

Embark agrees to acquire the Adviser and Partnership businesses of Alliance Trust Savings

28 October 2019

Embark Group has today agreed in principle to acquire the advised and partnership client books of Alliance Trust Savings (ATS) from interactive investor (II), for an undisclosed amount, further increasing Embark's presence in the UK investment savings sector.

The transaction will bring >£6bn of Assets under Administration (AuA) along with 30,000 new clients to Embark, taking the total scale of the Embark Group to over £22bn AuA on behalf of over 180,000 consumer clients. Embark will also gain the benefit of a highly skilled specialist team.

The deal also includes the purchase of the Alliance Trust Savings building in Dundee, which will become Embark's platform operation centre and Group headquarters, with platform service partner FNZ also occupying space in the building.

The acquisition will cement Embark's position as one of the few long-term players in the UK retirement space able to offer a full range of capabilities suitable for all levels of client affluence and distribution channels. It follows a [recent material capital raise](#) which included funding from new investors; BlackRock, Legg Mason and Merian Chrysalis.

Phil Smith, Embark Group Chief Executive, says: "This acquisition presents a perfect opportunity to accelerate our growth strategy by acquiring a book of platform assets with high SIPP penetration, as well as complementary distribution relationships. This takes our group AuA to well in excess of £22bn and reinforces our position as one of the fastest growing disruptors in the UK investment savings and platform market. It also offers an excellent opportunity to establish a centre for our operations and growth in Scotland, enabling us to access local talent and FinTech capabilities, assisted by cross-government support."

Richard Wilson, Chief Executive Officer of interactive investor, says: "I am delighted with this outcome. It is a good result for all concerned. Embark is the right partner to take the advisory and partnership business forward, with Dundee remaining an important platform and employment centre. The ATS jobs have been protected which was a key consideration and I have no doubt they will take the business from strength to strength.

"The divestment will allow ii to focus on its single purpose: to serve the self-directed retail investor, and the increased scale means we can continue to invest in providing a class leading customer experience, excellent value and a wealth of impartial information to help customers make better-informed investment decisions."

Adrian Durham, FNZ Group CEO, added: "FNZ is delighted to support our long-term strategic partner Embark in the continued growth of their business. As part of this transaction we will be opening a permanent strategic operations centre in Dundee, strengthening our long-term 15 year commitment to Scotland as a key technology & operations centre for FNZ. We expect this to create a wide range of opportunities for the existing employees of ATS, now Embark, and more generally in Dundee as the FNZ business continues to grow strongly. This will operate alongside our existing operations centres in Edinburgh and Brno (Czech Republic) to strengthen the Platform Service we provide to our European clients."

Jamie Hepburn MSP, Minister for Business, Fair Work and Skills says: "Embark's plans to retain the site in Dundee is good news for employees and for the economy of the city. The Scottish Government, Scottish Enterprise and Scottish Development International have been working closely with the company and will continue to provide support going forward."

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Editors' notes

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About Embark Group

Embark Group is a full-scale UK retirement solutions provider, active in the areas of Investment Platform, SIPP, SSAS, Fund Research and Employee Benefits Consulting. The Group trades under the brands Embark, Vested, Rowanmoor and The Adviser Centre. It also operates a wide portfolio of white label services for business such as RBS Coutts, Standard Life, Nutmeg, BestInvest, Charles Stanley, Moneyfarm and Wealthsimple. Businesses within the Embark Group have been established in the market for more than 40 years and have a long history of working closely with intermediary distribution partners and consumers of all levels of affluence.

The Embark Group now has more than £22bn in assets under administration on behalf of c180,000 clients, operating across seven UK locations (London, Edinburgh, Leicester, Salisbury, Bolton, Milton Keynes and Dundee).

Embark has been recognised as one of the most innovative Wealth Tech companies in 2019

www.embarkgroup.co.uk

About interactive investor

interactive investor (ii) is the UK's number one flat-fee investment platform. ii offers a wealth of unbiased information, analysis, tools and expert ideas to help customers make better informed investment decisions. ii's award-winning trading platform provides access to an extensive choice of markets, instruments and currencies within Trading, ISA and SIPP accounts. This comprehensive investing service is underpinned by a strong focus on delivering great value for investors demonstrated through an innovative and competitive pricing model – featuring simple, flat fees and unique 'trading credits'. interactive investor is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

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