



Staffordshire

Fire and Rescue Service

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15th October 2009

Contract for Community Fire Stations Signed!

The contract to build ten new community fire stations in Staffordshire was officially signed today.

The signing known as, financial close, took place in London and was attended by representatives from Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service and the consortium delivering the £46 million project, Fire Support.

The project will see seven fire stations rebuilt as well as the construction of an additional three stations in areas where the Fire and Rescue Authority has determined there is a need for additional resources. The funding for the project has come from a government private finance initiative (PFI) scheme.

All stations have been designed with community facilities and state of the art operational facilities. Stations crewed around the clock are also to include fitness facilities that can be used by supervised groups. Community groups will be able to use the facilities and the newly designed stations will also allow for more community safety activities to take place, such as Student Firefighter courses

Construction work has already commenced on the site for the new station in Rising Brook, Stafford. However now that contracts have been signed, building work can commence on the remaining sites in line with the two year build programme. The Rising Brook station is due to open in summer 2010. Before the end of the year construction work will also start on stations at Sandyford, Belgrave in Tamworth and Uttoxeter.

Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Peter Dartford said: "This is fantastic news for Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service, those we work in partnership with and, most importantly those we

serve. We are leading the way in the UK Fire and Rescue Service with these purpose built community embracing fire stations. Our current fire stations were built at a time when we were almost solely a reactive service just responding to emergencies, they were certainly not built for the pro-active service we are today or the Service we are going to be in the future – sitting at the heart of the community.”

Chairman of the Fire and Rescue Authority, Cllr Len Bloomer commented: “It’s taken over three years of hard work to get to this stage, however now that the contracts are signed things will start progressing quickly – within the next year we’ll have opened the first of our new stations. It’s a very exciting time for both the Service and the communities who will benefit from these new facilities.”

Managing Director of Bilfinger Berger Project Investments, Martin Pugh said: "Bilfinger Berger Project Investments (BBPI) is proud to be partnering with Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Authority in developing the next generation of community fire stations, placing safety at its very heart. The Fire Support consortium is delighted to have reached this important milestone and is now focused on delivering the programme of modern and exciting new facilities. This also marks our partners continued commitment to long-term investment in the UK Social Infrastructure sector; we look forward to working closely with the Authority to deliver high quality emergency services for many years to come."

Construction companies working on the project are Stepnell Ltd and Thomas Vale Construction.

Niraj Bhatt, Strategic Projects Regional Manager of Stepnell Ltd said: "Stepnell are looking forward to this very exciting opportunity to work closely with Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Authority in delivering these state of the art community fire stations. Our preconstruction team and design consultants have worked in close collaboration with the Authority to develop an inspirational design solution that provides both robustness for the fire authorities operational staff and also versatility and flexibility to meet the needs of the community.”

Mark Wakeford, the Managing Director of Stepnell, said that this milestone would allow Stepnell to now concentrate on delivering these new facilities with and for the Authority. He hoped that the two year build programme would offer benefits to the local communities and that his teams were looking forward to the challenge.

Gary Mail, Group Construction Director of Thomas Vale stated: “The two year build programme will be an excellent opportunity to not only leave a legacy of state of the art facilities for the authority but to also provide added benefits via the local community and supply chain. We are looking forward to working with our partners in Staffordshire.”

A spokesperson for the Communities and Local Government Department, who are contributing to the project said: “We are pleased that the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Authority have now signed off the contract for this project. One which will deliver a better working environment for firefighters as well as helping the Authority meet its aspirations in service delivery to the communities it serves.

The stations to be located in new areas are Tamworth, at a location in Belgrave (the existing Tamworth station will also be rebuilt on its current site), Sandyford which is located between Kidsgrove and Burslem in North Staffordshire and Rising Brook which will complement the existing station on Beaconside, Stafford.

To book a free Home Fire Risk Check contact: 0800 0241 999. For all other non emergency enquiries contact: 08451 22 11 55 or log onto: www.staffordshirefire.gov.uk or www.direct.gov.uk/firekills. In an emergency dial 999.