

HAPTC Subscriptions formula explained

Earlier history

In the pen-and-paper age, when everything had to be calculated manually, HAPTC subscriptions were based on broad population bands, which led to unfairness for those Councils near the edge of a band.

Around 2000, it was calculated that the cost of running HAPTC was about £330 per member Council. A flat rate subscription of £320 was impossible since smaller councils (we had one of 123 electors) could not afford it, while a proportional-to-size subscription was also impossible, because if a large council left (our largest was 26092 electors), our finances would collapse. (This happened to Nottinghamshire ALC, with its proportional-to-size subscription, when its largest member resigned.)

Meanwhile, Council Tax had changed from a per-electors system to a property-value-bands system, and the HAPTC Executive Committee took the far-sighted decision likewise to base its subscriptions on the Band-D-equivalent tax base of each member Council, as better reflecting the general level of resources within each respective Parish.

So, with the aid of spreadsheet technology, a Band-D-based subscriptions formula was devised whereby all Councils (those with over 800 band-D-equivalent properties) paid £320 plus an additional 8p per Band D-equivalent on their whole taxbase, but "Smaller" Councils (fewer than 800 Band-Ds) were rebated 3.4p per Band-D by which their taxbase was less than 800. HAPTC absorbed the NALC affiliation fee out of this subscription.

However, this rebating formula failed under the impact of our affiliation fee to NALC and was starting to give anomalous results, especially for very small councils.

Birth of the current formula

In 2003, it was decided that our subscriptions invoice to Member Councils should separately itemise the NALC affiliation fee attributable to them. At the same time, the HAPTC formula was reformed, and the thinking behind it evolved as follows:

All Councils except the very smallest to be charged: **£330 + 3p per Band D**
[Remember the old basic of "£320"]. The "3p" was arrived at arbitrarily, because our larger Councils had been pointing out that the old 8p/Band-D supplement was a burden far in excess of our extra costs of providing them with membership services.

For the smallest Councils: a straight **66p per Band-D** where this would be cheaper for them than the above £330+3p/Band-D. This was intuitively arrived at on the basis that it would be unconscionable for any Band-D Council Tax-payer to be paying more than £²/₃ towards HAPTC.

However, upon review of the resulting draft spreadsheet, it became evident that the medium-size Councils would face astronomical rises, so, as an "interim" measure (which remains to this day!), we introduced an intermediate rate:
for medium Councils: **£110 + 33p/Band-D.**

Every Council is automatically charged according to which of these three formulae will be **cheapest** for it (this being a simple task with modern spreadsheets).

The subscriptions charged today are the direct successors to that, with small annual increases to the factors being made in most years since then.