

Isle Of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority

Organisational Assessment (Summary version)

Dated 9 December 2009



oneplace

for an independent overview
of local public services

Isle Of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority

Overall, Isle Of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority performs adequately

Managing performance	2 out of 4
Use of resources	2 out of 4
Managing finances	2 out of 4
Governing the business	2 out of 4
Managing resources	2 out of 4

Description of scores:

1. An organisation that does not meet minimum requirements, Performs Poorly
2. An organisation that meets only minimum requirements, Performs Adequately
3. An organisation that exceeds minimum requirements, Performs Well
4. An organisation that significantly exceeds minimum requirements, Performs Excellently

Summary

Isle of Wight Fire Service performs adequately overall.

Performance levels are generally high and the service has a good track record of improvement. Although the cost of the service is high compared to others it is delivering better than average performance. The service responds well overall to emergencies and is helping to make local communities safer. Deaths and injuries from fires are low and the number of fires is reducing. With partners it is effective in improving road safety.

Currently the service has two weaknesses holding it back, which it is working to improve. Retained duty system fire crews are often not available - retained duty system staff have other jobs and are available on call for a certain number of hours per week, living close to their local fire stations. This is being tackled by a major transformation programme, known as 'Model for Change' which aims to increase the number of whole-time fire fighters. And better risk information will be provided to fire fighters attending incidents by introducing mobile data technology.

The service works well with partners, for example in dealing with emergencies and educating the public to improve community safety.

The service has good leadership and a strong commitment to improve. Significant extra funding has been approved and robust improvement plans are in place.

It has a good knowledge of the community and its needs from extensive consultation on specific issues. However the service lacks an effective

mechanism for ongoing community engagement and has yet to fully engage with local councillors and scrutiny on fire issues.

Arrangements for managing finances are effective. The service has a good track record of managing expenditure within budgets and achieving efficiency savings. There is good use of partnership working to secure added value for money and improve service delivery.

The current workforce of the service does not match its needs in regard to skills and availability. The service has not been able to develop a formal workforce strategy until 'Model for Change' was approved but many of the components are in place such as an assessment of training needs and succession plans for future management changes. The service is making good progress in improving equality and diversity having been externally assessed at level 3 of the Equality Standard for Local Government, Targets for diversity and equality have been set for the workforce but currently these are not being achieved and there is no clear action plan to achieve them.

CAA looks at how well local public services, working together, are meeting the needs of the people they serve. It's a joint assessment made by a group of independent watchdogs about the performance of local public services, and how likely they are to meet local priorities. From 9 December you will find the results of Comprehensive Area Assessment on the Oneplace website - <http://oneplace.direct.gov.uk/>

Alternative formats - If you require a copy of PDF documents in this site in large print, in Braille, on tape, or in a language other than English, please call: 0844 798 7070

Audit Commission, 1st Floor, Millbank Tower, Millbank, London SW1P 4HQ
Telephone: 0844 798 1212
Fax: 0844 798 2945
Textphone (minicom): 0844 798 2946
www.audit-commission.gov.uk



for an independent overview
of local public services