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To Whom it May Concern

We have been a ratepayers to Maitland City Council since 1980 and wish to strenuously object to the rate increases requested by Maitland City Council.

The increase requested is well above inflation and most importantly well above increases in wages and income returns such as interest rates.

Furthermore in this environment when even further downward pressure is being applied to wages and interest rates by both political and business considerations we can not expect any increases in either

In my current occupation I work in middle level management in private enterprise and not only am I on the same salary as I was 7 years ago but due to the economic turmoil we have experienced but in the past year I have been forced to work a 4 day week for a considerable amount of the time in order to keep the business viable.

The net result is if we take into account inflation in my personal circumstances my discretionary income has declined by a considerable amount.

In my job I interact with many businesses and personnel in the region and my circumstances are not unique , in fact in comparison I am lucky to still have a job.

While council put out a questionnaire which was obviously meant to be community consultation in relation to rate increases I believe that this process was flawed by biased polling and the answers obtained do not truly reflect community attitudes and more importantly circumstances.

For council to request rate increases by 7.3% for 7 years bears no relationship to the current political environment where we are being asked to pull our belts in and the actual personal circumstances of ourselves and I am sure a large proportion of the community where jobs and wages have in reality already suffered.

Council should be treated the same as individuals in our community and at the very most be granted rate increases according to inflation and even this should be questioned in the current environment.

Kevin and Julie Nott