



## PRESS RELEASE

### **Allied Irish Bank (GB) expands North East network**

**23<sup>rd</sup> November 2017** - With expert insight and dedicated sector teams, Allied Irish Bank (GB) is working with businesses across the North East who are ambitious for growth.

For over 40 years, Allied Irish Bank (GB) has been working with businesses in the North East. The bank's Newcastle team, based in One Trinity Gardens, works with colleagues across the UK to provide up-to-date, specialist market knowledge to clients across the region.

The bank recently signaled its growth aspirations with the appointment of Martin Rankin as Business Growth Manager for the area.

With 20 years' experience of banking and working with businesses in the region, Martin has an unrivalled network of contacts, extensive knowledge of the region's economy and the benefit of Allied Irish Bank (GB)'s niche, sector-specific insight and expertise.

The decision to join Allied Irish Bank (GB) was an easy one, as its outlook reflects his own, Martin explains. "Allied Irish Bank (GB) specialises in delivering a relationship-driven service to medium and large-sized businesses, an approach that is valued by companies in the North East.

"From my experience, North East businesses want a dedicated contact at their bank, expert knowledge and support, and a bit of imagination. That's exactly what we offer.

"There are huge opportunities for growth in the North East, and that's what we want to support. Healthcare, Hospitality and Leisure sectors are all growing. The devaluation of sterling has also created opportunities for manufacturers in the North East.

"We want to hear from businesses that are as ambitious as us."

Allied Irish Bank (GB)'s recent insight report for the North East identified some key markets for the bank, which it will be focusing on in 2018: manufacturing, hotels and leisure, healthcare and professional services, as well as recycling and waste management.

Allied Irish Bank (GB)'s Newcastle office is headed by Chris Dixon, who joined the bank in 1997. The bank has dedicated teams for hospitality, healthcare, professional services and manufacturing, meaning businesses will always receive advice from someone who understands their sector.

Chris explained: "We have a wide client base in different sectors, but with small relationship management teams. This means we act as a barometer, with highly localised knowledge and the ability to respond rapidly to changes in the marketplace.

"Having specialist sector teams supporting us means we can work more flexibly with clients. We understand the seasonality of hospitality, how currency changes and exports can suddenly affect cash flow and costs, and what investments are required to future-proof businesses.

"We tailor packages and terms for our clients, we don't just tick boxes and make businesses fit our model. We work with them to create bespoke funding terms."

### **Steps to Growth with Allied Irish Bank (GB)**

Allied Irish Bank (GB) recently published its Steps to Growth: Strategy report, an exclusive survey of business leaders across the UK, including the North East.

The survey revealed a high degree of optimism and a belief among business leaders that their companies have the right strategy to weather Brexit and lay the foundations for long-term, sustainable growth.

Chris commented: "The view from our clients in Newcastle and across the North East mirrored the overall response. They remain ambitious, with 87 percent saying they want to grow their business, and 72 percent saying leaving the EU will be positive and encourage that growth.

"There are lots of unknowns when it comes to Brexit, as negotiations continue between the UK and the EU, but what's certain is the determination of businesses in the North East to continue to grow.

"Allied Irish Bank (GB) wants to hear from businesses across the region that are ambitious and want a sector-focused, relationship-driven bank that can work with them."

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