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Submission: I am a local rate payer who took part in the survey conducted by council. At no time was it made apparent to me that my answers, would in fact, be construed as supporting this rate increase. We are a local family who run a small business and are only just making ends meet as it is. We have implemented payment plans on all our accounts and will not be able to stretch the budget to the extent that council are asking. While perusing councils submission I noticed that all statistics submitted are from 2006 and 2011. Are they still relevant? In the Southern Highlands area we do have a large number of people who are affluent. I cant help but feel that these higher end scale families drag the median income to a level that is not truly indicative of the local population. I know our income will not increase by 46.24% over the next four years and nor should theirs. Perhaps if Council could stop the continual in house fighting and legal battles they would have more money to spend on the maintenance of the Shire. Perhaps they may look at decreasing the number of " flexi" days staff receive to come into line with what the "normal" workers do, it may also contribute to higher financial stability...just a thought. While discussing this topic at numerous times I have been made aware that a good contingent of the population do not know about this proposed rate increase. I would not have been aware either except that I participated in the survey and then received the booklet outlining every thing we had supposedly asked for. The bottom line is that a good part of this community can not afford such an increase.