



Formentera held its February plenary session today, a gathering that brought definitive approval to the fourth round of changes to Formentera's Local Land Plan (Pla Territorial Insular, or PTI). The go-ahead came thanks to supporting votes from the Gent per Formentera and Socialist Party (GxF-PSOE) governing coalition and despite the abstention of councillors from Sa Unió.

Said mobility and land chief Rafael González, “we know how serious the housing problem is on Formentera, and with this change we'll be able to give the Balearic housing agency [Ibavi] a single plot for construction of a new crop of rent-controlled public housing in Sant Ferran”. The retooling also means freeing up land for a new park nearby for children. González described the pair of measures as complementary to the various improvement projects —upgrades on Avinguda Joan Castelló i Guasch, construction of a primary school and nursery— that the Formentera government has overseen in Sant Ferran in recent years.

Councillor González said the rules change was also about bringing the island into line with prevailing trends, removing obstacles for islanders keen to instal self-use solar panel systems in their homes and, at the same time, promoting renewable energy. What's more, bugs have been worked out of the 2010 rules: formalities related to land use are now more straightforward for government staff and islanders alike. Today, a decade after councilmembers voted to enact the rules, a name change is in the pipeline, so what were once referred to as the island's “Subsidiary Rules” (Normes Subsidiàries) will henceforth be known across the archipelago as PTI.

### **formentera.eco 2020**

Having described Formentera's plans for the next 12 months of formentera.eco to the Council of Entities (Consell d'Entitats), the land and mobility councillor presented the scheme to the full-house gathering. Entry will be granted to 4% fewer cars than last year, and the period of enforcement will be from 1 July to 31 August. The measure passed with support from the GxF-PSOE governing coalition despite abstention from the opposition.

But González insisted formentera.eco was about more just than “tightening the tap on incoming cars”. “We're shooting for a sustainable mobility where residents and tourists naturally begin to move differently”, he said. “That means improvements to public transport like buses and taxis. It

means more people cycling and more space for pedestrians.”

The number of motorists who receive a permit to drive on the island will shrink by 4% every year until 2023, when there are 16% fewer cars on the road than when [formentera.eco](#) first launched. In 2020, 11,952 permits will be available for visitors seeking to rent a car on the island (including Formentera residents, the figure is 21,487).

### **Quotas for rental car agencies, tourists and Eivissa residents**

The maximum number of standard-size automobiles available for rental by tourists is 2,592 (for scooters the figure is 6,720). A total of 2,180 permits will be available for drivers who want to bring their own vehicle (220 if the vehicle is a motor-scooter). Eivissa residents, for whom the number of quotas remains unchanged from last season, are the only ones who won't see reductions in the available supply. “It's about guaranteeing access to our neighbours”, explained Councillor González, “and upholding the law”. Up to 220 Eivissa drivers can request a permit to bring a car (for scooters, the total is 20), and the application carries no associated fees. As in 2019, no permits will be issued for four-by-fours, caravans or RVs.

### **Quotas for residents**

Although there is no limit on permits for motorists who reside on Formentera, Councillor González said he hoped that “with the growing momentum around sustainable mobility and the growing list of alternatives to status quo transport, we hope islanders will naturally start to use their personal cars and scooters less”.

Formentera residents are still exempt from the authorisation fee, and as in 2019, the application process can be completed on [formentera.eco](#). Also similarly to last year, authorisation for drivers with a permit to park in blue zone street parking will be automatic. Authorisation can be verified by entering a vehicle's plate number on a section, still in development, of the [formentera.eco](#) website.

González pointed out that permits will not be denied to tourists who already had a booking for lodging or ferry passage prior to the measure's adoption and its publication in the regional gazette. [Formentera.eco](#) will offer such individuals the chance to process their case online.

### **Service fee**

With “yes” votes from the governing coalition and despite “no’s” from representatives of Sa Unió, plenary members gave the initial green-light to a proposed service charge for tourists who bring a private vehicle to the island. Just like last summer, tourists will be charged €1/day for cars (minimum fee: €5), and €0.50/day for scooters (minimum fee: €2.5). The minimum fee is just one of the changes motorists will see in 2020. Islanders from the other Balearic Islands and electric car drivers will also avoid paying minimums, and drivers of hybrids pay half price. “We expect the minimum fee will help cover the project’s cost”, concluded the councillor.

Support came for a measure to renew the current waste collection and transport contract until such time as a new one can be tendered. Environment councillor Antonio J Sanz said the contract would move forward “as soon as cost structuring data is received from five firms”, intimating that pick-up and shipment of rubbish had been deemed essential services and must continue even pending determination of a new service concessionaire.

Councillors also passed two measures brought by the opposition. The first proposal dealt with renewing efforts to remove asbestos from buildings under the jurisdiction of the Formentera government. Councillor Sanz expressed his support for the proposal and said the government already ensures pickup of illegally dumped materials. Plenary members likewise agreed to fast-track legislation of road safety improvements at the Porto-Salé turnout from the main highway. Councillor González told assembly members to expect to see changes before the start of the tourist season.

### **Status update from Councillor Paula Ferrer**

Head of the local offices of sport, island services and human resources, Paula Ferrer took stock of progress on efforts within her departments. Starting with human resources, Ferrer said the priority was “improving workplace conditions—key to stabilising local services”. She also spoke about short-, mid- and long-term goals, like creating pools of qualified candidates for temporary and permanent openings, publishing a transparent pay chart for all Formentera government employees, adopting a schedule of positions, and coming up with a path for full-time staff to become civil-service employees.

Ferrer also ran through recent improvements to the island’s sport and fitness infrastructure, like upgrades at the swimming pool, at the main football pitch and other pitches in Es Cap de Barbaria, at padel courts and elsewhere. The children’s park in La Savina has been equipped with a calisthenics circuit, pergola and street lighting. Repairs have taken place in the Ses Bardetes neighbourhood, while islanders in La Savina, Sant Francesc and other towns can now enjoy newly installed basketball hoops. Urban areas and roads have seen changes as well, like the removal of architectural barriers in Sant Francesc. Lastly, Ferrer spoke about some of the

priorities of Formentera Department of Sport: "Dedicating all our efforts and resources to incentivising sport among schoolchildren".

### **Official proclamation on Int'l Women's Day**

Members of the assembly came together to issue an official proclamation on International Women's Day, 8 March. Councillor of equality Vanessa Parellada presented the text, which encourages "islanders of every gender to join our plea for a fairer, more peaceful, more sustainable world". "The movement around International Women's Day continues to grow stronger. It has become undeniably powerful—just the women who make up its core. Many men have joined the cause as well, for gender equality benefits everyone, and men's and women's destinations are intertwined".

The councillor also trumpeted another milestone, the election of Formentera's first-ever female president, not to mention the fact that women now hold 9 of 17 elected posts in Formentera's governing body. "Equality is increasingly visible and public", she affirmed. "The challenge that lies ahead is nothing short of complete equality on Formentera. It's a challenge we must all rise to, because equality benefits everyone."

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**Department of Communication**

**Consell de Formentera**