

CashBack for Communities Phase 6

Equality Impact Assessment Results

November 2023

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1. Summary of aims and desired outcomes of policy

The CashBack for Communities (CashBack) programme invests money recovered through the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 (POCA) in community projects. Cashback projects focus on supporting children and young people aged 10 to 25. This may also involve working with parents and families.

Cashback projects target areas of multiple deprivation and more broadly help to address some of the underlying causes of antisocial and offending behaviour. Project activities range from diversionary youth work and opportunities to progress into employment, education, training or volunteering, to longer-term intervention projects that improve the lives of young people.

Phase 6 of the CashBack programme will run from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2026. CashBack supports Scotland's National Performance Framework and the Scottish Government's Justice Vision.

Directorate: Safer Communities

Division: Safer Communities

Team: Building Safer Communities

2. Executive summary

The CashBack programme was first implemented in 2008 and since then has delivered over 2.5 million activities and opportunities for children and young people.

This Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) relates to Phase 6 of the CashBack programme.

The impact analysis has confirmed that the focus for Phase 6 of CashBack is not discriminatory, supporting the Scottish Government's wider approach to equality and diversity, in particular for young people aged 10 to 25. No significant equality issues have been raised that will require changes to the framing of the CashBack programme for Phase 6.

3. Background

Ministers announced in June 2007 that they would use POCA funds in a positive way to expand young people's horizons and increase the opportunities they have to develop their interests and skills. The intention was to support a range of activities in the areas of sports, culture and arts.

Phase 1 of CashBack, which ran from 2008 to 2011, allowed the testing of different approaches. Under Phase 2 there was an expansion of the programme as a result of POCA windfalls, appointment of a Fund Manager and improved monitoring and

reporting. Phase 3 sharpened the focus on providing opportunities for young people to move into positive destinations, such as further education, volunteering and employment. The aim of Phase 4 was to tackle inequalities by delivering activities to raise the attainment, ambition and aspirations of young people. Phase 5 reflected previous phases and additionally developed a stronger focus on supporting young people, families and communities most affected by antisocial behaviour and crime.

Phase 6 builds on Phase 5 with a greater focus on tackling some of the underlying causes of antisocial and criminal behaviours. The 29 organisations that have been awarded CashBack funding for Phase 6 will deliver a range of projects for young people aged 10 to 25 that:

- Support young people most at risk of being involved in antisocial behaviour, offending or reoffending towards or into positive destinations (training; further education; employment and volunteering).
- Support young people, parents and families affected by Adverse Childhood Experiences and trauma.
- Support young people to improve their health, mental health and wellbeing.
- Support people, families and communities most affected by crime.

Projects use the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) to help target delivery in areas most likely to be affected by antisocial behaviour and crime. However, CashBack projects are on offer to children and young people in all 32 local authority areas, where a need is identified. Young people are referred to the programme in various ways, for example by statutory bodies, schools, equalities organisations, third sector organisations, youth services and other CashBack projects.

4. The Scope of the EQIA

The Phase 6 programme is aimed at young people aged 10 to 25 living in areas hardest hit by crime across Scotland. It has been running successfully since 2008. We assess that it requires a high-level impact assessment.

Officials undertook a number of activities to help develop the Phase 6 programme. These included engagement with policy leads across Scottish Government, the CashBack Fund Manager, Phase 5 CashBack organisations and a survey of 850 young CashBack participants.

The Cashback Programme has a thorough process of reporting and evaluation. This consists of quarterly reports, annual reporting and an external evaluation of each overarching Phase. Case studies and experiences shared by the young people who take part in the programme are also an important source of evidence of impact. The EQIA has considered these sources of evidence as part of its scope.

Links to the most recent evaluations, impact reports and young people survey are included below:

[CashBack for Communities Impact Evaluation: Phase 4](#)

[CashBack for Communities Impact Report for 2020-2021](#)

[CashBack for Communities Impact Report for 2021-2022](#)

Highlights from the 2021-2022 Impact Report for Phase 5 include that:

- Over 30,000 young people were supported during 2021-2022
- 19,725 young people reported increased confidence
- 19,418 young people improved their wellbeing
- 17,343 were from the most deprived areas of Scotland
- 17,179 reported positive behaviour changes
- 7,473 young people felt less inclined to take part in criminal behaviour

[Young People Survey: their views on CashBack](#)

Key findings from the survey of 850 CashBack participants were:

- 99% of respondents felt that the proceeds of crime should be reinvested in communities most impacted by crime.
- An overwhelming positive response in respect of the value to young people and wide range of CashBack projects.
- The vast majority of participants emphasised how easy it was to access CashBack activities, with 91% reporting no difficulties. Young people reporting difficulties accessing projects commonly cited personal circumstances such as drug use and mental health.
- Participants saw CashBack projects as highly inclusive. They placed a strong emphasis on being listened to, and being supported, so that CashBack partners could reach the widest possible audience.

Young people placed most value on:

- Improving mental health, particularly in relation to confidence, anxiety and social interaction;
- Acquiring new skills and experiences;
- Improving support networks through one-to-one support and guidance, from trusted and experienced mentors and staff; and
- Volunteering and community connectivity.

A wide range of research and evidence was also used to underpin Stage 2 of the EQIA in relation to specific protected characteristics and their life experiences, including engagement in crime and the justice system.

5. Key findings

The EQIA process has provided reassurance that the CashBack programme is not discriminatory and aligns with the Scottish Government's approach to equality and inclusion. The available evidence was sufficient to support the CashBack policy and demonstrated that there would be no negative impacts for any equality group. The Stage 2 process found potential positive benefits for all groups.

Some improvements were identified and implemented as outlined below:

- The scope of the Phase 5 evaluation (due to be completed by December 2023) will include greater analysis of the profile of participants, using the collection of equalities data by delivery partners.

- Learnings from the Phase 5 evaluation will be used more broadly to develop the scope for the Phase 6 evaluation and any potential phases in the future.
- The 29 organisations that secured Phase 6 funding will embed Equalities and Children's Rights and Wellbeing in their CashBack projects. This includes reporting on participation levels for protected characteristic groups and completion of a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment.
- The EQIA process found some sensitivities relating to collection of data across all protected characteristic groups. Advice was taken from Equalities policy colleagues, the CashBack Fund Manager, Project leaders and CashBack participants. It was agreed that collection of data on five core areas would be proportionate:
 - Age
 - SIMD
 - Sex
 - Disability
 - Ethnicity

Individual projects will consider collection of equalities data on other protected characteristics. This will depend on the type of project and relationship with young people engaged in the project.

- Phase 6 organisations will report on how their CashBack project is contributing towards reducing child poverty. This includes steps they have taken to support young parents under 25, as a priority group within the Scottish Government's Best Start, Bright Futures Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan. This will also help future analysis of the impact of the CashBack programme on the pregnancy and maternity equality group.
- The EQIA process highlighted the need to maintain oversight of other policy and legislation, where changes have the potential to impact on young people and CashBack policy. For example, The Promise; Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2022-26; The Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Bill and The Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill.

6. Recommendations and conclusions

The Cashback Programme is a well-established and successful programme that has supported around 1.3 million children and young people since 2008. The programme continues to support children and young people across Scotland, providing a wide range of activities and support services to help bring about positive life changes.

Over 30,000 children and young people benefitted from CashBack projects between 2021 and 2022 alone, despite the residual impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The programme will continue to be delivered through a range of partners and focus on providing support, activities and opportunities for young people. We will use the Phase 5 evaluation to review the programme. We will monitor the potential effects of new legislation on future policy development.



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