



Members of the Consell de Formentera gathered today for the local government's full-house assembly for the month of September. The gathering brought approval for “plastic-free Consell de Formentera”, a pioneer measure set for implementation across government offices and buildings. Backed by the Consell's environment office, the proposal envisions giving staff and visitors of government buildings the means to stop using single-use plastics.

Environment chief Antonio J Sanz said government buildings would be equipped with some twenty water fountains and government employees and visitors would be provided bottles, like those seen at today's assembly. Sanz pointed out that legislation in Europe, Spain and the Balearics would be on the government's side as Formentera took what he called “a path-treading step forward”. “That means getting the buy-in of islanders as well”, he added, “so that they use the fountains when visiting Consell buildings”.

The governing team will encourage employees of the Consell to progressively begin using equipment that's available round the workplace, not to mention to nix single-use plastics in their individual work spaces. The government will also work with organisations and schools to promote measures aimed at doing away with single-use plastics in those places as well.

Maritime transport ordinances

Assembly members came together in support of a proposal to urge the Govern balear to urgently pass a decree required for legislation on maritime transport in the Balearic Islands. In their statement, council members called on the regional government to “seek the full consensus and backing of Formentera's local council as the Govern strives for a decree that safeguards the environment and serves the general public”.

Reasoning that the harbour in La Savina is the only point of entry and exit on the island, mobility councillor Rafa González described the adoption of such a decree “a priority, because it affects all of Formentera”. He pointed to key areas like guaranteeing the first and last ferry of daily service, avoiding overlapping departure times and resolving the issue of the so-called “maritime excursions”.

Assembly members also opted to include in their communication with the regional government a technical report highlighting cases in which nitrogen dioxide emissions exceeded the legal limit, occasionally by as much as two-fold. González said the data offered yet more proof of the urgency of the decree—“so we can avoid repeat cases of pollution, knock-on effects on the environment and risks to human health...this is about protecting islanders' best interests”.

Additional proposals

Another proposal to garner cross-party support was a measure calling on Abaquá to urgently relocate a new wastewater pump station originally included in a planned works project for Es Pujols town centre. Infrastructure chief Josep Marí advocated “an installation that meets the needs of this tourism-centred town and is conducive to better maintenance”. A deal between the Consell and Balearic Port Authority (APB) on prevention, fire-fighting and civil defence was also passed unanimously.

Backing was also secured for a proposal to urge the Balearic government to keep its promise to accommodate more zero- to three-year-olds in public schools, increase assistance for school meals and boost school attendance among children of at-risk families. The goal, according to assembly members, is to have every child attending school and making early-childhood education totally cost free. The same proposed statement urges the central government to “change laws that currently emphasise mere attendance to reflect the educational importance of the zero-to-three years”.

Lastly, the GxF-PSOE governing team passed a transactional measure brought by Sa Unió to ensure the 75% discount on air and sea travel in the Balearics is kept intact in government spending and the Special Register of Ships and Transport Firms (*Registro Especial de Buques y Empresas Navieras* ; REB).

Authors of the proposal also called for the establishment of a special observatory to obstruct abusive price increases at the hands of airlines. The proposal passed with the support of the GxF-PSOE governing team, despite Sa Unió abstention.

27 September 2019
Department of Communication
Consell de Formentera