



Cultural Improvement Partnership
East Midlands

A baseline study of local authority cultural services in the East Midlands

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NetForm

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Executive Summary

The Cultural Improvement Partnership East Midlands (CIPEM) is delivering a programme in 2007-2010 to strengthen local authority cultural services in the region. The partnership aims to increase the impact and value of cultural services to the communities of the East Midlands by facilitating continuous improvement, effective delivery and shared service provision.

In conjunction with CIPEM, the East Midlands Cultural Observatory and Karen Stephenson undertook a Netform® analysis and baseline study. As well as collaborative working, the study looked at skills needs, priorities for support or training and perceptions of effective partnership working and best practice. This research will help CIPEM identify what support is needed for local government to ensure continuous improvement in culture and sport services.

The research was conducted by asking five questions concerning collaborative working and twelve personal information and baseline questions. This report presents the findings of this research and is organised into four main chapters addressing:

- the methodology
- a literature review,
- key findings
- and recommendations.

The conclusions highlight the importance of collaboration across the sub-regions and between the regional cultural agencies and the local authority cultural service teams. The five sub-regions could be better integrated and collaboration could be improved. Analysis also suggested that Leicestershire was the most integrated of the five sub-regions and that the weakest connected sub-region was Lincolnshire.

The research, in short, has highlighted that there is significant evidence that collaboration is nascent in the East Midlands cultural services sector and that the CIPEM grouping is the most centrally connected grouping in the East Midlands cultural sector. The social network analysis revealed that CIPEM correctly comprises many Hubs, Gatekeepers and Pulse takers ensuring that it is well positioned with a wealth of leadership, mentorship and problem-solving ability and potential. The pattern of the connection CIPEM exhibits is called a Hub and Spoke pattern characteristic of early partnership formation. As a Hub, CIPEM centralises and distributes information to supporting members. When the partnership matures, the supporting members would be connected to each other and not necessarily through CIPEM.

The research identifies key findings under the following themes: Increasing the profile of cultural services, priority training, expenditure baseline and connectivity of cultural services. From these key themed findings the following key recommendations have been drawn out:

- CIPEM is well positioned yet needs to ensure that it continues to build a sustainable approach to ensure that beyond the CIPEM model there is continuity in embedding improvement across the East Midlands Cultural Sector within the context of the sub-regions and chief officer groups.
- CIPEM should run targeted training events which address the needs as set out in this report, these include: embedding culture in the Local Area Agreements (LAAs),

performance management and in understanding available mechanisms and resources for evidencing outcomes.

- Pockets of innovation were revealed and CIPEM needs to continue to champion this and other examples of best practice. A number of authorities were identified as requiring specifically targeted support and these should be addressed as an immediate priority.
- A further study of this kind should be undertaken in 12-24 months to establish the effectiveness of CIPEM's interventions against the baseline provided by this study.
- Key priorities for CIPEM should be to focus upon increasing collaboration and integration within the sub regions and in particular those which exhibited weaker interconnectivity in the social network analysis such as Northamptonshire and Lincolnshire.

Introduction

About CIPEM

The Cultural Improvement Partnership East Midlands (CIPEM) is delivering a programme in 2007-2010 to strengthen local authority cultural services in the region. The partnership aims to increase the impact and value of cultural services to the communities of the East Midlands by facilitating continuous improvement, effective delivery and shared service provision.

The CIPEM partnership comprises representatives of the key regional cultural agencies and local government. The partnership is funded by the East Midlands Improvement Partnership (EMIP) and the key regional cultural agencies ([Sport England](#), [Arts Council England](#), [MLA and Renaissance](#)). It is also supported by [Local Government East Midlands](#), [Culture East Midlands](#), the East Midlands Cultural Observatory and the [Government Office for the East Midlands](#). Delivery of the CIPEM objectives is through a team of sub-regional secondees including: Liz Blyth, Leicestershire sub region; Mark Homer, Lincolnshire sub region; Andrew Beddow, Derbyshire sub region; Ian Redfern and Grace Kempster, Northamptonshire Sub Region; Steve Palframan (subsequently replaced by Sarah Dawes), Nottinghamshire sub region and Bill Cullen, Hinckley and Bosworth District Council.

CIPEM aims and objectives

CIPEM seeks to develop the capacity of local government and to support more effective partnership working between local government and regional cultural agencies. The aim is to raise awareness and share best practice, support continuous improvement in culture, sport and leisure services and develop effective community leadership and advocacy. CIPEM will also continue to make the case for culture and sport to be mainstreamed into the activities of local authorities. CIPEM will deliver its aims through a targeted and resourced improvement programme to:

- 1) Raise awareness and share best practice within the region and nationally of the impact of cultural services and effectiveness at delivering shared priorities and programmes. This will be achieved through tailored developments and support for elected members and officers and promoting exemplar case studies.
- 2) Achieve continuous improvement in culture and sport services to assist poor and weak authorities to raise standards to meet the EMIP target of no poor/weak authorities by 2008. This will be achieved through effective improvement planning, targeted performance programmes and use of improvement tools and peer challenge.
- 3) Develop effective community leadership and advocacy to promote understanding and impact of sport and culture in enhancing quality of life for communities of the East Midlands. This will be achieved by targeted briefings.

One of CIPEM's first priorities was to establish a baseline of skills needs and priorities relating to the region's local authority cultural services provision. This would enable CIPEM to respond by identifying priorities and initiating a targeted support programme. CIPEM was also keen to understand the ways in which cultural service providers and regional agencies interact and work

together, by identifying the formal and informal links between organisations and between key people within those organisations. CIPEM were presented with the opportunity by EMIP to undertake a social network analysis study in conjunction with Karen Stevenson of Netform. This report provides an overview of both the Social Network Analysis undertaken by Netform and Karen Stevenson and the baseline information gathered in conjunction with the Netform online survey by the East Midlands Cultural Observatory. The Cultural Observatory worked with CIPEM to identify priorities for the survey that they believed would provide useful baseline information to enable CIPEM to prioritise interventions when shaping their programme of support for local authority cultural service teams in the East Midlands.

Methodology

Baseline data was collected in conjunction with the social network analysis study undertaken by Netform international. Netform was contracted to undertake a social network analysis which was appended with baseline information questions devised by the CIPEM group. The full list of questions can be found in Appendix.1.

The survey was delivered online to the database of 423 contacts created by CIPEM and the Cultural Observatory. Those who received the survey included all staff within the regional cultural agencies, directors of cultural service within local authorities, heads of cultural services and those who report to them. The following sections outline the social network methodology and the data collection process in greater detail.

Outline of Social Network Analysis

Social network theory assumes that 80% of human knowledge is not written down in policies or procedures within organisations. Instead it is thought that it is held in the tacit knowledge shared among colleagues who have worked together or collaborated in some capacity. Most organisational and community leaders confirm this fact recognising that it is the interaction of people, their connection on teams and tasks, that contributes as much to mission success as individual people and their talents. Yet it is this interaction that is difficult to understand and impossible to formally teach.

Social network analysis is seen as the only objective means by which to understand how tacit knowledge enhances mission performance at the enterprise or community level and to map and measure communication networks. **As a proven social networking methodology, Netform was asked to design a study so that CIPEM could better understand the networks of relationships existing within and across the various constituencies.** Network data was collected and analysed in Q2 2007 and benchmarked against a database. Diagnostic reports describe systemic organisational trends at the collective and organisational level.

In understanding network analysis, it is important to acknowledge that individual opinions regarding strategy are based upon individual “perceptions” and are therefore naturally biased and flawed. That is why the aggregate of individual responses reveals the “collective thinking” of a larger area or partnership, over which no one person can completely control. The purpose of the NetForm methodology is used to obtain this aggregated analysis and as such, an objective understanding of the total cultural landscape.

In summary, social network analysis is the mathematical analysis of aggregated individual responses, referred to as “tacit knowledge” or “social capital” as distinct from human capital, the individual measure of individual contribution. The social capital of the collective is embedded in enterprise-wide networks that are invisible and widely considered to be the missing link in performance measures.

The data collection process

The database for this study consisted of 423 contacts. Each respondent was asked to answer 12 baseline questions (See. Appendix.1) and then to identify from the 423 population those colleagues with whom they had contact. Once they had created their personalised list of

contacts they were asked to indicate the frequency of contact in response to five network questions regarding work, innovation, expertise, social and decision-making. These five network questions are listed here:

1. Who do you go to or talk to, to help you get your day to day work done that supports cultural service delivery?
2. Who do you go to or talk to when you need a decision relating to your work connected with cultural services?
3. Who do you go to or who do you talk to when you need expert advice relating to your work in connection with cultural service related issues?
4. Who do you go to or who do you talk to when exploring new ideas or solutions you might have to problems or new ways of working in connection with cultural service related issues?
5. Who do you make contact with to keep up to date with what's going on or to hear the latest news in connection with cultural service related issues?

The response rate for the survey was reasonable at 49% and fairly normal for a large regional or partnership study. However, in general, the response rate was considerably lower than desired by Netform; a response rate minimum of 80% is preferred. The lowest response rate was from two of the regional cultural agencies and this swayed the overall response rate. All staff in the regional cultural agencies were included in the survey population. However, the low response rate was brought about because representatives of these agencies responded on behalf of others, an unsuitable response given the nature of this survey. Netform advise that the social network findings be considered and weighed with some caution due to the lower than desirable response rate. The baseline findings resulting from the appended questions (See Appendix.1) are not affected by the response rate.

The analysis approach

The analysis was based upon both the social network findings and the baseline information answers. For ease of analysis the social network findings are presented in diagrams that outline the organisational structures within the survey population (See, Fig's 2 & 3). The local authorities were clustered by sub-regional area and appear on the upper half of the diagram and the regional cultural agencies are distributed around the lower half of the diagram. Two versions of this diagram were produced, one with CIPEM clustered in the centre of the diagram (See Fig's 2 & 4-8) and another in CIPEM was dropped back into their relevant organisations (See, Fig's 3 & 9 - 13).

The analysis of the social networks is centered upon the organisational charts in Fig's 2 and 3 which map the flow of information and work. The individual network roles that strategically connect others are labeled Hubs, Gatekeepers and Pulsetakers, abbreviated as HGP. Social network analysis assumes that everyone is connected in a network and therefore, to a greater or lesser degree, everyone has these qualities of a Hub, Gatekeeper or Pulsetaker, sometimes having more of one quality than another at various points in time over a person's career or in an

organisation's life cycle or in a particular network or position. These network roles are the net effect of everyone being connected to a greater or lesser degree in the network.

The social network analysis has identified potential resources and individuals who can potentially increase or decrease organisational effectiveness. Definitions of HGP are provided below.

- **Hubs** are directly connected to large numbers of individuals within a population. As such, they exhibit multi-tasking skills which when combined with their interpersonal skills make them pivotal in centralising information flows within work groups. Open and inclusive, they reliably disseminate information.
- **Gatekeepers** are strategically connected to a few, rather than directly connected to many. You will find gatekeepers on critical pathways between organisational groups and key individuals. They are careful and selective regarding their information and contacts. As such, they can be instrumental in controlling the rate and substance of change.
- **Pulsetakers** have a wide and deep reach into the organisation, the result of the pattern of their indirect connections to a large portion of the population. Embedded within the culture, they serve in invisible advisory roles. Subtle, they are keen observers and monitors of cultural health and work from within to affect change.

These findings will allow CIPEM to ensure that they maximise their links with those individuals who exhibit strong connectivity. This in turn should help ensure that CIPEM is effective and has a lasting impact.

Literature Review

This literature review seeks to identify relevant research and baseline information that could inform CIPEM and its priorities for continuous improvement in culture and sport services. It focuses upon similar studies to the baseline approach requested by EMIP and CIPEM and also upon baselines of expenditure by local authorities on culture and sport services in the East Midlands region. Additional resources that relate to the improvement agenda and the connections between regional cultural agencies and local authorities include: Regional Cultural Commentaries and resources from IDeA.

Local government improvement

Regional Commentaries in cultural services are intended to: promote closer alignment of national, regional and local cultural objectives; strengthen and extend relationships between cultural agencies and local authorities; and achieve better, more effective cultural provision from a more unified approach to strategic and improvement planning. There are some key messages from the East Midlands regional cultural commentary process which should be incorporated into CIPEM's strategic planning process and inform CIPEM's role in supporting local government's self-improvement journey.

When considering local authority delivery of culture there are other sector specific sources of intelligence including research commissioned by the National Association of Local Government Arts Officers (NALGAO). Recent studies commissioned by NALGAO include their local authority budget settlement report 2006/2007. This report suggests NALGAO's survey is sent to 309 authorities of whom 44 responded representing over 14% of the NALGAO membership and a total of 10.9% of all authorities in England and Wales.

Other research which specifically took a very similar approach to this CIPEM study was led by the Scottish Executive in 2000 who initiated a similar baseline study 'A Survey of local authority provision for arts and culture', undertaken by Bonnar Keenlyside. The Scottish study sought to identify: the range of arts and cultural provision supplied by local authorities, how local authority departments deliver arts and culture, links between councils and other groups, the levels of participation in arts and cultural activities, evaluation and best value considerations and funding.

In the Scottish study interviews were held with all 32 local authorities, and they were also asked to fill in a questionnaire. The level and quality of information provided varied significantly. In the majority of cases, interviews were held with heads of cultural services departments, who were able to give an overview of the full range of their council's cultural activities. In some cases where this was not possible, councils fielded several people to attempt to give an overview. In a few instances, interviews were held with one person who dealt with only part of the services provided. Some questionnaires were only filled out in part for the same reasons.

The researchers in the Scottish study also drew on the Local Financial Return (LFR), which provides information on the revenue expenditure of each council. The Scottish Executive supplied information about each authority's capital payments. The Convention of Local Authorities (CoSLA) provided data from its 1998/9 survey of local authority expenditure, which related to funding for the arts, libraries, museums and arts teachers – it did not cover sports facilities or natural or built heritage.

Expenditure baseline

In England more broadly information on cultural services within local government is available from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) publishes data resulting from the *Leisure and Recreation Survey* and currently available data is from activity information from the 2005-06 actuals. The latest complete survey is the thirty first annual survey which analyses local authority expenditure (2006-07 estimates) and activity (2005-06 actuals). The survey for 2007-2008 is currently in progress and draft data is available for those authorities who have completed this to date. However, the statistical data resulting from CIPFA is limited in its usefulness for CIPEM's purposes, as it is collated via survey and for the year 2006-2007 suffered from a low response rate of 58%. Understandably therefore in order to allow meaningful comparisons to be made the totals have had to be 'grossed up' to take account of missing data. Further information regarding the *Leisure and Recreation Survey* findings can be found in Appendix.2.

An alternative approach to providing a local authority expenditure baseline for the region was sought using Revenue Outturn Data sourced from the Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG) for RO5 - Cultural, Environmental and Planning 2005-2006. This data breaks down by the East Midlands region, local authority areas and by cultural related services which comprises: archives, arts development and support, heritage, museums and galleries, theatres and public entertainment, community centres, foreshore, sports development and community recreation, sports development and community recreation, sports and recreation facilities, including golf courses, open spaces, tourism and library services. The CLG LGF data also breaks down further still under these category headings by: running expenses, sales fees and charges, employees, other income including joint agreements and totals. As this data is collected as a mandatory process there are no difficulties regarding response rates and the data has not had to be 'grossed up'.

Whilst further analysis of the CIPFA data will be undertaken by the Cultural Observatory and CIPEM, an initial review of this data reveals the following. Local authority expenditure on culture and related services across the East Midlands in 2005-2006 totalled £311.5 million. (This includes NET expenditure on revenue and capital minus spec grants).

Key findings

This section presents the key findings of the baseline study; it focuses initially upon the baseline information collected and then addresses the findings of the social network analysis. The findings are then where possible related to existing intelligence and data such as Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) scores.

The personal information questions included in the online survey requested information on years of experience in delivering cultural services. Responses demonstrated that 24 respondents had been in post for less than 1 year, 54 respondents had been in post for between 1-5 years and 23 respondents had been in post for more than 5 years.

Increasing the profile of cultural services

Question 7 asked respondents to indicate all appropriate existing methods they use to increase the profile of culture amongst local authority directors; portfolio holders and politicians. The respondent local authorities identified the production of induction materials as the most favoured way of improving the profile of culture amongst local authority directors, portfolio holders and politicians. This was closely followed by inviting them to meetings and then by running training sessions in conjunction with members' services. The four authorities that run training for elected members to raise the profile of culture are: East Lindsey District Council, Leicester City Council, Rushcliffe Borough Council and South Kesteven District Council. None of the local authorities who responded reported producing briefings or cabinet reports or inviting elected members to cultural events or openings as a way in which they seek to improve the profile of culture. CIPEM has run a series of elected member events and is examining the possibility of a member leadership programme. CIPEM should continue to explore how the training it offers can dovetail with the work of Local Government East Midlands (LGEM) and sub-regional cultural issues groups.

Questions 10 and 11 of the baseline information section focused upon local authority cultural services involvement and successes with regard to engaging their Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and embedding culture within their local area agreement (LAA). The responses to these questions made it overwhelmingly apparent that nearly all of the local authorities felt they have had little success in embedding culture within local area agreements. This echoes the responses to Question 8, which determined that the highest priority for intervention, training and support is embedding culture in local area agreements (See priority training section of key findings).

CIPEM needs to ensure that the region's local authority Cultural Services teams are given adequate support to negotiate LAAs. As such, CIPEM should pay particular attention to the responses to Question 11. CIPEM could explore further the structures that enable the cultural services staff to engage with the LSP. This responses to this question suggested that a number cultural issues groups exist and are led by cultural services staff notably in: Rutland, Oadby and Wigston, Melton Borough Council, North East Derbyshire, Leicester City, Hinckley and Bosworth and the Derbyshire Dales. In addition to which there are cultural issues groups not led by the cultural services staff in: South Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Erewash and East Lindsey. It would be advisable for CIPEM to make themselves familiar with these groups and seek to determine what

impact or influence they have had or could have on the relevant LSPs. It is apparent from the analysis that the responses suggest those authorities who lead or contribute to a cultural issues group which engages with the LSP feel they have had greater success in embedding culture in LAAs to date. Although in Nottinghamshire and Northamptonshire some successes were reported in embedding culture in the LAA without the aid of a cultural issues group. CIPEM will be seeking to work with the sub-regions to ensure that a shared understanding of success in embedding culture in LAA's is realised.

Priority training

With regard to areas of priority for training and improvement, specifically Question 8, which asked authorities to identify priorities for training or improvement, there was a clear and certain demand for support in embedding culture in future local area agreements. There was unanimous consensus that this was the utmost priority for training. There was also some demand for training in setting targets and indicators for cultural services and for measuring and monitoring these. Of the five authorities who reported a need for performance management support three of the authorities were in Northamptonshire suggesting efforts could wisely be focused initially in this county. There was no demand identified for training in the following areas: Culture as a cross cutting theme in the LAA, Performance management for cultural venues, building upon the regional commentary process, procurement guidance, TAES and other performance management regimes, efficiency and shared service models and approaches, economic impact methodologies and measures, rationalising data collection methods. CIPEM has begun the process of initiating training in response to this demand with its LAA event held in December; however this is not just a priority for CIPEM but also for CIPEM's partners including LGEM and cultural officer groups.

Expenditure baseline

One of the aims of this study was to determine whether local authority cultural services in the East Midlands had faced funding decreases, increases, or if funding had remained static in real terms over the past few financial years. CIPEM also sought to determine whether funding for a particular aspect of the cultural sector had remained any more stable than any other. It became apparent for example in the Scottish study that funding for libraries had remained most consistent when compared to the other areas of cultural services. The data provided by CIPFA should enable the Cultural Observatory to provide CIPEM with evidence of Local Government expenditure on cultural services comparably and accurately. CIPEM will also be working with the Cultural Observatory to ensure that comparable data is available across the sub-regions.

We have been unable to use the data regarding local authority expenditure on cultural services as requested in question.12, as this data proved to be of limited usefulness in establishing an accurate comparable dataset. The Scottish study faced similar difficulties and while the LRF data was available, they reported a lack of consistency in both this data and that provided by the local authorities. This was in part due to the LRF data categories being utilised to report their financial information and this omitting parks and open spaces, formal education, community education and community halls.

Connectivity of Cultural Services

The connection between the various areas of cultural services was explored in Question 9. The local authority representatives were asked how connected they perceived the arts, sport, libraries, museums and archives to be within their authority. In determining this they were asked to consider the existence of joint service delivery plans, frequency of meetings and shared priorities and delivery. The responses suggest that thirteen authorities feel cultural service areas are quite well connected with another six local authorities reporting that they are well connected. Only five local authorities suggested that their cultural service areas are very well connected. These were: South Derbyshire District Council, North West Leicestershire, Leicester City, Hinckley and Bosworth and Erewash Borough Council. There were, however, five local authority representatives who felt that their cultural service areas were not very well connected these were: North Kesteven District Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, Northampton Borough Council, Melton Borough Council and East Northamptonshire District Council. These later five authorities could be targeted for support and to raise awareness of the benefits of shared service provision. There would also be the potential to partner these five authorities with the five who reported having very well connected areas of cultural service delivery to encourage sharing of best practice.

The social network analysis aspect of the study revealed that there are real strengths in terms of collaborative structures and that CIPEM correctly consists of representatives of the sector who exhibit high degrees of ability in terms of leadership, mentorship, problem-solving and potential. The social network analysis also provides CIPEM with the opportunity to identify hidden potential, talent or innovators. CIPEM should draw on these people who, through peer challenge and support, could help to realise other authorities' ambitions towards continuous improvement and to assist poor or weaker authorities to raise standards.

The social network diagrams also reveal some pockets of isolation where collaborative working or lines of communication are weaker. All the local authorities are shown in the chart in Fig.1 along with their CPA category or star category and culture rating where they are available for single tier or county councils. Initially comparing the CPA scores with the connectivity shown by the SNA reveals that there is potentially some association between the two. Certainly council's who score highly on CPA are also seen to be highly connected with other authorities as well as with the regional cultural agencies. The same is true in reverse for Rutland and Lincolnshire who scored low in CPA were also isolated from other authorities and regional cultural agencies. There are however anomalies, such as High Peak and Wellingborough who score excellent in CPA and yet show little or no connection with CIPEM representatives or regional agencies. This suggests that such agencies which are performing well overall do not place the same emphasis on cultural services as some other similar authorities. Such authorities could be a priority for CIPEM focus as an overall successful authority may be able to influence.

CIPEM could draw upon the chart in Fig.1 to prioritise attention on those authorities which score poorly in CPA and also exhibit weak links with other authorities and regional agencies. Some of the authorities which could be of potential focus would include Northampton Borough as a first priority and then others including: North East Derbyshire, North West Leicestershire, East Lindsey and Rutland. There are too many authorities to list here who fall into the 'fair' category and exhibit weak or no links with the

regional cultural agencies. These authorities could be focused upon as part of a second wave of CIPEM intervention.

Subsequent to this research CIPEM placed priority focus on Northampton Borough Council which has included the creation of a sub-board for culture chaired by Martin Allison of IDeA, as part of wider peer led improvement. There has been recognition that to date this focus has led to improvements which would be evident if the social network analysis study were repeated now.

With regard to innovation it seems there are a number of local authorities which exhibit signs of leading innovative practice. These include: Leicester City Council, Northamptonshire County Council, Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council, Corby Borough Council, Lincolnshire County Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, Derbyshire County Council and Derby City Council. Interestingly this list corresponds almost entirely with the list of authorities from which case studies were presented in CIPEM's councilor briefings suggesting that CIPEM were aware of the pockets of innovation and have begun to champion these and raise awareness of them. The only exceptions were a CIPEM case study of Boston which was not revealed on the SNA to be innovating and the SNA identification of Derbyshire Dales District Council and Corby Borough Council as innovative. The innovative practice in the two later authorities has the potential to be recognised in CIPEM's future best practice case studies. CIPEM could also potentially look to bring together Hubs, Gatekeepers and Pulsetakers (HGPs) from within these innovative authorities to tackle problems innovatively and to initiate peer challenge and self-improvement.

Summary

In summary, CIPEM is the most centrally connected organisational structure within the East Midlands cultural services sector. The CIPEM group comprises many HGPs which ensure a wealth of leadership, mentorship, problem-solving ability and potential lies with them. Of the regional cultural agencies Regeneration East Midlands, Sport England and the County Sports Partnerships are currently the most centrally connected to the local authority cultural services agenda. This may be as a result of those regional cultural agencies strategic priorities. They are however all therefore well positioned to encourage increased effective partnership working with and between regional cultural agencies to deliver a cohesive culture and sport offer. Significant the results from this baseline study suggest that a legacy of collaboration is nascent but that it is reliant upon CIPEM responding strategically to the needs and gaps in collaboration identified in this area to date.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The survey and analysis show that CIPEM is ideally positioned to add value to the cultural service sector in the East Midlands. The evidence also reveals that CIPEM needs to target its interventions to address some of the gaps in collaborative and communication structures and respond to the skills needs around LAAs. The analysis in this study has led to the following recommendations:

1. Targeting activity

The combination of CPA scores and the results of the social network analysis provide an indication of the authorities which CIPEM could target for self-improvement. Immediate priority focus has been identified for: Northampton Borough Council, and the Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire sub regions in general. The evidence also suggested that the CIPEM group have been able to successfully identify pockets of innovation to champion in case studies. Where CIPEM is able it should continue to link high performing and well connected authorities with those identified as in need of priority attention. The individuals responsible for innovative and good practice projects should also be brought together to bring their experience to bear on problems and issues facing the sector.

2. Training recommendations

With regard to training sessions it is recommended that CIPEM runs training events which address the overwhelming demand and need for guidance on embedding culture in LAAs. This suggests that the briefings and guidance that CIPEM has produced to date are entirely appropriate and respond to an identifiable need. This process has begun and is ongoing with the first event held in December.

3. Adding value

It is recommended that CIPEM source copies of the induction and briefing materials produced for members by each of the local authorities. They might also seek details of the training sessions that members' services run in the various local authorities. Having an understanding of the volume of briefing and induction material that is received by members with the aim of improving the profile of culture is crucial. Further work should also be undertaken to establish the volume, content, quality and appropriateness of briefing material produced by the region's cultural agencies to influence elected members.

CIPEM should continue to work smartly by identifying pockets of good practice and enabling this to be shared with other authorities. CIPEM has an ongoing role to continue to coordinate effort and sustain the self improvement activity which it initiates both at a regional and sub regional level. In order to achieve its aims CIPEM will need to work with its partners including sub regional cultural officer groups to identify what activity is underway and to plug gaps where necessary.

4. Profile and Influencing

It was revealed that an array of authorities either have a place on a group that addresses culture or convene a cultural issues group as part of their Local Strategic Partnership. CIPEM should explore these groups further and determine who comprises them and what impact or influence they have had or could have on LSPs. The analysis revealed that there is still a lot of work to be done to ensure that culture and sport is seen as a high priority.

5. Further research and analysis

Whilst the research explored the links between cultural service teams and LSPs it is acknowledged that it did not explore the links between cultural service teams and other local authority departments. This could be a further area of focus for CIPEM analysis in the future.

The financial information available from CIPFA will be collected and the analysis appended to this report. This should provide an opportunity to validate or challenge some of the claims made by survey research such as that undertaken by NALGAO which suggests that investment in the arts by local authorities is on the decline.

This survey provides a baseline of how the collaborative structures within the East Midlands Cultural services sector operate today. For longer-term value and to provide an evaluation of CIPEM it is suggested that a second measure be performed again 1-2 years from the initial baseline. This would equally apply to the baseline information questions, which could be replicated to see whether people's perceptions changed with regard to priorities and successes at embedding culture.