scheme Document published on 11 September 2024, which is also available on DS Smith's website at [www.dssmith.com/possible-offer](http://www.dssmith.com/possible-offer).

Capitalised terms used in this announcement shall, unless otherwise defined, have the same meanings as set out in the Scheme Document.

All references in this announcement to times are to London time unless otherwise stated.

#### **Enquiries**

**DS Smith Plc** +44 (0) 20 7756 1800

Hugo Fisher, Group Investor Relations Director

**Goldman Sachs International (Financial adviser to DS Smith)** +44 (0) 20 7774 1000

Anthony Gutman

Nick Harper

Warren Stables

**Citi (Financial adviser and corporate broker to DS Smith)** +44 (0) 20 7986 4000

Andrew Seaton

Christopher Wren

**J.P Morgan Cazenove (Financial adviser and corporate broker to DS Smith)** +44 (0) 20 7742 4000

Charlie Jacobs

Richard Walsh

Jonty Edwards

**Brunswick Group (PR adviser to DS Smith)** +44 (0) 20 7404 5959

Simon Sporborg

Dan Roberts

Slaughter and May is acting as legal adviser to DS Smith. Sullivan & Cromwell LLP is acting as US legal adviser to DS Smith.

## IMPORTANT NOTICES

*This announcement is for information purposes only and is not intended to, and does not, constitute, or form part of, an offer, invitation or the solicitation of an offer to purchase, otherwise acquire, subscribe for, sell or otherwise dispose of, any securities or the solicitation of any vote or approval in any jurisdiction pursuant to the Combination or otherwise, nor shall there be any sale, issuance or transfer of securities of DS Smith in any jurisdiction in contravention of applicable law.*

*The Combination will be implemented solely pursuant to the terms of the Scheme Document, which contains the full terms and conditions of the Combination.*

*This announcement does not constitute a prospectus, prospectus-equivalent document or prospectus-exempted document.*

*The Combination will be governed by English law and subject to the jurisdiction of the Court, the applicable requirements of the Code, the Panel, the London Stock Exchange, the FCA, the Listing Rules and the Registrar of Companies.*

***If you are in any doubt about the contents of this announcement or the action you should take, you are recommended to seek your own independent financial advice immediately from your stockbroker, bank manager, solicitor, accountant or independent financial adviser duly authorised under the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (as amended) if you are in the United Kingdom or from another appropriately authorised independent financial adviser if you are taking advice in a territory outside the United Kingdom.***

### Notices related to financial advisers

*Goldman Sachs International, which is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority ("PRA") and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority ("FCA") and the PRA in the United Kingdom, is acting exclusively for DS Smith and no one else in connection with the matters referred to in this announcement and will not be responsible to anyone other than DS Smith for providing the protections afforded to clients of Goldman Sachs International, or for providing advice in connection with the matters referred to in this announcement.*

*Citigroup Global Markets Limited ("Citi"), which is authorised by the PRA and regulated in the United Kingdom by the FCA and the PRA, is acting exclusively for DS Smith and for no one else in connection with the matters described in this announcement and will not be responsible to anyone other than DS Smith for providing the protections afforded to clients of Citi nor for providing advice in connection with the matters referred to in this announcement. Neither Citi nor any of its affiliates, directors or employees owes or accepts any duty, liability or responsibility whatsoever (whether direct or indirect, consequential, whether in contract, in tort, in delict, under statute or otherwise) to any person who is not a client of Citi in connection with this announcement, any statement contained herein or otherwise.*

*J.P. Morgan Securities plc (which conducts its UK investment banking business as J.P. Morgan Cazenove) ("J.P. Morgan Cazenove") which is authorised in the United Kingdom by the PRA and regulated in the United Kingdom by the PRA and the FCA, is acting as financial adviser exclusively for DS Smith and no one else in connection with the matters set out in this announcement and will not regard any other person as its client in relation to the matters set out in this announcement and will not be responsible to anyone other than DS Smith for providing the protections afforded to clients of J.P. Morgan Cazenove or its affiliates, nor for providing advice in relation to the matters set out in this announcement or any other matter or arrangement referred to herein.*

*In accordance with the Code, normal United Kingdom market practice and Rule 14e-5(b) of the US Exchange Act, BofA Securities and its affiliates and J.P. Morgan Cazenove and its affiliates will continue to act as exempt principal trader in DS Smith securities on the London Stock Exchange. These purchases and activities by exempt principal traders which are required to be made public in the United Kingdom pursuant to the Code will be reported to a Regulatory Information Service and will be available on the London Stock Exchange website at [www.londonstockexchange.com](http://www.londonstockexchange.com). This*

*information will also be publicly disclosed in the US to the extent that such information is made public in the United Kingdom.*

### **Overseas shareholders**

*This announcement has been prepared in accordance with and for the purpose of complying with English law, the Code, the Market Abuse Regulation, the Disclosure Guidance and Transparency Rules and the Listing Rules and the information disclosed may not be the same as that which would have been prepared in accordance with the laws of jurisdictions outside of the UK.*

*The release, publication or distribution of this announcement in or into or from jurisdictions other than the United Kingdom may be restricted by law and therefore any persons who are subject to the laws of any jurisdiction other than the United Kingdom should inform themselves about, and observe, such restrictions. Any failure to comply with the applicable restrictions may constitute a violation of the securities laws of such jurisdiction. To the fullest extent permitted by applicable law, the companies and persons involved in the Combination disclaim any responsibility or liability for the violation of such restrictions by any person.*

*The availability of the Combination to DS Smith Shareholders who are not resident in the United Kingdom may be affected by the laws of the relevant jurisdictions in which they are resident. Persons who are not resident in the United Kingdom should inform themselves of, and observe, any applicable legal or regulatory requirements of their jurisdictions. Any failure to comply with the applicable restrictions may constitute a violation of the securities laws of any such jurisdiction. To the fullest extent permitted by applicable law, the companies and persons involved in the Combination disclaim any responsibility or liability for the violation of such restrictions by any person.*

*Unless otherwise determined by International Paper or required by the Code and permitted by applicable law and regulation, the Combination will not be made available, directly or indirectly, in, into or from a Restricted Jurisdiction where to do so would violate the laws in that jurisdiction and no person may vote in favour of the Combination by any such use, means, instrumentality or from within a Restricted Jurisdiction or any other jurisdiction if to do so would constitute a violation of the laws of that jurisdiction. Accordingly, copies of this announcement and any formal documentation relating to the Combination are not being, and must not be, directly or indirectly, mailed or otherwise forwarded, distributed or sent in or into or from any Restricted Jurisdiction where to do so would violate the laws in that jurisdiction and persons receiving such documents (including, without limitation, agents, custodians, nominees and trustees) must observe these restrictions and must not mail or otherwise forward, distribute or send them in, into or from such jurisdictions where to do so would violate the laws in those jurisdictions. Doing so may render invalid any related purported vote in respect of the Combination.*

### **Notice to US investors in DS Smith**

*The Combination relates to the shares of an English company and is being made by way of a scheme of arrangement provided for under Part 26 of the Act. The Combination, implemented by way of a scheme of arrangement, is not subject to the tender offer rules or the proxy solicitation rules under the US Exchange Act. In connection with the proposed issuance of New International Paper Shares, International Paper filed the International Paper Proxy Statement with the SEC on 12 September 2024. Accordingly, the Combination and the Scheme will be subject to the disclosure requirements and practices applicable to a scheme of arrangement involving a target company incorporated in the UK and listed on the London Stock Exchange's Main Market for listed securities, which differ from the disclosure requirements of US tender offer and proxy solicitation rules.*

*The New International Paper Shares to be issued pursuant to the Combination have not been registered under the US Securities Act, and may not be offered or sold in the US absent registration or an applicable exemption from the registration requirements of the US Securities Act. The New International Paper Shares to be issued pursuant to the Combination will be issued pursuant to the exemption from registration provided by Section 3(a)(10) under the US Securities Act.*

*Neither the SEC nor any US state securities commission has approved or disapproved of the New International Paper Shares to be issued in connection with the Combination, or determined if this announcement, the Scheme Document, the*

*International Paper Prospectus or any accompanying document is accurate or complete or has passed upon the fairness or merits of the proposal described herein. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offence in the United States.*

*Financial information relating to DS Smith in the relevant documentation has been prepared in accordance with the accounting standards applicable in the UK and thus may not be comparable to financial information of US companies or companies whose financial statements are prepared in accordance with US generally accepted accounting principles. US generally accepted accounting principles differ in certain significant respects from accounting standards applicable in the UK.*

*It may be difficult for US DS Smith Shareholders to enforce their rights and any claim arising out of the US federal securities laws against DS Smith or its directors or officers, because DS Smith is incorporated under the laws of England and Wales, some or all of DS Smith's assets are or may be located in non-US jurisdictions, and some or all of its officers and directors are residents of a non-US country. US DS Smith Shareholders may not be able to sue a non-US company or its officers or directors in a non-US court for violations of the US securities laws. Further, it may be difficult to compel a non-US company and its affiliates to subject themselves to a US court's judgment.*

*US DS Smith Shareholders also should be aware that the Combination may have tax consequences for US federal income tax purposes and under applicable US state and local, as well as foreign and other, tax laws, and, that such consequences, if any, are not described herein. US DS Smith Shareholders are urged to consult with legal, tax and financial advisers in connection with making a decision regarding the Combination.*

#### **Cautionary note regarding forward-looking statements**

*This announcement (including information incorporated by reference in this announcement) contains certain "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act 1995, as amended, that are subject to risks and uncertainties. All statements other than statements of historical fact or relating to present facts or current conditions included in this announcement are forward-looking statements, including any statements regarding guidance and statements of a general economic or industry-specific nature. Forward-looking statements give International Paper's and DS Smith's current expectations and projections with respect to the financial condition, results of operations and business of International Paper, DS Smith and certain plans and objectives of International Paper, DS Smith and the Combined Company.*

*These forward-looking statements can be identified by the fact that they do not relate only to historical or current facts. These statements are based on assumptions and assessments made by International Paper and DS Smith in light of their experience and their perception of historical trends, current conditions, future developments and other factors they believe appropriate, and therefore are subject to risks and uncertainties which could cause actual results to differ materially from those expressed or implied by those forward-looking statements.*

*Forward-looking statements often use forward-looking or conditional words such as "anticipate", "target", "expect", "forecast", "estimate", "intend", "plan", "goal", "believe", "hope", "aim", "will", "continue", "may", "can", "would", "could" or "should" or other words of similar meaning or the negative thereof. Forward-looking statements include statements relating to the following: (i) the ability of International Paper and DS Smith to consummate the Combination in a timely manner or at all; (ii) the satisfaction (or waiver) of conditions to the consummation of the Combination; (iii) adverse effects on the market price of International Paper's or DS Smith's operating results including because of a failure to complete the Combination; (iv) the effect of the announcement or pendency of the Combination on International Paper's or DS Smith's business relationships, operating results and business generally; (v) future capital expenditures, expenses, revenues, economic performance, synergies, financial conditions, market growth, dividend policy, losses and future prospects; (vi) business and management strategies and the expansion and growth of the operations of the International Paper Group or the DS Smith Group; and (vii) the effects of government regulation on the business of the International Paper Group or the DS Smith Group. There are many factors which could cause actual results to differ materially from those expressed or implied in forward looking statements. Among such factors are changes in the global,*

*political, economic, business, competitive, market and regulatory forces, future exchange and interest rates, changes in tax rates and future business combinations or disposals.*

*These forward-looking statements are not guarantees of future performance and are based on numerous assumptions regarding the present and future business strategies of such persons and the environment in which each will operate in the future. By their nature, these forward-looking statements involve known and unknown risks and uncertainties because they relate to events and depend on circumstances that will occur in the future. The factors described in the context of such forward-looking statements in this announcement may cause the actual results, performance or achievements of any such person, or industry results and developments, to be materially different from any results, performance or achievements expressed or implied by such forward-looking statements. No assurance can be given that such expectations will prove to have been correct and persons reading this announcement are therefore cautioned not to place undue reliance on these forward-looking statements which speak only as at the date of this announcement. All subsequent oral or written forward-looking statements attributable to International Paper or DS Smith or any persons acting on their behalf are expressly qualified in their entirety by the cautionary statement above. Neither of International Paper nor DS Smith undertakes any obligation to update publicly or revise forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise, except to the extent legally required. For further information regarding forward-looking statements, please see the prospectus published on or around the date of this announcement.*

#### **Disclosure requirements of the Code**

*Under Rule 8.3(a) of the Code, any person who is interested in 1% or more of any class of relevant securities of an offeree company or of any securities exchange offeror (being any offeror other than an offeror in respect of which it has been announced that its offer is, or is likely to be, solely in cash) must make an Opening Position Disclosure following the commencement of the offer period and, if later, following the announcement in which any securities exchange offeror is first identified. An Opening Position Disclosure must contain details of the person's interests and short positions in, and rights to subscribe for, any relevant securities of each of (i) the offeree company and (ii) any securities exchange offeror(s). An Opening Position Disclosure by a person to whom Rule 8.3(a) of the Code applies must be made by no later than 3.30 p.m. (London time) on the 10th business day following the commencement of the offer period and, if appropriate, by no later than 3.30 pm (London time) on the 10th business day following the announcement in which any securities exchange offeror is first identified. Relevant persons who deal in the relevant securities of the offeree company or of a securities exchange offeror prior to the deadline for making an Opening Position Disclosure must instead make a Dealing Disclosure.*

*Under Rule 8.3(b) of the Code, any person who is, or becomes, interested in 1% or more of any class of relevant securities of the offeree company or of any securities exchange offeror must make a Dealing Disclosure if the person deals in any relevant securities of the offeree company or of any securities exchange offeror. A Dealing Disclosure must contain details of the dealing concerned and of the person's interests and short positions in, and rights to subscribe for, any relevant securities of each of (i) the offeree company and (ii) any securities exchange offeror(s), save to the extent that these details have previously been disclosed under Rule 8 of the Code. A Dealing Disclosure by a person to whom Rule 8.3(b) of the Code applies must be made by no later than 3.30 p.m. (London time) on the business day following the date of the relevant dealing.*

*If two or more persons act together pursuant to an agreement or understanding, whether formal or informal, to acquire or control an interest in relevant securities of an offeree company or a securities exchange offeror, they will be deemed to be a single person for the purpose of Rule 8.3 of the Code.*

*Opening Position Disclosures must also be made by the offeree company and by any offeror and Dealing Disclosures must also be made by the offeree company, by any offeror and by any persons acting in concert with any of them (see Rules 8.1, 8.2 and 8.4 of the Code).*

*Details of the offeree and offeror companies in respect of whose relevant securities Opening Position Disclosures and Dealing Disclosures must be made can be found in the Disclosure Table on the Panel's website at [www.thetakeoverpanel.org.uk](http://www.thetakeoverpanel.org.uk), including details of the number of relevant securities in issue, when the offer period commenced and when any offeror was first identified. You should contact the Panel's Market Surveillance Unit on +44 (0)20 7638 0129 if you are in any doubt as to whether you are required to make an Opening Position Disclosure or a Dealing Disclosure.*

#### **Rule 26.1 disclosure**

*In accordance with Rule 26.1 of the Code, a copy of this announcement and the Scheme Document will be available (subject to any applicable restrictions relating to persons resident in Restricted Jurisdictions) on DS Smith's website at [www.dssmith.com/possible-offer](http://www.dssmith.com/possible-offer), and International Paper's website, at <https://www.internationalpaper.com/offer-for-ds-smith-plc/documentation> by no later than 12:00 p.m. (London time) on the business day following the date of this announcement. For the avoidance of doubt, neither the contents of these websites nor the contents of any websites accessible from any hyperlinks are incorporated into or form part of this announcement.*

#### **No profit forecasts or profit estimates**

*No statement in this announcement is intended as a profit forecast or estimate for any period and no statement in this announcement should be interpreted to mean that earnings or earnings per ordinary share, for International Paper or DS Smith, respectively for the current or future financial years would necessarily match or exceed the historical published earnings or earnings per ordinary share for International Paper or DS Smith, respectively.*

#### **Requesting hard copy documents**

*DS Smith Shareholders, persons with information rights and participants in DS Smith Share Schemes may request a hard copy of this announcement (and any information incorporated by reference in this announcement), free of charge, by contacting DS Smith's Registrar, Equiniti, by: (i) submitting a request in writing to Equiniti at Aspect House, Spencer Road, Lancing, West Sussex BN99 6DA, United Kingdom; or (ii) contacting Equiniti between 8:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. (UK time), Monday to Friday (excluding English and Welsh public holidays), on +44 (0) 333 207 6535 (calls from outside the UK will be charged at the applicable international rate and you should use the country code when calling from outside the UK) - calls may be recorded and monitored for training and security purposes.*

*If you have received a copy of this announcement electronically, a hard copy of this announcement will not be sent unless so requested. You may also request that all future documents, announcements and information sent to you in relation to the Combination be sent to you in hard copy form.*

#### **Electronic Communications**

*Please be aware that addresses, electronic addresses and certain other information provided by DS Smith Shareholders, persons with information rights and other relevant persons for the receipt of communications from DS Smith may be provided to International Paper, members of the International Paper Group and/or their respective advisers during the Offer Period as required under Section 4 of Appendix 4 of the Code.*

This information is provided by RNS, the news service of the London Stock Exchange. RNS is approved by the Financial Conduct Authority to act as a Primary Information Provider in the United Kingdom. Terms and conditions relating to the use and distribution of this information may apply. For further information, please contact [rns@lseg.com](mailto:rns@lseg.com) or visit [www.rns.com](http://www.rns.com).

RNS may use your IP address to confirm compliance with the terms and conditions, to analyse how you engage with the information contained in this communication, and to share such analysis on an anonymised basis with others as part of our commercial services. For further information about how RNS and the London Stock Exchange use the personal data you provide us, please see our [Privacy Policy](#).

END

SOASDMFESEISEFF