



Today at its November plenary, the Formentera Council granted preliminary approval for the administration's 2017 budget. “Yes” votes were cast by Gent x Formentera and the socialist party while Compromís opted for abstention and Partido Popular voted against the measure. As tax office councillor Bartomeu Escandell pointed out, the budget's nearly €24m total marks a 6.91-per cent increase on the 2016 figure (€22.8m).

Escandell also highlighted a few changes, like money for a traffic inspection crew, plus funding to expand Formentera's lifeguard and rescue service, fire brigade, school of music, childcare services, cleaning crews and administrative staff.

He added that Formentera currently has no debt, though said that could change with the Council's projected assumption of a loan linked to Consorci Formentera Desenvolupament.

On other spending, Escandell referred to “recent improvements in Formentera's residential and tourist urban zones, development of green and sustainable transport solutions, upgrades of out-of-use heritage sites and a continued push for community involvement through Formentera's Council of Entities.

José Manuel Alcaraz, spokesman of Partido Popular, bemoaned the absence of tax cuts in the budget, while Ana Juan, spokeswoman for Partido Socialista, opined that the forecast was “very close” to her own group's vision for the island, citing projects like safety upgrades on camí Vell de la Mola alongside Formentera's football pitch. Explaining the group's abstention on the vote, Compromís's spokesperson said: “It's got plenty of good parts and then some not-so good parts”.

### **Other agreements**

The plenary brought unanimous approval for a deal with Grup d'Acció Local to support local fishing, as well as a call from the socialist group for an educational effort to familiarise local associations with the technicalities of grant requests.

Another measure that received unanimous approval (excluding abstention from Partido Popular's) dealt with the language used on future roads and urban arterials. A forthcoming measure will address the official name of the island's new industrial park.

**Verbal report from Sònia Cardona**

This month's plenary featured an account from councillor of community involvement Sònia Cardona, who described her office's goal as "bringing resident participation to the fore of the administration's decision-making process".

"We are seeing that local mobilisation can influence the decisions that are made," Cardona said, pointing to the creation of local participatory budgets and the popular effort to stop a plan to move Formentera's landing at the Eivissa port.

Cardona trumpeted the list of 96 groups that make up the island's association registry and reported on recent upgrades of audio and IT equipment at the local space for associations, the Casal d'Entitats.