



Members of the Formentera Council gathered today to celebrate the administration's February plenary. During the session one measure on housing benefits, adopted unanimously, proposed pushing the Govern Balear to heed the suggestions and comments included in a housing bill. Land councillor Alejandra Ferrer called it “a step toward resolving the problematic issue of home rentals on Formentera in a way that takes into account the particular characteristics of the island and the needs that exist here”. Councillors also voted to urge the executive branch of the regional government to create benefits for home renters, bearing in mind, said Ferrer, “low-income families and €600-plus rental payments”. Representatives from all of the parties supported the measure.

### **Revival of Formentera's salt flat heritage**

The plenary also saw the unanimous adoption of a measure to protect Formentera's salt flat heritage, an asset which, as patrimony councillor Susana Labrador called to mind, received official recognition in 2004. The text calls for urgent action by the Balearic Islands' coastal authority, Govern Balear and Formentera Island Council to prevent major damages to the structure that houses the “màquina d'en Palla” and restore other related sites.

Plenary members also voted to push authorities to work with the owners of the land where Ses Salines is located to implement a project to revive the salt flats. Such a project was agreed on August 4, 2015 by the ensemble of the political parties with representation in the Council. Councillor Labrador said that text calls for “the construction of an interpretative centre, restoration of related heritage sites in the park and creation of a network of walking and cycling trails that showcase the natural beauty and historic importance of Ses Salines, including signs highlighting plant and animal life in the park”.

### **Other proposals**

Also adopted at the plenary despite the Popular Party's abstention was a proposal by the socialists (PSOE) regarding the central government's policy on awarding grants and urging equal opportunities and rights for all students. Support was likewise given, with 13 votes for and two Popular Party (PP) votes against, to a joint proposal from PSOE and Gent per Formentera (GxF), calling for policies to promote equality and curb gender violence as well as observance, March 8, 2017, of International Women's Day.

### **Official statement**

All parties lent support to a call from GxF and PSOE to lift barriers to refugee reception. The manifesto airs concerns over the desperate situation of Syrians displaced by a war now in its fifth year. According to social welfare councillor Vanessa Parellada the text also highlights Spain's refusal to meet intake quotas for asylum seekers set by the European Union in 2016.

### **Report from sports councillor**

Sports councillor Jordi Vidal took stock of his department's efforts and pointed to targets on the horizon in 2017. He highlighted upcoming plans extend and increase by 20% a partnership promoting the values inherent in sport. Vidal also trumpeted the early go-ahead received to extend a partnership with the Balearic Islands' foundation for sports and the scheduling of two regional school sports finals on the island.

Vidal also held up one of his department's priorities: a nautical sports centre he said had already received the green light from the Palma government and Balearic Islands coastal authority. According to the councillor, the call for bids to construct the centre is currently being prepared.