

# Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority

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The way Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority is run and the delivery of its services is **good** (on the scale: excellent/good/fair/weak/poor).

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## What are Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority's main strengths?

- It has a strong performance culture, which has led to significant successes including a reduction in accidental dwelling fires of 35 per cent over the past five years.
- It has developed key strengths through appointing experienced and committed specialists, particularly in community safety.
- It operates well at a strategic level, taking a risk management approach to determining priorities with plans that relate closely to the government's national framework.
- Decision making is effective, with a good relationship existing between members and senior management.

## What are Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority's areas for improvement?

- Engagement with staff is hindered by the traditional hierarchical culture that exists within the Authority. Cultural change has not kept pace with other changes in the modernisation agenda.
- Limited resources have created pressures on the Authority's support services, such as human resources, ICT and finance.

## ***What is the Audit Commission's role in CPA?***

- *The Audit Commission is an independent body working to check that public money is being spent well on local government, housing, health, community safety and fire and rescue services.*
  - *Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) is about helping fire authorities to deliver better services to local people.*
  - *Fire CPA is an assessment, at the corporate level, of how well the authority is being run. It does not give an opinion on how well the fire service responds to emergency incidents.*
  - *All fire authorities in England were inspected from January to May 2005 and results published in July 2005.*
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## **What do fire authorities do?**

- *All fire authorities have the responsibility to control and administer the business of the fire brigade in their area. They ensure that the duties such as putting out fires, community fire safety, dealing with road accidents and flooding, and responding to major emergencies are correctly discharged.*
- *The day-to-day management of brigades is delegated to the Chief Fire Officer. Fire authorities oversee and direct the work of the fire brigade.*
- *The money for these services comes mainly from precepts on council tax, government grants, fees, and charges.*

## **What happens next?**

*Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority will use our report to help it improve the services that it provides to local people. It will be supported in this work by the [Office of the Deputy Prime Minister](#). You can get more information from the Authority's website on [www.hwfire.org.uk](http://www.hwfire.org.uk) or by telephoning 01905 24454.*

Date: 28 July 2005

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