

Browne Jacobson advise on merger of leading UK frozen food wholesalers Hopwells and Windsor Foodservice

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Browne Jacobson's corporate dealmakers and specialist food and drink sector lawyers have acted for one of the UK's largest independent family run frozen food wholesalers, Hopwells on its acquisition of one of its competitors, Windsor Foodservice.

The move will support Hopwell's strategic plan to expand its service offering and geographical reach.

Hopwells was established in 1975 and is headquartered in Nottingham. The wholesaler operates a fleet of over 110 vehicles from six distribution depots throughout England and offers its customer base a comprehensive range of frozen food products and chilled goods, including premium fresh meat and poultry from various branded manufacturers and suppliers.

Windsor Foodservice, which is also a family run business, was set up in 1989 and is headquartered in Barnsley, South Yorkshire. The business employs over 70 staff and supplies over 3,000 catering customers with a portfolio made up of over 2,500 quality products. In 2013 the business created Pete's Patisseries – a top of the range luxury dessert range; and in 2017 launched Windsor Fresh Meat which offered top quality meat products at competitive prices.

Browne Jacobson **corporate lawyer, Sam Sharp** and **associate Ruairi O'Grady** advised on the deal.

Sam Sharp who **leads the firm's UK & Ireland food and drink practice** said: "Both Hopwells and Windsor are well respected in their markets, are built on strong family values, and have excellent reputations for providing quality service to their longstanding customer base, so it was a pleasure to have been involved in the merger of these two similar businesses. This move will enable the newly merged business group to further develop and grow its product portfolio and position itself as a major player in the food wholesaler sector.

Tristan Hopwell, Managing Director of Hopwells added: Hopwells is an independent family business which prides itself on its traditional family values. Windsor is also a family business, and we both celebrate the successes our family ethos brings to our customers. Hopwells and Windsor Foodservice have both grown our businesses from the ground up, we're both excited to bring together our joint experiences to form a leading position within wholesale.

"We were pleased to have had Sam and Ruairi of Browne Jacobson work with us on this important transaction. They delivered sound commercial advice on various aspects of the deal from-the-get-go, and Sam's experience of dealing with businesses in the food and drink sector is strong and impressive."

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