

## **CHILTERN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES of the Meeting of the LICENSING & REGULATION COMMITTEE held on 12 OCTOBER 2011**

**PRESENT:** Councillor P N Shepherd - Chairman

Councillors: S P Berry  
M J Cunnane  
G K Harris  
P J Hudson  
P M Jones  
H A Trevette  
M Vivis

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** were received from Councillors D G Meacock, Mrs J A Burton, D J Lacey, S A Patel, M Prince and N Stewart

#### **8 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 2 June 2011 were agreed by the Committee and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

#### **9 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **10 CHILTERN DISTRICT DRIVERS' ASSOCIATION**

Following a request from the Licensing and Regulation Committee, members of the Chiltern District Drivers' Association and representatives from other taxi operators were in attendance to discuss taxi and private hire licensing in the Chiltern District.

The Chairman opened the meeting by noting the important (and often unrecognised) role undertaken by taxi and private hire drivers. The group were a significant service provider in the district and provided an important service to vulnerable groups. The following key points were then raised during the ensuing discussion:

- Reference was made to the reasons for the Council's decision not to increase fares in 2011. Drivers advised that they did not need to be told about the impact fare increases had on vulnerable people. They were well aware and were only asking for what was fair. They stated that they knew the community well and did not feel that an increase would have unfairly affected vulnerable people.
- The number of drivers was causing parking problems and issues with parking attendants. Concern was expressed that new regulations

allowing the Police to enforce traffic regulations would exacerbate the situation. Drivers requested as much parking as possible. Regarding the assertion that the number of drivers was a cause of the parking problems, Members asked whether consideration of a limit on the number of drivers would help; the drivers declined to discuss this. One representative from a taxi operator disputed that there were too many drivers.

- Drivers considered that comparisons with fares in Wycombe were unfair since facilities such as the university, hospital, and lots of social venues, generated a lot of taxi work in Wycombe.
- It was suggested that one of the bus stops by 'Simply the Best' Dry Cleaners in Chesham could be moved, and a taxi rank installed. The Licensing Officer confirmed that this had been explored with Bucks Highways but had been refused on technical and safety grounds due to the turning circle requirements of buses.
- The Head of Health and Housing advised that the Licensing Authority could make suggestions to Bucks Highways regarding the placement of taxi ranks. The process took approximately 6 months, and the trade would need to provide maps with locations.
- Concern was raised at the subsidised buses that were taking trade away from drivers, though it was acknowledged that buses were the responsibility of the County Council.
- Reference was made to incidents in the Prestwood / Missenden area where it had been alleged that unlicensed vehicles, and vehicles with Aylesbury Vale plates had been seen operating. It was confirmed that the Licensing Authority were aware of the issue, and it was being investigated in partnership with Thames Valley Police and Aylesbury Vale District Council. Concern was expressed from an operator that it had taken some time for the licensing authority to take action following the complaints, and that action had only been taken once the local Councillor became involved. The Head of Health and Housing advised that he would look into the issue as a complaint against the service.
- Drivers were thanked for observing the Remembrance Day Silence in Chesham each year.

The Chairman advised that the Licensing Authority were keen to re-invigorate the Taxi Forum and maintain a dialogue with drivers, operators, the police and Bucks Highways to resolve issues. Two Members of the Committee would also be on the forum, and it was agreed that this should be the Chairman or in his absence the Vice-Chairman, and one other – interested Members should contact officers.

The Chairman thanked all drivers and operators for attending; it was hoped that a similar event could be held in future. A proposal document from the Chiltern District Drivers' Association was left with the Democratic Services Officer for circulation to Members.

## **RESOLVED –**

**That the matters raised by the Chiltern District Drivers' Association and representatives from other operators be noted.**

*Note: Following the meeting Councillor H Trevette volunteered to be a representative on the Taxi Forum.*

## **11 WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee considered the Work Programme for October 2011 to November 2012.

It was noted that a review of hearing procedures for Taxi & Private Hire Licensing Sub Committees and Licensing Sub Committees had been added to the work programme for 24 November.

It was noted that the report 'Hackney Carriages: Options for extra charges' was being presented to the Committee on 24 November, but had been requested at the meeting on 2 June. The Head of Health and Housing advised that the delay was due to the intensive license renewal process which took place from July onwards. The lack of staff resources, and the requirement to process the licenses to ensure that the trade could operate, meant that this work had had to be prioritised. A rolling renewal process would operate in future to better manage workloads.

## **RESOLVED –**

**That the Work Programme of the Licensing and Regulation Committee – with the addition on 24 November of Hearing Procedures for Taxi & Private Hire and Licensing Sub Committees – be noted.**

*Note: the Agenda order was amended since the applicant for the Street Trading Consent (discussed as Minute 12) had been delayed.*

## **12 STREET TRADING CONSENT**

The Committee considered an application made to the Licensing Authority for the grant of a street trading consent to sell Asian food from a mobile food van to be located on the High Street in Chesham.

The Licensing Officer presented the details of the application.

During the period of consultation an objection had been received from Chesham Town Council. An Officer from Environmental Health had also submitted comments for Members' information, although no formal objection had been made. In light of the valid objection received, the full Licensing and Regulation Committee were asked to determine the application.

The applicant was invited to address the Committee. He advised that he operated at Chesham Market on Wednesdays and Saturdays, and was

seeking additional days at the request of customers. He did not mind where he was located on the High Street, as long as his presence was visible.

In response to questions, the applicant confirmed that he did have a litter bin and would ensure the area was left clean and tidy; he currently operated from Kempton Park Race course when not operating in Chiltern. In response to concerns that his vehicle would block access to delivery vehicles, the applicant opined that there was sufficient room. He also advised that he provided a different product to other food establishments on the High Street.

The Chairman thanked the applicant for attending, and the applicant and the Officers then left the meeting. The Legal Services Manager and the Democratic Services Officer remained behind for the purpose of giving legal advice and recording the decision only.

Following the Committee's deliberations and determination, the applicant was invited back into the meeting to be told the outcome. Confirmation of the decision of the Committee would be sent to the applicant within 10 working days detailing the reasons for the decision.

#### **RESOLVED –**

**That the application for the Street Trading Consent be refused for the following reasons:**

- i) The Committee wished to concentrate Street Trading activities on market days so as not to detract from the market, which was working hard to consolidate and improve.**
- ii) There was a danger that granting the application would set a precedent for granting consents for other mobile catering and other outlets which could threaten the sustainability and long term viability of the Town Centre by attracting business away from the permanent shops and businesses.**
- iii) Granting the application could cause an obstruction to delivery vehicles in the High Street on days when the street was not closed for the market.**

**The meeting ended at 8.02 pm**

# **Proposal Document Chiltern District Drivers Association**

### **Introduction**

**Chiltern District drivers association is a voluntary organisation our purpose is to represent the Licenced Hackney / Private Carriage Taxi drivers in the Chiltern District (UK).**

#### **Our Objective:**

**The current recession has hit our trade very hard and the drop in the work levels is evident for all to see in the long lines of cabs on all the ranks and the sheer number of empty taxis on the streets.**

**Taxi Rank Allocations**

We would like to see an extension of existing locations i.e Chesham Broadway  
The current rank ends at Broadway barbers we would like to extend this to just past the Nationwide Bank.

We would like to see an extension of the rank in Amersham next to boots, either move the rank to the high street or extend the rank to allow for more vehicles.

**More taxi ranks**

We would also like to see new ranks available in the following locations:

Amersham - High Street  
Old Amersham – High Street  
Great Missenden – Station Road  
Chalfont St Giles – High Street  
Chalfont St Peter – High Street  
Seer Green Station – Seer Green Station  
Little Chalfont - Chalfont parade  
Holmer Green – High Street

Please can the Council suggest additional / new locations?

## Fare Increase

We have not seen a fare increase in the last three years and in Licensing & regulations committee meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> June it was decided a recommendation to Head of Health and Housing that there be no change to the table of fares.

Looking at the initial report the request by drivers of 12% increase, we would like to re-evaluate this and would like the council to communicate via local papers a gradual increase in line with inflation. Initially we would like to go for option (iv)

			(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)
Tariff	Distance	Existing Fare	1% increase	2% increase	RPI increase (4 %)	Baxter Increase (6%)	Driver's proposal for increase (approx 12%)
1	One mile day	£3.40	£3.43	£3.47	£3.54	3.60	£3.80
1	Two mile day	£5.20	£5.25	£5.30	£5.41	5.51	£5.70
2	One mile night/ bank holiday	£5.10	£5.15	£5.20	£5.30	5.41	£5.70
2	Two mile night/ bank holiday	£7.80	£7.88	£7.96	£8.11	8.27	£8.70
4	1 mile bank holiday night, and Xmas day, Boxing day New Years day	£6.80	£6.87	£6.94	£7.07	£7.21	£7.60
4	2 mile bank holiday night, and Xmas day, Boxing day New Years day	£10.40	£10.50	£10.61	£10.82	11.02	£11.60

*(N.B although the percentage figures are shown above, final operational figures will require further calculation to enable them to work mathematically)*

- That a further report detailing the various options for increasing extra charges for hackney carriages be brought before the Licensing and regulations Committee at future meetings. –
- Question - How far have you progressed with this and can we see this report today if possible.

### **Our suggestions-**

1. Increase Soiling Charge to £80
2. With Reference to this could you please advise the Head of Health and Housing on the introduction of a new MPV tariff at a 50% premium as discussed in the main report or a change to the per passenger tariff. The price per additional person over 4 to equal £3
3. Tariff 1 starts at £3.40 and continue with existing prices.



Other implications for a request of an increase of fares include: recession, more licenses distribution, drivers from other districts (Winkers), fuel prices, Insurance increases, tyre prices, car parts, inflation – please refer to appendix 4.

### **Hackney carriage / Private hire badge renewal proposal**

Please see Appendix 1 which shows surrounding councils fees for badge renewals

The Chiltern District Council has a yearly renewal process and our proposals are:

1. Reduction in the renewal cost from £95 to £50
2. Increase the duration of the badge to three years Cost to be double the price of a year renewal.

Please see Appendix 3 for links to see fees for all surrounding districts.

### **Hackney carriage / Private hire plate renewal proposal**

Please see Appendix 2 which shows surrounding councils fees for plate renewals.

The Chiltern District Council has a yearly renewal process and our proposals are:

1. Reduction in the renewal cost of driver plates from £300 to £150 for both plates.
2. Even lower fee for vehicle a year old and duration to increase to three years of plate.

Please see Appendix 3 for links to see all fees for surrounding districts.

### **Medical reports proposal**

We would like to change the current medical standards, so that drivers can seek medicals from other surgeries as their GP's are booked up and prices vary by GP. Suggestions include:

1. If the councils can enforce surgeries to fix prices for medicals.
2. Medicals can be done by any GP or Medical centre in the Chiltern District.

### **IMPORTANT NOTES AND REQUIRED MEDICAL STANDARDS**

#### **Notes:**

2. The Medical Examination and Taxi Driver Medical Report must be completed by the Driver's own General Practitioner, or one within the same practice. Payment for the examination is required and is the responsibility of the Driver.

### **Vehicle Compliance proposal**

1. We would like to abolish the six month compliance of vehicles over six years and should go back to yearly compliance and have a cap on vehicles of ten years old.
2. Vehicles one year old have compliance after three years.

### **Council license badge applications increasing**

The council is issuing badges; we would like to know if there is a limit to these.

### **Hackney badge holders proposal**

Current hackney carriage drivers wishing to drive a private hire vehicle have to re-apply as new drivers having to go through all the existing checks and fees again

These include:

1. Licence Application
2. CRB Check
3. Medical Report
4. Knowledge test
5. Drivers test

We suggest that the Chiltern District Council have a dual badge similar to some surrounding districts and feel this is impractical and waste of council time and resource.

### **Police Protection**

A number of our drivers have been either attacked, robbed assaulted and the lack of response or follow up by the police has left a lot of drivers with no confidence in this service.

### **Council communication**

We would like to improve our communication and awareness of our committee and have included contact details - Appendix 5 shows all the committee members.

Please can the Council include any communication or legislation changes affecting the drivers association to send emails to our committee members?

We have several instances of changes to go ahead without any knowledge or awareness.

We would like to have a meeting once a month with committee members.

**Other**

The committee report referenced that:

A large proportion of drivers work for themselves. As such the following costs may be considered for a typical driver (approximately and based on driver with 5 years' experience) in the Chiltern District:

Cost Elements	Rates (2011)	Annualised Cost
Plate Renewal – Vehicles	£300	£300
Badge Renewal - Drivers	£95	£95
Medical Certificate (Every 1,3 or 5 years) approx.	£100	£25
CRB Check (Every 3 years)	£51	£17
Compliance Test £40-60 (annual or twice annually depending on age of vehicle)	£60	£60
MOT (If older than 3years) (but can be discounted if done with compliance test)	£45	£45
Car Tax Variable from £0 to £450 approx £220 approx	£400	£220
Insurance £1000- £1200	£1,200	£1,200
Total (Approx £1962)	£2,251	£1,962

**Note:**

This is not the case a large proportion of drivers work for operators, and cost vary from £50 - £170 per week. There is a small proportion of drivers that work for themselves.

## Appendix 1

Council	Type ID	Type	Duration	Fee (£)
South Bucks District	Plate	Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence - Annual Renewal	1 year	190
	Plate	Private Hire Carriage Vehicle Licence - Annual Renewal	1 year	160
Wycombe District Council	Plate	Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence - Annual Renewal Under 6yrs	1 year	234
	Plate	Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence - Annual Renewal 6yrs and over	6 months	138
	Plate	Private Hire Carriage Vehicle Licence - Annual Renewal Under 6yrs	1 year	222
	Plate	Private Hire Carriage Vehicle Licence - Annual Renewal 6yrs and over	6 months	138
	Plate	Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence - Annual Renewal	1 year	200
Dacorum Borough Council	Plate	Private Hire Carriage Vehicle Licence - Annual Renewal	1 year	200
	Plate	Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence - Annual Renewal Under 6yrs	1 year	331
Aylesbury Vale District Council	Plate	Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence - Annual Renewal 6yrs and over	1 year	372
	Plate	Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence - Annual Renewal	1 year	300
Chiltern District Council	Plate	Private Hire Carriage Vehicle Licence - Annual Renewal	1 year	200
	Plate	Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence - Annual Renewal	1 year	126
Three Rivers District Council	Plate	Private Hire Carriage Vehicle Licence - Annual Renewal	1 year	126
	Plate	Private Hire Carriage Vehicle Licence - Annual Renewal	1 year	126

## Appendix 2

Council	Type ID	Type	Duration	Fee (£)
South Bucks District	Badge	Hackney Carriage Drivers Licence - Annual Renewal	1 year	50
	Badge	Private Hire Drivers Licence - Annual Renewal	1 year	50
	Badge	Dual Drivers Licence (Private Hire & Hackney Carriage) - Annual Renewal	1 year	55
Wycombe District Council	Badge	Hackney carriages drivers licence 3yrs Duration	3 years	148
	Badge	Private Hire drivers licence 3yrs Duration	3 years	148
	Badge	Dual Drivers Licence (Private Hire & Hackney Carriage) 3yrs Duration	3 years	217
Dacorum Borough Council	Badge	Hackney Carriage Drivers Licence	1 year	52
	Badge	Hackney Carriage Drivers Licence	3 years	105
Aylesbury Vale District Council	Badge	Hackney carriages drivers licence 1yr Duration	1 year	79
	Badge	Private Hire drivers licence 1yr Duration	1 year	79
	Badge	Hackney carriages drivers licence 3yrs Duration	3 years	156
Chiltern District Council	Badge	Private Hire drivers licence 3yrs Duration	3 years	156
	Badge	Hackney Carriage Drivers Licence - Annual Renewal	1 year	95
	Badge	Private Hire Drivers Licence - Annual Renewal	1 year	95
Three Rivers District Council	Badge	Hackney Carriage Drivers Licence - Annual Renewal	1 year	126
	Badge	Private Hire Drivers Licence - Annual Renewal	1 year	126

**Appendix 4**

**Contact Details**

**Chairman**

**Masud Ahmed**

**Mobile: 07876502324**

**Email: Masud\_132@hotmail.co.uk**

**Vice Chairman**

**Qaser Mahmood**

**Mobile: 07748764797**

**Email: qaser.mahmood@yahoo.co.uk**

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**Mobile: 07956601784**

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**Mohammed Latif**

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**Vice Tresurer**

**Faisal Rehman**

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**Email: faisal\_fazal\_rahman@hotmail.com**

### Appendix 3

#### Useful links:

<http://www.ltda.co.uk/>

<http://www.taxi-driver.co.uk/>

<https://isa.chiltern.gov.uk/democracy/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=120&MIId=1939&Ver=4>

<http://www.bankofengland.co.uk/publications/inflationreport/ir11aug4.pdf>

#### Council links for fees:

##### Chiltern District Council

[http://www.chiltern.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents\\_info.php?documentID=194&pageNumber=12](http://www.chiltern.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?documentID=194&pageNumber=12)

##### Aylesbury Council

<http://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/business/licensing-regulation/taxi-licensing/hackney-carriage-vehicle-licence/>

##### Watford Council

<http://www.dacorum.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=3831>

##### High Wycombe Council

<http://www.wycombe.gov.uk/council-services/business/licences-and-street-trading/taxi-licences/fees.aspx>

##### South Bucks Council

[http://www.southbucks.gov.uk/business/licences/taxi\\_and\\_minicab\\_licences/schedule\\_of\\_licensing\\_fees.aspx](http://www.southbucks.gov.uk/business/licences/taxi_and_minicab_licences/schedule_of_licensing_fees.aspx)

#### Future Events:

##### **Licensing & Regulations Committee Meeting:**

**12<sup>th</sup> October 18.30 Chiltern District Council Offices**

**24<sup>th</sup> November 18.30 Chiltern District Council Offices**

## Appendix 4

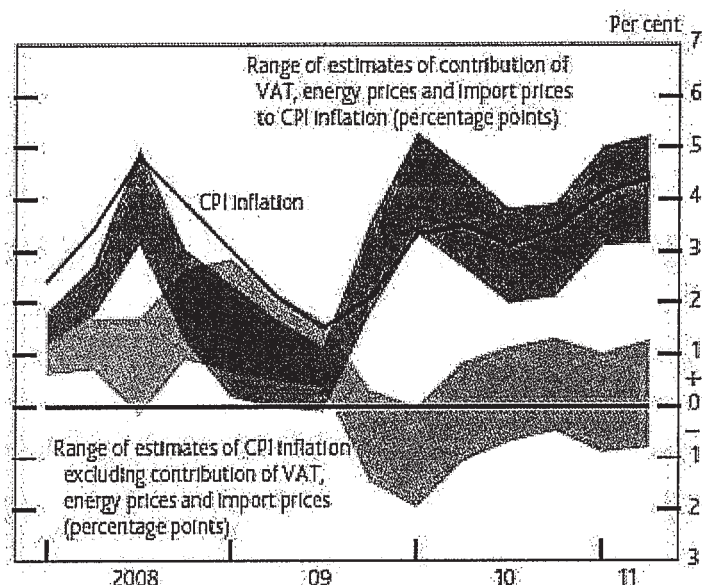
### Information from the Bank of England

CPI inflation averaged 4.4% in 2011 Q2. The current elevated rate of inflation reflects increases in VAT, energy prices and import prices. Inflation is likely to rise further this year, boosted by increases in utility prices. Excluding the effects of VAT, energy prices and import prices, the prices of other goods and services have been rising at a rate well below the inflation target. Aggregate data suggest that profit margins have returned to pre-recession levels, although they may remain below normal in consumer-facing sectors. Nominal wage growth remained subdued. Evidence from movements in indicators of longer-term inflation expectations continued to be mixed.

CPI inflation was 4.2% in June and averaged 4.4% in 2011 Q2. With April's CPI outturn of 4.5% lying more than 1 percentage point away from the target, the Governor, on behalf of the Committee, wrote an open letter to the Chancellor.<sup>(1)</sup> The current elevated rate of inflation reflects the temporary impact of rises in VAT, energy prices and import prices (Chart 4.1). These factors are likely to be able to explain why inflation was above target throughout 2010 and the first half of 2011. Bank analysis suggests that VAT, energy prices and import prices added around 3 to 5 percentage points to



**Chart 4.1 CPI inflation and the contribution of VAT, energy prices and import prices<sup>(a)</sup>**



Sources: ONS and Bank calculations.

(a) The details behind these calculations are set out in the box on pages 34–35 of the February 2011 *Inflation Report*. The range of estimates of the impact of VAT on CPI inflation assumes that between 25% and 75% of the share of prices subject to VAT changed following the December 2008 and January 2010 VAT changes, and that between 50% and 100% of prices subject to VAT changed following the January 2011 VAT increase. The examples make the simplifying assumption that businesses only changed their prices in the month in which VAT was changed. The VAT range is adjusted to allow for changes in VAT on petrol prices already being incorporated in the energy price impacts. The lower bound of the range of estimates of the impact of energy prices on CPI inflation is based on the direct contribution from electricity, gas and other fuels and fuels and lubricants. The upper bound of the impact of energy prices range also includes an estimate of indirect effects, calculated as the average of the direct energy effects in the current and previous two quarters. The range of estimates of the impact of import prices on CPI inflation is based on differences between CPI goods inflation excluding energy and CPI services inflation excluding airfares. Further details can be found in the footnote to Chart B on page 34 of the February 2011 *Inflation Report*. The total range is calculated by adding together the top and bottom of the ranges of the individual impacts of VAT, energy prices and import prices. The green swathe shows CPI inflation less the minimum and the maximum of the blue swathe.

CPI inflation in 2011 Q2,<sup>(1)</sup> although it is impossible to identify the effects of those factors with any precision. The evolution of these factors, relative to what was expected at the time of the May 2010 *Report*, is discussed in the box on pages 48–49. The rest of this subsection discusses recent developments in the factors raising inflation in more detail, and also considers developments in domestically generated inflation.

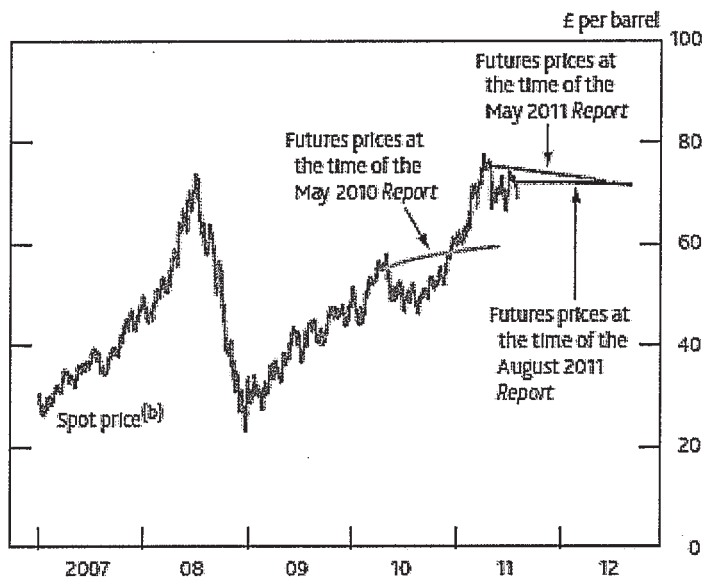
## VAT

The rise in VAT is likely to have added around 1 percentage point to CPI inflation in 2011. That estimate is based on Bank staff's assessment that around three quarters of the increase in the standard rate of VAT to 20% in January 2011 had been passed into consumer prices by the end of Q1. The size of this effect should remain broadly the same until it drops out of the twelve-month comparison in early 2012. But there is uncertainty around the extent of pass-through. Alternative pass-through assumptions of 50% or 100% would imply contributions of VAT to CPI inflation of 0.7 and 1.4 percentage points respectively.

## Energy prices

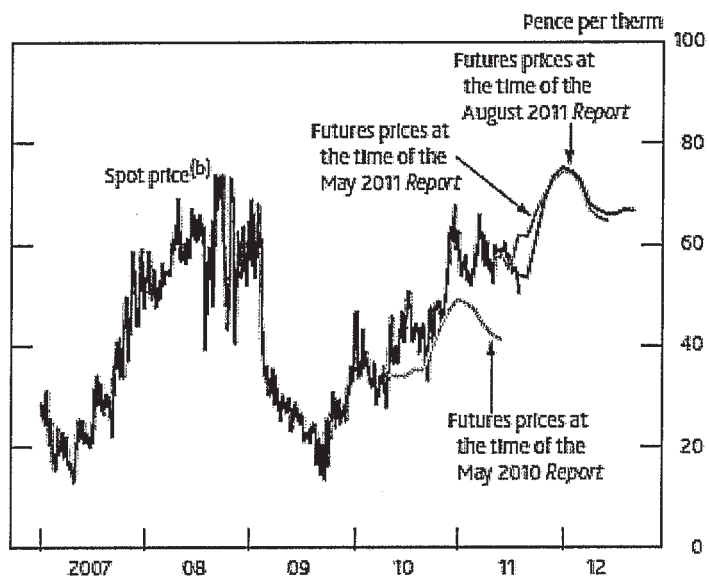
Sterling oil and wholesale gas prices over the fifteen working days to 3 August were similar to those in the run-up to the *May Report* (**Charts 4.2 and 4.3**). But over the past year as a whole, oil and gas prices are around 45% and 25% higher respectively. Those large rises in energy prices over the past year have put significant upward pressure on CPI inflation. Petrol prices directly contributed 0.6 percentage points to CPI inflation in the second quarter of 2011, and retail gas and electricity prices added a further 0.3 percentage points (**Chart 4.4**). But higher energy prices also have indirect effects that will have further added to CPI inflation, for example by raising production and transport costs. In the fifteen working days

**Chart 4.2 Sterling oil prices(a)**



Sources: Bloomberg, Thomson Reuters Datastream and Bank calculations.

- (a) The futures prices shown are averages during the fifteen working days to 3 August 2011, 4 May 2011 and 7 May 2010. Each futures curve assumes that the sterling-dollar exchange rate remains constant at its average during those periods.  
 (b) Brent forward prices for delivery in 10–21 days' time converted into sterling.

Chart 4.3 Sterling gas prices<sup>(a)</sup>

Sources: Bloomberg, Thomson Reuters Datastream and Bank calculations.

(a) The futures prices shown are averages during the fifteen working days to 3 August 2011, 4 May 2011 and 7 May 2010.

(b) One-day forward price of UK natural gas.

Source: <http://www.bankofengland.co.uk/publications/inflationreport/ir11aug4.pdf>