

Formentera's heads of safety and law enforcement services gathered today for a meeting of the island's Junta Local de Seguretat. Chaired by CiF president Jaume Ferrer and the Govern's envoy in Formentera, Teresa Palmer, the meeting featured the attendance of CiF councillors Bartomeu Escandell (presidential office), Rafael González (transport) and Vanessa Parellada (social welfare). The Spanish central government's representative in the Pitiüsas, Roger Sales, was also present along with other individuals representing forces of order and emergency services on the island.

CiF president Jaume Ferrer seized the opportunity to air concerns about an increase in burglaries and vandalism on the island in recent years. In that respect, Ferrer pointed to a number of cases of vehicle arson as well as a growing incidence of drug use. “These are real problems,” he said, “and to tackle them, we will be asking for a more robust police presence.” Moreover, Ferrer spoke about the need for a traffic officer of the Guárdia Civil to be stationed on the island year round.

Ferrer took the opportunity to thank the Formentera Playa hotel, the island's association of small and medium-sized businesses (PIMEEF) and the local federation of hotels for providing accommodation to law enforcement representatives. He celebrated recent improvements in coordination between Formentera's local police force, the Guárdia Civil and island agents of Spain's national police force.

Arrest for vehicle arson

For her part, the Govern envoy announced the creation of a coordinating committee so the various safety forces on the island can “effectively review and respond to issues of concern among Formentera residents.” Palmer confided the recent break-ins and car burnings sparked concern among islanders and that response teams were being created to tackle the problem. The envoy referred to the arrest yesterday of a Romanian national who is accused of arson in connection to a recent car fire in Sant Francesc. Guárdia Civil agents are currently investigating links between the individual and other recent fires.

Regarding the burglaries at homes in the Formentera countryside, Palmer announced the upcoming work with the specialist task force, ROCA. For summer 2016, the envoy shared plans for local safety operations were still being developed. “We've put in the request for an increase compared to last year's numbers,” Palmer said this morning. “We've asked for maritime forces as well as law enforcement officers and are expecting a return of a Guárdia Civil traffic officer and two Italian *carabinieri*.”