

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION

Council's Pledge to reform Police Use-of-Force department policies.

Wendell Shirley, Chief, 452-2031
Police Department

DIRECTION NEEDED FROM COUNCIL**INFORMATION
ONLY**

As a result of the final report and recommendations from the Office of Independent Review (OIR) Group concerning police use of force policies, the City has been implementing reforms as directed by the final step of the Council's Pledge. Staff will share the progress on responding to the recommendations since the last quarterly update to Council. No Council action is needed.

RECOMMENDATION

N/A

BACKGROUND & ANALYSIS

This Council item is a routine quarterly update on ongoing progress on the Council's Pledge to review the Police Department's use of force policies.

On June 11, 2020, Mayor Lynne Robinson, with the support of Council, pledged to review police use of force policies to identify any potential reforms. In September 2020, the City hired OIR Group to review the Bellevue Police Department's policies surrounding use-of-force. After community engagement with stakeholders and the community at large, OIR Group completed its analysis of the police use-of-force policies. On April 12, 2021 the OIR Group presented its final report and recommendations to Council. Since June 2021, the Police Department has presented quarterly on the progress status of implementing the recommendations.

At the last progress report on January 18, it was reported that the department had responded to 32 of the 47 recommendations (68 percent). Since then, the Police Department has addressed the remaining 15 OIR recommendations. The updated policy revisions associated with these recommendations have been presented to the affected unions before final publication.

This last set of recommendations focused on updating the department's policies to match its current practices and incorporating more formalized processes for reviewing use of force incidents. The department expanded its existing officer-involved shooting review board process to include critical incidents that involve serious bodily injury and other serious uses of force incidents. The department also updated its Critical Incident Response and Use of Force Reporting/Notifications policies to reflect its current practices for investigating and reviewing each use of force incident.

Additionally, the department revised its existing Early Warning System to reflect the recommendations of OIR Group to formalize the system to allow for early, positive intervention for an officer whose work performance trends exhibit the potential to review and where appropriate allow for implementation of

remedial measures such as training, debriefing, mentoring, and wellness to address any underlying performance issues.

In 2020, the Legislature required the state Attorney General’s Office (AGO) to develop a model policy on law enforcement use of force and de-escalation tactics consistent with the new standards set by the Legislature. The model policy was officially published on July 1 and all state law enforcement agencies are required to adopt the model policy or adopt their own policy consistent with the standards by December 31. OIR Group was hired by the AGO to assist in developing the Model Use of Force Policy. The Bellevue Police Department’s Use of Force policy was referenced as one of the sources used in developing the model policy for the state. A review of this model policy shows that our use of force policies are in line with best practices set out for the state.

Having addressed all 47 OIR recommendations, this completes the quarterly updates on the Police Department’s progress on implementing the use of force recommendations.

POLICY & FISCAL IMPACTS

Policy Impact

The Pledge prompted reforms to use of force policies of the Police Department.

Fiscal Impact

All potential new fiscal impacts have yet to be determined. Most recommendations that present a cost are already budgetarily achievable within the adopted budget. Some mandated legislative changes may prompt the procurement of equipment or other costs that are achievable through the assistance of grant funding specifically set for implementation of legislative mandates.

OPTIONS

N/A

ATTACHMENTS

A. Office of Independent Review Group – Report and Final Recommendations

AVAILABLE IN COUNCIL LIBRARY

N/A