

## **BCC Opening Statement**

1. Welcome the Inspector, Mr Simon Emerson, to Bristol. Thanks to all stakeholders who have been involved in the lengthy process of producing the Core strategy. Thanks to Programme Officer Robert Young for his strenuous efforts.
2. The Council considers the Core Strategy sets out a sound, strategic approach to the future development of Bristol. It will provide a clear and distinctive vision for development on the city, with a focus on regeneration in areas of disadvantage and where there is potential for transformative change.
3. Core strategy's examination process has coincided with a very interesting time; a change in national government – the first such change for 13 years. The incoming government has signalled at an early stage that it wishes to take new approaches to planning.
4. The council considers that the government's intended abolition of Regional Spatial Strategies has particularly significant implications for this Core Strategy. The Inspector has programmed this matter for discussion on 21 July or later. The related issue of the government's approach to green belt is also of significance to the Core Strategy, and its broader context, and will form part of that discussion.
5. In response to various concerns raised by the Inspector about the Core Strategy's soundness, the Council has put forward suggested changes to the wording for the Inspector's consideration. The Secretary of State's announcement on RSS is likely to mean that additional changes are appropriate to ensure that the Core Strategy is suitably flexible and responsive to the government's emerging policies. Therefore, the Council will offer further changes where these would be appropriate to address the changing circumstances. These suggested changes will be provided for the Inspector's consideration well in advance of the examination session on 21 July.
6. Whilst the changing national policy context will require some change to the Core Strategy, the Council considers that overall the document sets out the appropriate approach to development. It is based on a clear, locally derived vision and addresses the relevant local issues.
7. Look forward to lively and informative hearings and welcome the Inspector's role in further shaping a sound approach to planning in the city.