



Consell de Formentera president Alejandra Ferrer and mobility conseller Rafa González met yesterday in Palma with Balearic minister of housing and mobility Marc Pons and head of the department's air and maritime section, Xavier Ramistal. The working meeting has been in the offing since Pons visited Formentera in October, and is preliminary to a gathering of the Balearic Committee on Maritime Transport scheduled for Monday 25 November.

According to Ferrer, three of Formentera's primordial issues came up for discussion at the encounter. "The first issue raised, and in fact the most pressing, was the importance of early-bird and late-night ferry connections with Eivissa", said Ferrer.

Consell and Govern officials are reviewing their options concerning tabling any of an array of different proposals at the maritime transport committee meeting. "Any measures would have to offer immediate solutions to the current service gap", she pointed out.

Minister Pons said that ferries in the early morning and late at night represented "the easiest hurdle, and the one we're focused on now" but insisted that efforts were under way to address Ferrer's other areas of concern.

### **Day trips**

Meeting participants also talked about organised single-day boat trips from Eivissa. "The lack of oversight on such excursions means our port and the roads and beaches of Ses Salines reserve are seeing saturation", said Ferrer. "That's why we're calling for regulation".

"In summer there are as many as 170 such excursions happening every day", pointed out the president. "The boats arriving are 70% empty, though if they were full it would mean a total of 45,000 visitors", she continued, "and it's happening right here in our backyard".

Ferrer and González's message to Pons was that a retooling would be required to make the

service environmentally sustainable. Ferrer called for the approval of “a series of measures -in line with the declaration of climate emergency- to move our island towards sustainability”.

The two points served as basis for an agreement from Pons and Ferrer to hold periodic meetings in an effort to chart a consensus-based path to a more sustainable system, with a well-founded argument justifying the importance of guaranteeing early-morning and late-night service, which would be consistent with CNCM demands.

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