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To TRIBUNAL MEMBERS 1 PART.

BOARD MEMBERS



I am writing to you in regards to Wyong Council's intended property rate increases for the next seven years. Before considering Council's request I ask you to have a serious look at Council's operation

At the first community meeting attended by several ratepayers including myself, there were several staff members (but no councillors attending) to explain council's aims & wishes.

Firstly, the figures quoted by them were inaccurate and very misleading in this respect. When I suggested these figures quoted didn't take into account property value increases they flabbed me off with the answer that property values would most likely fall, and would not continue that discussion which I think was out of order & showing contempt towards ratepayers in general.

At the first meeting I attended they (Council staff) gave out three rate rise options for ratepayers to consider. Option 1 standard increase of 3.4% Option 2, 9.5% increase and option 3 a 12.5% increase which everyone howled down immediately.

At the second meeting which I attended and also over two hundred other people attended council asked people to accept either option one or option two. At this meeting the Mayor Doug Eaton & Councillor Grey Best were in attendance to answer any questions to which they did. However when I again raised the question of land values increasing making the council's rate rise figures wrong no answer was forthcoming.

The Central Coast is an area of high unemployment and a great number of retired people, me included and on very limited incomes and pensions. No doubt you would be well aware of that.

While no doubt we have to expect increases in charges. I think what Council is asking for a 6.7% variable increase is way beyond affordability for ratepayers. From what I understand that increase plus the 3.4% plus that already given for Waste & Sewage etc. most of us ratepayers won't be able to survive.


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Council gave a list of projects under threat if rates were not increased. They also said at the current level in a few years council would go broke as they put it.

I believe Council will survive because of State and Federal grants they obtain every year with a modest rate rise of an extra 2% maximum on top of the 3.4% annual increase. One way to cut costs is not having council employees working on unnecessary jobs on Saturdays such as lawn or grass cutting of parks and drainage work which I believe can be done Monday to Fridays unless it is emergency work also the council seems to be overloaded with all of their managers & assistants + assistants at council Headquarters.

I believe Council's main objective should be to maintain the shire and live within their means and income not build shrines & Castles about themselves, and be more transparent to the people.

Yours Sincerely,

  
W. RITCHIE