

Welcome to IMAS M&A Monthly – November 2011
Highlighting key deals and trends in the UK financial services industry

General Insurance

In a busy month for insurance **Aegon** has completed the sale of its **Guardian** UK life and pensions company to private equity group **Cinven** for £275m whilst **Resolution**-owned **Friends Life** announced the acquisition of **Winterthur Life UK** from **Axa** in a deal worth more than £2.7bn and US broking conglomerate **AmWINS** agreed to acquire AIM-listed Lloyds broker **THB**.

Towergate acquired caravan and motorhome insurance comparison site **Caravanquoter**, **Oxygen** agreed to sell event insurance specialist **Robertson Taylor** to **Entertainment Insurance Partners** as well as announcing its intention to sell all its remaining assets and **Jardine Lloyd Thompson** is merging its Italian business, and taking a 25% stake in the JV, with **Marine & Aviation S.p.A.** **Hyperion's Howden Broking Group** has acquired selected Asian operations of **Accette Insurance Group** with other infill acquirers including **Aston Scott**, **Quindell Portfolio**, **Higos Insurance Services**, **The Insurance Partnership**, **CCV** and **Clear Insurance**.

IMAS advised on the sale of **RL Davison's** UK motor and commercial London Market operations to Miles Smith, who also acquired motor fleet specialist **Parker Norfolk**.

Investment Related

The investment sector saw significant overseas interest with Australian investment bank **RFC Group** acquiring UK investment house **Ambrian Capital**, US hedge fund **Black Diamond Capital Management** acquiring European leverage market investor **GSC Group's** London business, US capital markets provider **INTL FCStone** acquiring the metals division of London-based **MF Global UK Ltd** and South African investment manager **Prescient Holdings** acquiring **AIB Investment Managers** from **Allied Irish Banks**.

Corporate finance has also been active with **Webb Capital** acquiring **Rivington Street Corporate Finance**, **Westhouse Holdings** acquiring **Arbuthnot Banking Group** and **Maven Capital Partners** acquired corporate finance adviser **HM Corporate Solutions LLP**. In investment management **European Wealth Management** acquired **Aventus Capital Management**, **Insetco** agreed to acquire **ARM Asset Backed Securities** and **Smith & Williamson** acquired the tax advisory business of **Begbies Traynor**, **BTG Tax LLP**. Other activity included inter-dealer broker **Tullett Prebon** acquiring US municipal bond broker **Chapdelaine & Co** and the sale of IFA **Oakleaf Independent Financial Services**.

Lending

Northern Rock finally concluded a £747m sale to **Virgin Group** backed by US billionaire investor **Wilbur Ross** and Abu Dhabi investment fund **Stanhope Investments**. A further £250m could also be paid subject to a future sale / float. **Lloyd Bank** has sold £1bn of distressed property loans in Australia and New Zealand to **Goldman Sachs** and **Morgan Stanley**. **Palatine Private Equity's** portfolio company **MoneyPlus Group** announced the completion of four IVA debt management infill acquisitions in the four months since its MBO and **Sterling Green** agreed to sell the majority of its debt management book to IVA support provider **DRSP**.

Support Services (Financial)

Payments has been active with **Cardtronics** acquiring US ATM operator **Access to Money** and Canadian ATM business **Mr Cash**. Belgian electronic payments specialist **Clear2Pay** acquired UK ATM testing specialist **Level Four Software** and **Visa Europe** has taken a minority stake in UK data analytics firm **Beyond Analysis**.

Ffastfill is acquiring US technology software business **WTD Consulting** for \$12.0m, **Markit** acquired research and trading analytics firm **Quantitative Services Group**, **Brightside** paid £17m for insurance software firms **eDevelopment Limited** and **E-Systems**, **Randall & Quilter** acquired **Synergy Insurance Services**, Indian **Dion Global Solutions** acquired wealth management software business **Investmaster** and US credit ratings business **Moody's** acquired a stake in UK analytics provider **Copal Partners**.

Finally **Scottish Friendly Assurance** sold its back office wrap admin business to **Citi** whilst US private equity house **Genstar Capital** acquired **Reed Elsevier's** policy administration software business **Insurance Software Solutions**.