



**Allied Irish Bank (GB) win Britains Best Business Bank for the sixth time
9th November 2004**

Government statements and the recommendations of the Competition Commission are pointing businesses in the right direction when choosing a bank, Allied Irish Bank (GB) said today. "Businesses are more aware than ever of the ease with which they can, indeed should, make comparisons between banks and the services they offer," said Aidan McKeon, Allied Irish Bank (GB), Managing Director.

Allied Irish Bank (GB)'s comments come in response to the latest Bank Report from the Forum of Private Business, announced today. Allied Irish Bank (GB) has, for the sixth consecutive time, been voted the top performing bank in this independent survey, scoring 70.9%. This score is a 10% increase since the last survey in 2002 and is eight points clear of the nearest rival.

The Forum of Private Business (FPB) Chief Executive Nick Goulding said:

"Allied Irish Bank (GB) has won FPB's Best Bank title for the sixth consecutive occasion and has now held that title for a formidable ten years. Moreover Allied Irish Bank (GB) has shown a significant performance improvement since the last report. FPB warmly applauds Allied Irish Bank (GB)'s tremendous consistency and determined commitment to its small business clients."

Aidan McKeon commented "Our customers tell us that they want people who know and understand their business, who can make decisions, and who will be with them for the long term. What's pleasing is that they are not only telling the FPB the same thing, but that they are also telling their peers."

Although the report states that there is no evidence of switching providers, Allied Irish Bank (GB) says that it has gained customers from other banks. Aidan McKeon said, "Much of the business we gain has been as a result of customer recommendations. We believe in good, old-fashioned personal service. That's why our customers come to us, and stay with us."

-Ends-

For further information please contact Robert Fenner or Tony Hannon at Grayling PR, on 020 7255 1100, Anne Dockery, Allied Irish Bank (GB) on 01895 272222 or Ben Pinnington, Forum of Private Business on 01565 634709.