



## **GRAHAM MILNE BSc IEng FIHE**

Graham has made his career in construction, and decided early on to be an engineer. He was good at science at school. When he was a teenager he got himself a summer job at Balfour Beatty, where he enjoyed being a chainboy – “the assistant who holds the other end of the tape” and went onto achieve an engineering degree at Glasgow University.

Today he is responsible for an £8million budget, 70 roadworkers, 4 supervisory staff, and 4 technical staff, running the South Lanarkshire Council’s East Kilbride Depot.

East Kilbride was built over 60 years ago and its roads are all reaching their sell-by date together. Also the whole SLC road network has deteriorated more quickly over the past few years because traffic has doubled since 1983, HGVs are much heavier, and there are 6000 utility openings per year. The new SLC Roads Investment Programme will contribute an additional £126M to the Roads Maintenance Budget over the next 8 years, which will bring Graham’s budget up to about £12 million.

Jim Cannon, SLC’s Roads and Transportations Head of Service, is confident SLC will resurface approximately 80% of its total network, ranking SLC in the top quartile of Scottish Authorities for road conditions. Consequently Graham and his staff will be working flat out for the coming few years delivering the programme.

His responsibilities are now more managerial, rather than technical, meaning more time in the office. Graham has always “enjoyed being out and about” on site, but it is some compensation he is now able to help people more, to develop their skills to create good careers for themselves.

SLC promotes personal development opportunities for its staff, as well as the Graduate Training Programme there is a career succession programme and encouragement for

roadworkers to complete the SVQ Level 2 in Construction and Highway Maintenance and half of Graham's roadworkers have done this.

He says "the impact of training is of interest to me. There are many benefits from developing existing knowledge and skills: job satisfaction for employees, career development, job opportunities, employee retention, and reducing the financial costs associated with external recruitment" An example of the success of SLC's training programme is Hugh Campbell, now an Assistant Engineering Officer in the East Kilbride Area Office. Hugh started work as a *skillseeker* roadworker in 2000 and in March 2009 he was shortlisted for the Association of Public Service Excellence Trainee of the Year Award in Highway Maintenance, and will start his HND in civil engineering in August.

Graham is an advocate of IHIE membership for people in the industry because the Institute's focus and interests so closely fit the needs of people with responsibilities such as his, or with career paths leading to them.

He values IHIE's professionally supportive networking opportunities and finds it "friendly and interested in helping people, which is very important for encouraging younger entrants to the industry to decide to go ahead to Registration with the Engineering Council".

IHIE being a UK-wide body Graham is Scottish Representative on its Council, and is busy organising the June AGM in Edinburgh.

Graham reflects that IHIE members up and down the land "are responsible for maintaining a key component of the nation's infrastructure and in so doing can enjoy varied and satisfying careers": a message he and John Nightingale, another IHIE Council member, are taking to university engineering departments across the country. As ever, he is turning his beliefs into action.