



Yesterday the plenary hall of Formentera's dependent care centre became the site of a gathering to discuss regulating vehicle entry on the island. It was the second one-off session to date in which the league of community leaders, or Consell d'Entitats, addressed the issue.

Attendees presented an assorted representation of local civil society and business and political spheres. The meeting was chaired by Balearic first minister Francina Armengol, Formentera Council president Jaume Ferrer, regional minister of land, energy and mobility Marc Pons, and two CiF secretaries, Rafael González (of the infrastructure and mobility offices) and Sònia Cardona (of citizen participation).

After a review of proceedings carried out to date, officials unveiled the final version of a local draft bill for environmental and financial sustainability. The draft legislation, open to comments until recently, will now be submitted for scrutiny by the Consell d'Entitats. Of twenty comments issued by a range of agencies, businesses and political parties, forty per cent were appraised.

The future ordinance will empower the Formentera Council to limit the flow of incoming traffic, use environmental standards to determine how vehicles can circulate once on the island, fix a maximum number of rental vehicles, and promote electric and less-polluting transportation in the public and private sectors.

New features of draft bill

Individuals with homes on Formentera and Eivissa residents employed on Formentera will be considered locals and thus exempt from regulated vehicle access. Regulation will likewise be waived for Formentera-natives who live outside the island but return for serious, family-related reasons.

The Council will set a special priority quota offering Eivissa residents facilitated access as well. The quota will be based on visitor figures taken this summer.

Transport companies will be held responsible for letting travellers know about the special permit requirement to drive on the island. Nevertheless, the firms themselves will not be forced to block access to anyone nor prevent individuals from disembarking on Formentera or purchasing tickets to travel here. Compliance with authorisation requirements is the sole responsibility of registered vehicle owners.

Drivers must have in their possession a decal attesting to the fact a vehicle has received clearance. Fines for driving a vehicle without autorisation vary from €1000 to €10,000 depending on the seriousness of the infraction.

Processing and approval

On the back on yesterday's scrutiny of the measure by the Consell d'Entitats, the draft bill will come before a subcommittee charged with reviewing its financial and social components. Cabinet approval could come as soon as August. Pending an ensuing vote by the regional parliament, the measure could see final approval by year end 2018.

The measure could enter into force, making regulation of incoming vehicles a reality, by next summer.