



The Formentera Island Council plenary session held today brought approval for a host of different measures. Among these was a proposal regarding Formentera's anticipated request for recognition by UNICEF's Child-Friendly Cities programme, another a proposed set of standards to establish and regulate a system of seasonal taxi licences on Formentera, and a third measure, a vote to approve the record of procurement proceedings and management delegation agreement with the TRAGSA company for road work on the Es Cap highway.

Setting the plenary session in motion was the Council's own proposal for a series of nominations of representatives to the technical committee assessing Catalán knowledge, known as Comissió Tècnica d'Avaluació de Coneixements de Català. The measure proposed designating the linguistic specialist of the Formentera Council as representative of the Comissió Tècnica d'Avaluació, as outlined in decree 1/2014 [10 January] regarding evaluation and certification of Catalán proficiency.

The second measure, whose only abstention came from the Partido Popular and was otherwise passed by an absolute majority, proposed ratifying the list of individuals to serve on the local Consell d'Entitats (or 'Council of Entities'). The third measure was relative to proceedings initiated in the defence of the municipality – and not the island – of Formentera and of its local autonomy. The aforementioned proceedings were conceived as a countermeasure in response to Law 27/2013 [27 December] on the rationalisation and sustainability of local public administrations. Despite one nay vote from the Partido Popular, yea votes for the measure formed an absolute majority.

Another vote, to qualify the compatibility of temporarily-employed public servant Mr. Josep Costa Rosselló, resulted in approval by absolute majority and lacked only the participation of the opposition parties. Next, receiving unanimous approval was a proposal to initiate formalities to request a seal of recognition from UNICEF's Child-Friendly Cities programme.

The object of the Child-Friendly Cities programme is to promote the application among local government administrations of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. This explains our island's aspiration to obtain recognition by the UNICEF programme, for it stands as a clear sign of our municipality's compliance with the UN convention.

The programme subsidises the creation of local projects focusing on children and youth. It promotes active participation by children in local politics and likewise promotes any municipal policy that benefits children's rights. This extends to any policies facilitating children's participation in politics or policies facilitating coordination between youth and local councils, for these actions serve to improve the quality of policy in general. UNICEF Spain, by granting the seal of recognition, recognises a town or city's efforts upholding these values.

The sixth measure brought forth in the plenary dealt with preliminary approval for the codes of organisation and operations of the local security junta (Junta Local de Protecció Civil i Emergències), a joint project of the Formentera Island Council and the Comitè Assessor (assessment committee). The votes in favour of this measure formed an absolute majority; the only abstention being by the Grup Independent de Formentera (GUIF). A preliminary vote for the code of operations at the “Casa del Poble de la Mola” also resulted in an absolute majority of votes in favour, with the PP and GUIF again choosing to abstain.

Preliminary approval of the code of ordinances to regulate seasonal taxi licences on Formentera received a vote of absolute majority, excepting abstention once again by the conservative and independent parties

This code of ordinances is the result of a consensus reached between Formentera's association of taxi drivers and business sectors of the island. Firstly, the code of ordinances establishes the possibility of extending a taxi licence to include vehicles adapted to disabled passengers. It also establishes the possibility of installing a telephone or a telephone-based application for direct communication between drivers and hotels, and likewise establishes the possibility of creating five additional seasonal taxi licences. The new seasonal licences are staggered across two different periods: two licences will be granted for the period from 15 June to 31 August, and three from 1 July to 15 September. The licences will be valid from 10 am to 10 pm with the possibility of extending the set of workable hours and/or days.

Seasonal licences will be given with a duration of two years and require adherence to a series of basic conditions. Included in the conditions are: possession of a BTP-class driving licence and chauffeur's permit granted by the Formentera Island Council, current-status with all payments and being the driver of the vehicle in question.

Once all applications have been received, in the event that multiple applicants complete the conditions in equal measure, a public coin toss will be held to determine the order of licence concessions. These steps constitute the initial system of operations but they are not permanent; the expectation is that the system will be regularly revised in order to bring it into line with transport realities in Formentera. It is anticipated that recipients of the new licences will join the current fleet of 24 taxis by 15 June.

It is during summer months that the service's shortfalls – long queues at taxi stands and excessively-late arrival times – have been witnessed. The goal behind the decision to grant additional licences is to provide noticeable improvements to the public transport service during the height of the summer season.

The vote to approve the record of procurement proceedings and management delegation agreement with the TRAGSA company for road work on the Es Cap highway – again despite abstention by the opposition parties – resulted in an absolute majority of those in favour. The proposal set the project's budget at 1,801,041.81€, VAT included. The cost will be paid in two instalments and the project is slated for completion within fifteen months.

Rounding out the day's resolutions, and again lacking participation by the PP and GUIF, was a measure to grant official approval to the census figure (11,977) established for the population of Formentera on 1 January 2014.

Another portion of the plenary session was dedicated to propositions by the different political groups, with the first such proposition put forth by the GUIF. The proposal was to carry out a study relative to the needs present among users of the Formentera Day Centre and was rejected by a vote of five for (PP and GUIF) and eight against. Unanimous approval was given to a proposal to improve and repair the road connecting Es Camí Vell de la Mola with the area near El Casbah. For its part, the Partido Popular raised a proposition to bolster summer 2014 cleaning operations which was met with rejection.

During the portion of the plenary dedicated to that effect, the Partido Popular asked three questions and the GUIF six. The final act of the plenary session was led by councilor of the Presidential Council, the Tax Office and Territory Bartomeu Escandell, who reported on the projects carried out by his offices so far this year as well as future plans.