

# Edinburgh College conference discusses ways of tackling poverty

A conference at Edinburgh College yesterday allowed the 100 delegates to discuss ways of dealing with poverty and inequality in Edinburgh.

The discussions also focussed on ways that the Further Education sector might help address the problem.

Key speakers talked about what it is like to live in poverty in the capital and reveal some of the causes.

The conversation centred round four Ps :

Pockets – Identifying and relieving hardship; reducing and removing costs

Prospects – Focusing on completion as well as access; improving quality of opportunities with employers

Places – Transport; housing; FE as co-location hub

Participation – Students with lived experience of poverty becoming co-designers and evaluators

The Scottish Government explained what they are doing to tackle child poverty as part of their 2018-22 plan. Delegates were given the task of establishing three strategic actions for the Further Education sector to improve its approach.

Key speakers included: Jim Metcalfe, Chief Executive, College Development Network; Dr Jim McCormick, Chair of Edinburgh

Poverty Commission; Councillor Cammy Day, Depute Leader The City of Edinburgh Council; Julie Sinclair, SAAS; Paul Tyrer, Scottish Government; Ella Simpson, Chief Executive, EVOC; Diarmaid Lawlor, Director of Place, Architecture and Design Scotland; Sarah-Jane Linton, Head of Faculty, Edinburgh College; and Sarah Hay, President, ECSA.



Some of the speakers at the Edinburgh College conference on poverty and inequality

Jim Metcalfe said: "I really enjoyed attending the conference at Edinburgh College today, it was such an important event and it was great to hear from each of the speakers about the impact of poverty and inequality on our society.

"We learned about how in Edinburgh, there are 80,000 people living in poverty, with 1 in 5 children growing up in households below the poverty threshold. It's not right there are so many people living in poverty and these statistics show how much work there is to be done to tackle this problem."

Sarah-Jane Linton said: "It was an honour to speak on the same platform as our colleagues from the College Development Network and the Poverty Commission yesterday. It was a fantastic opportunity to get together and discuss what the FE sector, third sector and local authorities can do

collaboratively to help reverse the continuing rise of those living in poverty. It was an important and inspiring day to see so many organisations commit to joint working to eradicate poverty and inequality.”