



Today's plenary session of the Formentera Island Council included discussion of a host of different issues, like legal and administrative action with respect to Formentera-Eivissa waste transfer, initial approval for the Sant Francesc bypass road project and a proposed textbook recycling programme.

As for the resolutions discussed at the plenary, the Council unanimously approved a measure to pursue legal proceedings vis-à-vis outstanding bills issued by the UTE-Giref company for waste transfer between Formentera and Eivissa.

On the subject of interest accrued for late payments on UTE-Giref-provided waste transfer, the Court of Palma de Mallorca ruled in favour of that company, the concession-holder for Formentera's rubbish collection service. For this reason, the legal department of the Formentera Council will initiate an appeal of the sentence issued 31 July 2013 and additionally open legal proceedings in the Contentious Administrative Court of Palma for the measures enacted by the Council of Eivissa which gave the green light for the waste transfer company's bills.

That the island of Formentera be obliged to assume the cost overrun incurred by waste transfer to Eivissa represents a case of fundamental discrimination with respect to our counterparts in the Balearics. The Council of Formentera will continue fighting to ensure that basic public services have a standardised price across the islands and that double standards of treatment – as in the cases of rubbish collection and water, services for which Formentera's residents are asked to pay prices considerably higher than those existing on the other islands – do not exist.

The second, third and fourth points of order related to road improvements all received approval by absolute majority, excepting a vote of abstention by the Partido Popular and one nay vote cast by the Grup Independent de Formentera. Among these, the measure to grant initial approval for the Sant Francesc bypass (or ring) road was especially significant. These measures are all thanks to the collaborative accord on highway improvements, signed 14 May 2009 by the Spanish Ministry of Development and the Formentera Council and valid through 2014. Completion of the Sant Francesc ring road project is anticipated for the end of 2015.

The new arterial in Sant Francesc will alleviate traffic along El Pla del Rei road and make the area both more socially and commercially dynamic. Importantly, it will also serve to reduce car traffic through Sant Francesc in general.

The fifth proposal of the day – definitive approval for the Children and Youth Participatory Council and its guidelines – was passed as were the other measures of the plenary session: unanimously.

Formentera's Youth Participatory Council (el Consell de la Infància de Formentera) is an entity that is meant to provide a voice for the island's children and youth. It is intended to foster the active participation of youth in the issues that affect them, and additionally as a way for the locality to listen to their opinions and consider them in the decision making process. The guidelines of the Consell de la Infància, already initially approved in March, were definitively approved at today's plenary.

In Formentera we want to be mindful and respectful of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It was for this reason – and in consideration of a child's right to participate in his locality and have his voice heard - that the participatory entity was created. It is our desire that Formentera one day form part of UNICEF's Child Friendly Cities programme, an initiative that grants special distinction to any locality demonstrating adhesion to all of the convention's stated rights.

Another important component of the plenary meeting was the approval it saw for a textbook re-use programme. The Council approved a measure to urge the regional government in Palma to augment their contribution to the textbook-recycling programme fund. The goal of these publicly-funded programmes is to promote the exchange of textbooks between local families with students in primary and secondary schooling, and, at the same time, raise awareness about the importance of caring for classroom material in order to facilitate its future re-use.

Formentera's levels of student participation in the textbook programme are among the highest in the Balearic Islands; last year, 463 students from Formentera's primary and secondary schools registered and all four of the island's public school institutions took part. In the case of Sant Ferran, participation in the re-use programme reached 100%.

Finally, a motion presented by the Partido Popular for the creation of a committee to study possible increases in the number of local taxi licences was rejected by absolute majority despite nay votes by the PP and GUIF. The measure was rejected in light of the fact that the Council has already been working on the issue for some time with the PIMEF, the Federació Hotelera de Formentera, Formentera's local guild of taxi drivers and all of the other implicated sectors. The goal is to build a local taxi service that meets the existing demand of tourists and residents and establishes a quality standard for the service by this summer. Another measure receiving unanimous approval was a proposal to recognise the work conducted by four local police officers between 28 February and 5 March, which resulted in the confiscation of a quantity of hashish and the detention of one individual for offence to public health and safety.

The councilor of Infrastructure, Agriculture, Livestock, Fishing and Hunting of the Formentera Council reported on his office's work over the last year and the future project proposals under his supervision.