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**PRESS RELEASE FROM THE CENTRE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Iain Duncan Smith MP to return to chair the Centre for Social Justice**

- **Philippa Stroud to join the Legatum Institute as Chief Executive**
- **Andy Cook appointed as new Chief Executive of the CSJ**

Former Cabinet minister Iain Duncan Smith is to return to run the Centre for Social Justice, the ground-breaking think-tank he formed 12 years ago.

Mr Duncan Smith, who will resume the role of chairman of the CSJ, is planning “Breakthrough Brexit,” a bold new programme of research and policy-making designed to boost living standards and employment opportunities for the kind of blue collar workers whose dissatisfaction with today’s Britain proved pivotal in the vote to leave the European Union.

The programme is a deliberate echo of “Breakthrough Britain”, published by the CSJ in 2007, which foreshadowed the radical welfare reforms pushed through by Mr Duncan Smith in his six years as Secretary of State for Work and Pensions from 2010.

The former Cabinet minister’s return to the CSJ is the key element in a number of senior management changes at the CSJ. Baroness Philippa Stroud is stepping down as Chief Executive of the CSJ to take up a similar role at the London-based Legatum Institute, which has pioneered new ways of measuring global prosperity. Baroness Stroud, Mr Duncan Smith’s main adviser at the DWP, will remain on the CSJ board, in a move intended to ensure close working between the two think-tanks and to magnify the impact of their poverty-fighting agendas.

The CSJ’s current Director of Programmes, Andy Cook, has been appointed as the new Chief Executive. Mr Duncan Smith succeeds Rory Brooks as CSJ chairman.

Cook’s background is in the charity sector having co-founded 2020, the Leicestershire-based charity that provides training and opportunities for disadvantaged children and young adults. When Cook left 2020 to join the CSJ, the charity had expanded across the midlands with centres open in Loughborough, Leicester, and Derby. Cook sits on the Board of the NCVO and is a judge of the Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service. He joined the CSJ in 2015 as Director of Programmes.

Iain Duncan Smith said, “It is a huge privilege to return to the CSJ as Chairman. I’ve fought for social justice my entire political life, most recently in government, and I’m looking forward to continuing that fight from outside government. After the country’s vote to leave the EU, which I campaigned for whole-heartedly, this is a time of great opportunity in Britain. Post-Brexit, we can refashion and enhance Britain’s role in the world.

“I want the CSJ to focus on improving the lives of blue collar workers. Many of them were among the 52 per cent of people who voted to quit the EU partly, at least, because they did not believe they were gaining any benefit from our current political and economic system. I want the CSJ to come up with proposals for raising skill levels and productivity among this group of workers and so improve their wages and living standards.”

Baroness Stroud said: “I’m incredibly proud of the journey the CSJ has been on since we founded it in 2004. It has grown in strength and stature and now stands as the country’s foremost poverty-fighting think-tank. I look forward to continuing my involvement by remaining on the Board of Directors. The CSJ is in a strong position and I know it will thrive under Andy’s leadership.”

Mr Cook said: “I’m thrilled to be appointed as the CSJ’s chief executive. The CSJ has a long history of achievement and a strong reputation as a centre for evidenced-based, independent policy-making. I know that I have big boots to fill but I’m looking forward to getting stuck in and leading the CSJ through this next phase of its life.”

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### **Notes to editors**

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### About the Centre for Social Justice

The Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) exists to put social justice at the heart of British politics. Advancing social justice is about identifying the root causes of poverty and providing a way out to those it affects. Established in 2004, the CSJ is an independent think tank that studies the root causes of poverty and aims to address them through practical policy interventions.

The CSJ’s vision is to give people in the UK who are experiencing the worst multiple disadvantage and injustice, every possible opportunity to reach their full potential. The principles behind this vision are:

- A mandate for the whole of the UK, not just isolated areas;
- A focus on the bottom 20 per cent and those who, without external intervention, may never fulfil their potential;
- An agenda that is evidence-based, targeted towards long-term solutions, and harnesses the best grass-roots practice;
- A commitment to providing a route out of poverty via a hand-up, not a hand-out;
- A commitment to the transformation of lives, not just alleviating symptoms.