



ael

CEO

Information Pack

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Welcome from the Chair

Dear Candidate

On behalf of the AEL team, I am delighted that you have expressed an interest in the role of Chief Executive Officer at AEL.

Since 1998, we have built an organisation that has been having a major, positive impact on the lives of those it helps.

Our award-winning social enterprise model seeks to have a thriving, sustainable set of businesses that are put to the service of the people that need it most – people with disability; people with health conditions; and people from disadvantaged backgrounds. We provide the training, work experience and support services they need to get the most fulfilment they can out of their lives.

This unique model demands a unique set of skills for the CEO, which is where you come in. We are looking for an individual with a business head and a social heart. We need someone who is a convincing communicator and a strong negotiator.

Along with a solid track record of senior leadership involving social enterprise or business, you will understand how to bring to bear your business management skills on best meeting the needs of the disadvantaged and disabled people in the community we serve.

If successful, you will be joining a highly skilled and passionate team, supported by an exceptional Board of Trustees and a dedicated Senior Management Team.

I invite you to take some time to read this information pack intended to enable you to understand what we do and who we are looking for. If you believe you have the credentials, commitment and experience to become AEL's CEO, please submit your interest via our executive appointment partners Engage in the first instance.

We hope to hear from you soon.

Yours faithfully

Hazel Bell
Chair
The AEL logo consists of the letters 'ael' in a stylized, lowercase font. The 'a' is orange, the 'e' is dark red, and the 'l' is blue. The letters are slightly overlapping and have a subtle drop shadow.

Who we are

AEL was established in Larne in 1998 as Northern Ireland's first social firm to support individuals with disabilities, health conditions and social disadvantage into meaningful employment and or education.

We achieve this by providing advice, information and support on a range of issues, such as access to education, health, housing, leisure, social welfare and other services, on the same basis as people without disadvantage.

AEL provides training, work experience and sustained employment for people with learning disability/difficulty, health related conditions and additional needs. We are proud to acknowledge that while AEL trades globally our impact is felt most locally, as we bring in 70% of our income through our business activities, in addition to support from the National Lottery Community Fund, European Social Fund, Department for Communities and Northern Health and Social Care Trust.

We've grown to be a truly impactful, diverse, £1.4m turnover operation with nearly 50 staff as dedicated to their mission as the Board Members and Senior Management Team who support them.



What we do

Social Enterprise

Lunchbox

LUNCHBOX is a 5 star rated, on-site café, located in AEL's Larne Community Hub. We grow seasonal produce in our poly tunnels and allotments enabling us to prepare and provide customers with fresh, delicious meals. Trainees on our various programmes, play an important part in this busy work environment. It allows them to "try their hand" at the catering trade, gaining experience and qualifications as they go.



Sub-Contract Work

We work with some of NI's largest manufacturing companies including K-Rend, Brett Martin and Spirit. As an ISO 9001 accredited company AEL is a safe and reliable sub-contractor, capable of completing a

variety of tasks, on time, to a high standard and at competitive rates

Candyrush

Candyrush repackages goods which are imported from around the world and sells them online. Our product range includes Party Bags, Envelopes, Confectionery and Craft Products. This activity provides work experience in various areas such as stock control, warehousing, packaging, online listing and order fulfilment.



Packaging and Assembly

A cornerstone of AEL; the packaging department undertakes sub-contract work for other companies as well as packaging our Candyrush products. Employees and trainees work together as a team to get the job done. We have experience in packaging everything from mouse-traps, light bulbs to bottles of beer.

Sample Making

AEL manufactures and prepares product samples for some of Northern Ireland's top Companies including, K-Rend and Brett Martin. These are regulated activities with ISO 9001 processes in place to ensure consistency and quality. Providing samples to customers is a very important part of any manufacturer's sales process. Here at AEL we pride ourselves with excellence in supply chain delivery offering everything from simple, basic assembly to a full 'end to end' service.



Naggy Burn Garden Centre and Community Shed

Constructed with the assistance of trainees, staff and local volunteers our horticultural project is 'state of the art'. This environmentally friendly project produces fresh vegetables, salad and fruit for our Lunchbox Café. Using organic principles both allotments and poly-tunnels make use of rainwater harvested from the main building and then gravity fed to the plants. We also grow and harvest produce for local restaurants and individuals.

The latest addition to the Naggy Burn project has been the development of

the garden centre. Open to the public and garnering rave reviews, Naggy Burn Garden Centre has just been awarded "Best New Business Start-up" at Larne's Excellence in Business Awards 2021

Laser Engraving

We are now able to develop a range of bespoke products for order in bulk or individually and have supplies football clubs, awards for event organisers, name plates and signs. This is an exciting new business with many opportunities.

Training and Development Programmes

Transitions

The Transitions Programme provides work based learning and training for young adults aged 16 - 24 with additional needs. By undertaking meaningful work experience young people and their families can make more informed decisions about their future.

We are proud to be working in partnership with the following schools, as they seek to enable their pupils to gain a variety of skills and experiences.

- Roddensvale Special School
- Thornfield House School
- Rosstulla Special School
- Castle Tower School
- Jordanstown Special School
- Larne High School

Hands on Training (HOT)

Supporting those aged 16 - 60 to develop real work experience skills and to achieve recognised vocational and employability focused qualifications. Trainees on HOT are supported by job coaches and their own personal

development mentor, to plan a progression pathway, that meets their needs and aspirations, whether that be in employment, long term volunteering and/or further education.



Day Opportunities

For people diagnosed with a learning disability and who have been approved for receipt of community based day services through the Northern Health and Social Care Trust. Individuals can ask to attend AEL to volunteer 1-3 days per week, again helping them gain work experience and boost their skills and confidence.

Life

The LIFE Programme offers bespoke support which ensures trainees have choices in how they spend their day, who they spend it with and the types of activities offered. We aim to share what's important to them, by developing a person centred support and action plan that will, set realistic goals and encourage the development of each trainee. Attendance on this programme is dependent on the individual being in receipt of self - directed support.

Employer Support

Time and Resource Saving

Through our live business activities, we carry out a variety of practical work tasks for companies, which ultimately free up their time and resources. These tasks range from re-labelling of products, collating handouts to be used in information packs at conferences/events, recycling information packs for homes, fulfilling orders and wholesale, pre- packing goods for own brands, colour cards for plastics, manufacturing of samples to site clearance etc.



Learning Disability Awareness Training for Staff / Volunteers

Short workshops, delivered in house or in AEL premises, to provide an overview of what learning disability and learning difficulty is, its' prevalence in NI and examples of how you can support someone in your workplace/home life who may have a learning disability/difficulty.



Hands on support and advice

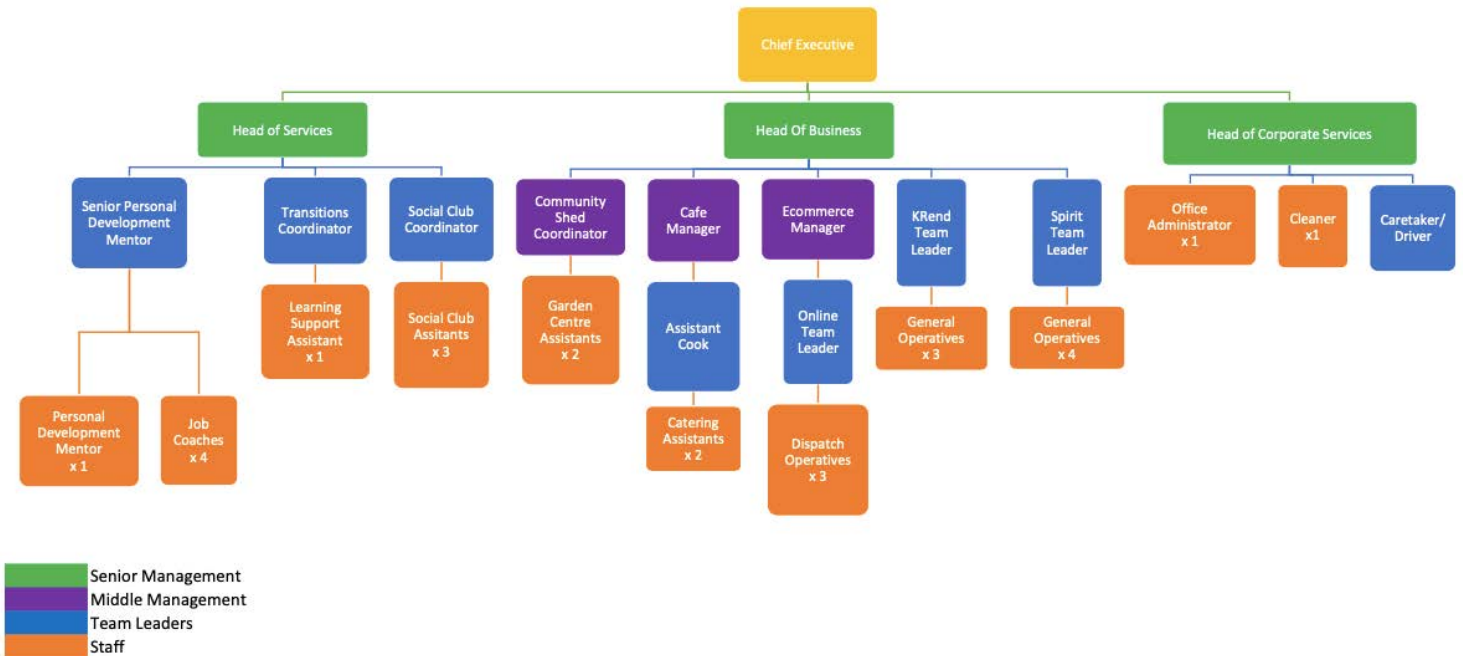
If you are thinking about taking on a trainee who may have support needs, for a work placement or employment, our staff can provide support, advice and practical hints and tips on how to make it a meaningful experience for the trainee and how the company can still work towards its' business objectives.



Inclusive Employer Awards

In recent years AEL have worked in partnership with over 30 local employers, who have provided opportunities for work tours, work placements, long term volunteering and paid employment to our trainees. In September 2019 we launched our Inclusive Employer Charter, to recognise their contribution and to help develop new relationships with other employers who would like to get involved. The charter awards employers with a Gold, Silver or Bronze status, depending on their degree of engagement with us and our trainees.

How we're organised



Our strategy

At AEL, the individuals we help are at the centre of our strategy. We use enterprise as a tool to help level the employment playing field for them, and to help them reach new heights in their quality of life that might otherwise be denied to them. To deliver this unique combination of support and guidance, we place a particular importance on investing in the training and development of our trainees and indeed of our staff. You can download a copy of our current strategy documents here:

[AEL Strategic Balanced Scorecard 2021-2024](#)

[AEL 3 Year Operational Plan 2021-2024](#)

OUR MISSION

To work in partnership with others to provide a centre of excellence offering opportunities for disadvantaged individuals

OUR VISION

To provide a centre of excellence which provides opportunities for disadvantaged individuals to gain work experience and training, enhancing their lifestyle and thus allowing them to achieve their full potential.

OUR VALUES

**Team Work
Respect
Passion
Equality**

Meet the Board



Hazel Bell OBE (Chair)

Hazel has more than four decades' experience in senior management and voluntary board membership in the social housing sector, and has a long track record of community development, fundraising, regeneration and governance.

Board Members

- Grace Nesbitt MBE (Vice Chair)
- Audrey Murray MBE
- Maureen Hanvey
- Kieron Kent
- Andrew Clenaghan
- Samuel Young
- Trevor Ringland MBE



Finances

Here is a summary of our most recently published annual Profit and Loss sheet. All our funds carried forward are unrestricted

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2021 £	Total Funds 2020 £
Income from:					
Donations	2	130,776	131,243	262,019	181,892
Charitable activities	3	747,522	381,007	1,128,529	1,201,220
Investments	4	3	-	3	37
Total Income		878,301	512,250	1,390,551	1,383,149
Expenditure on:					
Expenditure on charitable activities	5	737,989	493,346	1,231,335	1,243,450
Total Expenditure		737,989	493,346	1,221,335	1,243,450
Net income/(expenditure)	6	140,312	18,904	159,216	139,699
Transfers between funds		23,776	(23,776)	-	-
Net Movement in Funds		164,088	(4,872)	159,216	139,699
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		442,038	4,872	446,910	307,211
Total funds carried forward		606,126	-	606,126	446,910

Further details on our financial accounting can be accessed by clicking on the links below to our annual reports.

[Annual Report July 2021](#)

[Annual Report July 2020](#)

[Annual Report July 2019](#)

Job Description

Title:	Chief Executive Officer
Reports and is responsible to:	Chairperson of AEL
Location:	Larne
Hours per week:	37.5
Reward Package:	£50,000+ negotiable subject to experience 9% employer pension contribution Private health insurance and life cover
Leave entitlement:	34 days a year including statutory holidays

THE ROLE

This is an important role in an established and dynamic business based in Larne.

A strong leader with drive and commitment who will work closely with the Chairperson and Board to develop the strategic direction of the organisation with a focus on efficient service delivery and the development and marketing of new business opportunities

The CEO will lead by example and encourage all staff to conduct their activities in accordance with applicable legal and regulatory frameworks and policies and treating all those with whom they interact with the highest standards of dignity and respect.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Effective Leadership

- Ensure the mission, core values and guiding principles of AEL are put into practice.
- Foster effective teamwork between the Board and the CEO, and staff and the CEO.
- Excellent management of all aspects of the organisation.
- Represent the organisation at appropriate meetings / committees / events.
- Ensure the organisational profile is enhanced.
- Lead, develop and mentor members of senior management team to be co-developers of the business and address challenges.
- Ensure excellence in service delivery through the senior management team.
- Promote diversity and equality of opportunity throughout all AEL activities.
- Build a team culture where everyone is valued and adequately resourced in their role.

Board Engagement

- Ensure that the Board has at its disposal sufficient resources, guidance and professional advice on matters concerning compliance with its governing documents, the law and the need to remain sustainable.
- Identify, assess and inform the Board of internal/external issues impacting on the business.
- Act as a professional adviser to the Board on all aspects of business activity.
- Facilitate strategic and operational planning in conjunction with the Board.
- Carry out plans and policies of the Board including preparing agendas and minutes of Board and Committee meetings in conjunction with the Board Chairperson.

Strategic Development

- Join with the Board in reviewing the vision, strategic direction and plans which guide AEL.
- Create opportunities for staff to contribute to service planning and development.
- Ensure that all parts of the organisation are working in accordance with the agreed strategic direction.
- Work with staff to ensure their understanding of the strategic direction and their individual roles in its implementation.
- Ensure that strategy is reviewed regularly in conjunction with the Board to ensure it is current and effective and that it is reviewed and updated.

Strategic Vision

- Provide knowledge, experience and insight of funding and business opportunities advising on any strategic challenges/issues.
- Make recommendations to the Board on areas of service development required or new opportunities to enhance business development or unsustainable operations in line with organisational strategy.
- Work with senior staff to make sure the organisation is working effectively, providing advice and training as required.
- Identify barriers to development and work to address these in accordance with policies and legislative requirements.
- To ensure that the clients and stakeholders of AEL remain as the core strategic focus.

Planning and Management of Operations

- Develop and deliver of an annual operational plan incorporating targets and objectives aligning with strategic direction of AEL.
- Oversee the efficient day to day operation of the organisation.
- Ensure that fit for purpose policies, procedures and guidelines are approved, in place, understood and implemented across the organisation.
- Ensure that all records and personal data is securely stored, and privacy/confidentiality upheld.
- Oversee the implementation and evaluation of the services offered by the organisation.
- Ensure that the services offered contribute to AEL's mission and reflect the priorities of the Board.
- Monitor and exploit established and emerging digital technologies to support improvements to operational quality, cost effectiveness and range of services.

Human Resources Planning and Management

- Oversee the implementation of HR policies, procedures and practices.
- Oversee the recruitment and selection of staff with the right education, experience, skills, abilities and attitudes to deliver the organisational vision and mission.
- Ensure that all staff receive appropriate induction to AEL and are appropriately trained for their roles to the highest professional standards.
- Establish a healthy, positive and safe work environment in accordance with legislative requirements.
- Oversee the implementation of a performance management process for all staff which includes monitoring the performance of staff on an ongoing basis.
- Ensure the organisation complies with all legislation covering HR management.

Business Development and Sustainability

- Ensure the ongoing sustainability of AEL.
- Identify new and sustainable opportunities for business growth to the AEL Board.
- Leverage networking contacts of the Board and other AEL stakeholders to cultivate new revenue generation opportunities.
- Research funding sources attracting fresh funding sources.

Financial Management

- Work with staff to prepare a comprehensive annual budget for Board approval.
- Rigorously manage costs in line with overall business cost objectives and budgetary targets.
- Ensure all resources necessary to the success of the organisation are identified and addressed.
- Approve expenditure within the authority delegated by the Board.
- Ensure that sound financial and accounting procedures are in place and followed.
- Provide the Board or relevant committees with comprehensive regular reports on revenue and expenditure of the organisation.
- Ensure the timely and complete preparation of AEL's Annual Report and Audited Accounts.

Communication / Marketing /Advocacy

- Ensure effective communication mechanisms and processes exist with all internal and external parties.
- Promote and strengthen AEL and its business brands through social media and conventional media channels.
- Establish good working relationships and collaborative arrangements with a wide range of appropriate stakeholders to achieve organisational goals.
- Act as a spokesperson for the organisation and represent AEL at external events and opportunities.
- Develop a culture of active PR/Marketing activity consistent with optimising awareness of AEL services and businesses.

Risk Management

- Ensure a risk management strategy is in place and all risks appropriately managed with preventative measures in place and reviewed.
- Ensure information pertaining to risks are regularly reviewed and the risk register maintained and updated in keeping with policy.
- Develop tools and database systems to provide ongoing information relating to issues and ensure regular audit of practice.

Governance

- Ensure that the organisation is fully compliant with Codes of Good Governance, compliance and controls are such as to fulfil such as relates to NI Charity Commission, Companies House, etc.
- Work with the Board Chairperson to enable the Board to fulfil its governance functions and facilitate the optimum performance by the Board, any Committees or Working groups, and individual Board members.
- Manage the due diligence process to assure timely attention to core issues.
- Assist the Board acquire appropriate skills and ensure that peer review by the Board takes place.
- Enable proper constitution of the Board to provide good governance.

This job description reflects the role as perceived at this time and may be subject to changes in consultation with the Job Holder.

Person Specification

Essential Criteria:

- Degree in business / administration / economics / finance related subject or 5 years' experience in a senior leadership role with in a business or social enterprise.
- A significant track record of achievement as a leader and senior manager in a complex organisation.
- Experience in a senior management role where significant operational and financial management competency was gained.
- Experience of managing or working collaboratively with a range of stakeholders.
- Experience of managing a team to deliver an organisation's strategic plan and operational goals.
- Proven track record in senior management reporting directly to a Board or at senior level reporting to a CEO.

Essential Aptitudes:

- Understanding of and empathy with those who are disabled and disadvantaged within the community.
- Convincing communicator and strong negotiator.

Desirable Criteria:

- Understanding of the social economy sector in NI.
- Understanding of business and enterprise.
- Experience of good governance systems.

The competencies identified in this role are:

- Leadership and Direction
- Strategic Thinking/ Critical Analysis/ Decision Making
- Operational Excellence/ Financial Acumen
- Communication/ People Management Skills
- Team Building.

How to apply

Please forward a [CV, maximum three A4 sides](#), together with a completed [Supplementary Questions](#) form available from www.engageexec.co.uk, ensuring you have included mobile, work and home telephone numbers, as well as any dates when you will not be available or might have difficulty with from the recruitment timetable. You will also be asked to submit a separate [equality form](#) (see below).

The deadline is [Noon on Monday 27 June 2022](#). Applications should be made by email to:

patrick@co3.bz

Contact Patrick Minne on 07792 509003 if you have any queries about the role or the application process.

[Equality Monitoring and Criminal Convictions Disclosure](#)

Along with the CV and Form, you will be asked to complete and return the Equal Opportunities Monitoring and Criminal Convictions Disclosure Form in a separate document. Neither of these will be disclosed to anyone involved in shortlisting your application.

[Disability](#)

In accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act a person is disabled if they have, or have had, "a physical or mental impairment which has, or has had, a substantial and long term adverse effect on your ability to carry out normal day to day activities".

If you consider yourself to have a disability relevant to the position for which you are applying, please contact Patrick Minne so that we can process your application fairly, make any specific arrangements for your interview, and make any necessary reasonable adjustments or adaptations, or provide any aids to assist you in completing the duties of the post if appointed.

[Equal Opportunities](#)

AEL is an Equal Opportunities Employer and all applications for employment are considered strictly on the basis of merit.

Timeline

CV, Supplementary Questions and Equality Monitoring and Criminal Convictions forms to be submitted

Noon, Monday 27 June 2022

First Interviews

Thursday 7, Friday 8 July 2022

Second Interviews (may include a seen or unseen task)

Monday 25, Tuesday 26, Wednesday 27 July 2022

Final Interviews

Monday 1, Tuesday 2, Wednesday 3 August 2022





Helping You. Helping Us. Helping Others.

Please address any enquiries relating to the advertised position to AEL's recruitment partners:

Patrick Minne
Engage Executive Talent

Tel: 07792 509003
Email: patrick@co3.bz

www.engageexec.co.uk

JUL22

Enquiries unrelated to this recruitment can be addressed to:

AEL
32-34 Pound Street
Larne
BT40 1SQ

Tel: 028 2827 4992

Email: info@accessemployment.co.uk

Web: www.accessemployment.co.uk

AEL has been registered with the Charity Commission for N. Ireland NIC100987