



Electrical engineering firm Smith Brothers has secured a hat-trick of senior appointments as the high voltage specialist prepares for the next wave of growth.

John Benson has joined the team as Head of EHV (Extra High Voltage) Projects. With more than 30 years' industry experience and a number of high profile brands on his CV – including Siemens, Freedom and Anglian Water – he was the perfect candidate to oversee Smith Brothers' contracts of 66kV and above. This newly-created role has been established in response to the increasing number of enquiries being received for high voltage primary works throughout the country.

Michael McLaughlin is also on board as Head of Operations for Ireland. Another highly experienced recruit having spent 40 years in industry, he has worked for high profile infrastructure giants including Morgan Sindall and Balfour Beatty, to name just two. He brings with him a wealth of electrical engineering knowledge – including the nuances that differentiate the Irish market from Great Britain – and has expertise in projects ranging from large-scale commercial works to the ever-expanding renewables sector. He will now take the lead on all assignments on the other side of the Irish Sea.

Finally, Dan Wagner has assumed the position of Operations Manager. He is no stranger to the Smith Brothers business, having joined as Senior Project Manager in spring 2016 during a period of significant growth. But with 12 years' at Electricity North West and a further two years at Northern Power Grid under his belt, he soon impressed with his work. He has therefore adopted this more senior role as HV and EHV enquiries continue to flood in.

The appointments mark the start of an exciting financial year for Smith Brothers. 2016-17 accounts (year-end July) show another impressive year, with sustained £27m turnover levels and improved profit margins. But the team has its sights on even bigger figures for 2018, as Finance Director Richard King explains.

“The past 12 months have been about consolidation,” he said. “We’ve strengthened our internal

processes and procedures, boosted operational efficiencies, invested in more great new people, and relocated to new 10,000 sqft offices with room for expansion – all whilst maintaining performance levels.

“Now, we’re geared up for the next chapter of growth, with our forward order book already projecting turnover of £40m for the year ahead. This 50% uplift is something we’re more than ready for, given the efforts we’ve put in over the past 12 months to take our business to the next level. These appointments are a crucial part of that story.”