



## **CITY DRASTICALLY REDUCED THE PROPOSED INCREASES IN WATER TARIFFS**

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The Chamber welcomes the City's decision to drastically reduce the proposed increases in water tariffs in the draft budget, but believes the City can do even better.

According to a statement by the Acting Mayor, Ian Nielson, the overall increase in water tariffs has been reduced from 26.9% to 19.9% after complaints in a record 40 000 "comments" on the budget from the public.

What we cannot understand is how the City could ever have contemplated imposing these tariff increases on a population that has done an incredible job in saving water and investing in water-saving equipment, grey water systems and rainwater tanks to ensure future savings.

I think this shows that both officials and councillors are out of touch with the paying public.

The draft budget proposed a 55.16% increase in the tariffs for people using less than 6 kl (six cubic metres) of water a month. This has now been reduced to 10.1%.

If the city can do this now, why did it not do so in the draft budget? We can only speculate that they did not try hard enough and that is a shocking indictment of both officials and councillors. They are simply too focused on extracting revenue from the public rather than reducing their own costs as the private sector has to do in order to survive.

I'm sure there are many other savings that could be realised if officials and councillors put their minds to the job instead of playing politics. The place to start is those 17% pay increases for top management that will take the remuneration packages of directors to a staggering R3.2 million a year. Start at the top and set an example.

It's ludicrous to pay salaries like this to the people who should have been writing reports to the council on the need to recycle water and make contingency plans for a drought that developed over three years. Instead we had panic and last minute attempts to drill for water and to desalinate sea water. All the tenderers know that the city is desperate so the prices will come in very high. We are going to pay for poor planning and bad management.



**CAPE CHAMBER**  
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