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HONG KONG UPDATE - ANDY ROBINSON, NOVEMBER 2021

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As the mission to highlight Guernsey's specialist financial services industry across the globe continues, we hear from WE ARE GUERNSEY Hong Kong Consultant Andy Robinson, who provides an update on a packed schedule of events in his region.

My main focus over the last few weeks was towards our Asia private wealth roadshow, which I am pleased to say went well. The main topics of conversation were fiduciary duties for trustees, ESG, virtual assets, pre-IPO trusts and family office structures. Some of the key learnings to come out of our webinar and meetings were:

- There is no such thing as a standard family office structure - it varies enormously depending on the requirements of the family. Strong, well-qualified advice is key which, thanks to Guernsey's depth and substance, is a strength we can utilise.
- It is widely anticipated that regulation is coming into the world of family offices, and most responsible jurisdictions and their practitioners are already adopting structures and methodologies that would fit this potential regulation.
- Guernsey Trust law is not only very flexible, giving trustees the opportunity to consider various types of trust, but also accommodates foundation structures, which are increasing in popularity due to Asian families desire for slightly more control.
- Pre-IPO trusts are not new, but are becoming more popular as there is a growing realisation that putting a proper structure in place avoids future complications and disputes, as typically the wealth created will be a very long-term asset within family structures. Investor protection also plays a large part.
- Crypto assets (and more specifically, Blockchain), are here to stay. Guernsey Trust laws offers the flexibility for trustees to accept the assets, although Guernsey itself is still considering the regulatory demands of this type of asset.

As a sponsor of STEP Asia, WE ARE GUERNSEY ran a breakout session focusing on philanthropic investments and socially responsible investing (SRI). Among the key takeaways were an increased awareness of ESG and SRI from Asian clients and families, especially from the younger generation, which means there are great opportunities for practitioners well versed in private wealth combined with ESG when it comes to intergenerational wealth transfer. There also appears to be a gradual acceptance that investing responsibly doesn't mean foregoing returns; in fact there is growing evidence that it is the opposite.

We have done a lot of work with Asia-focused media outlet Hubbis over the last couple of months, which included a video interview with our Green Finance Manager Stephanie Glover on sustainable finance in Guernsey and the trends being seen in family offices towards ESG and sustainability. You can watch it here:

<https://okt.to/6xNlc5>.

I also opened a Hubbis Digital Dialogue session, Managing Wealth Across Multiple Jurisdictions, by sharing some of Guernsey's key messages. Around 200 people attended this, and I am in the process of following up with those delegates. We look forward to more collaboration with Hubbis in the future.

Finally, I am looking forward to hosting an informal Christmas Drinks event for some networking and a chat about Guernsey. I hope everyone reading this has a fantastic Christmas and I wish you all a prosperous 2022.

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