



Today's plenary session of the Formentera Island Council brought approval for a range of pending issues. First among these was the initial approval required for the ordinance on public-use post office boxes, second was approval for the creation of an adapted taxi service license, and third and fourth were a funding proposal for windsurf on the island and a construction proposal for the new Sant Ferran school.

First, in relation to the petrol exploration project on the Gulf of Valencia, official report was given of the presidential resolution drafted in response to claims of wrongdoing made by Capricorn Spain Ltd. Likewise, proclamation was made of a ruling (852/2013) by the Balearic Supreme Court of Justice with respect to the Council's subsidiary regulations, known as *normes subsidiàries*.

Of the resolutions discussed at the plenary, the first proposal – to authorise delegating construction of the rubbish collection plant (*deixalleria*) to subcontractors – received a vote of absolute majority that lacked only the votes of the Partido Popular and the GUIF. The proposed project would be located in Formentera's industrial park and would allow for the collection of large, hazardous and special waste created at the municipal level. At present, there is neither a home collection service available for these types of waste nor specific waste bins located along public roads. The new plant will have a surface area of 3,800 m² and will double as the centre of operations for municipal cleaning and waste collection services. The facilities will be run by the winning bidder for the island's cleaning and collection services, and the services will be provided free of charge to local residents.

The second proposal of the day, which dealt with the ordinance to regulate public-use post office boxes for La Mola residents located in remote areas, was approved unanimously. The Formentera Council, aware of the problem affecting delivery of post to far-removed houses, has taken all the necessary steps to install post office boxes not only in La Mola, but in Es Cap de Barbaria as well.

The third and fourth proposals – one to remodel the GESA electrical hub and simultaneously augment the site's electrical potential, the other regarding the creation of an adapted taxi license as well public notice of the competitive bidding to provide such a service – were also

unanimously approved at the plenary, as were the bids submitted for the second project's contracting. This project was the object of discussion at an April meeting with GESA company representatives. At that juncture the Formentera Council was informed of an additional requirement: the need to obtain a compatibility report from the Ministry of Industry, Energy and Tourism. At today's plenary the decision was made to urge the Govern Balear to continue demanding priority treatment for the project.

We remind readers that the General Direction of Industry and Energy ruled in August 2013 in favour of definitive environmental authorisation for the electrical station's remodel and expansion.

Once all of the necessary authorisations are received, the Es Ca Marí electrical station will increase its technical capacity from 14 to 19.5MW (megawatts). This will be made possible by replacing the station's current turbines for three new gas models. With the new gas turbines, use of complementary generators – traditionally employed in summer to meet increased need – will no longer be necessary. The overhaul planned by the ENDESA company would enable the Es Ca Marí electrical station to ensure provision of Formentera's own electricity supply not only in the event of possible interruptions with the traditional Eivissa connection but also during moments of peak-use in summer.

Public bidding will also be used to decide who provides taxi service for persons with reduced mobility. The goal behind the move is to increase the accessibility of Formentera public transport, fundamental to achieving social integration on the island. The contract will be awarded for a period of fifty years, during which time the selected company will have a license to provide the service. Interested parties can visit the Formentera Island Council website to consult requirements.

The fifth proposal heard at the plenary attended improvements to funding for windsurf as well as the construction of a nautical sports centre. The votes in favour formed an absolute majority, despite the abstention of the PP. The measure calls for pressing the regional Govern Balear to increase funding for Formentera's windsurf programme, and likewise pay off its outstanding debt with the Consorci Formentera Desenvolupament (Formentera Development Consortium) in order to make construction of the Formentera Nautical Sports Centre a reality. The proposal came as a reaction to recent budget cuts to windsurf funding. Since the PP took office in 2011, the Govern's subsidies for the practice of windsurf have dropped from 60 to 20 thousand euros.

It is the authority of the Formentera Council and furthermore its sincere desire to promote fitness among school-aged youth and foment leisure activities that run the gamut of sports. The Escola de Vela de Formentera (the Formentera sailing school) as well as the forthcoming Centre d'Esports Nàutics (the island's nautical sports centre) are two factors key to maintaining the important gains already witnessed in windsurf and other disciplines. Thanks to the tireless work of the sailing school, Formentera's athletes are now among the global elite, and require specific programmes to continue their development of the sport; this is the remit of the Govern Balear.

One final measure regarding construction of a new educational centre in Sant Ferran was also unanimously approved. The Formentera Island Council has already taken firm steps to make this project a reality. First, this included ceding a terrain to the affected department of the Govern Balear in order to allow for construction of the new two-line school. Next, the Council slated all of the utilities and services necessary for such a building for imminent construction.

The call for a two-line school (so named because the building would be fitted with sufficient classrooms for two different groups for each year), raised by the educational community of Formentera, must be followed up with real action. It is for this reason that the plenary body chose this route: to urge the Govern Balear to draft the project, put it up for public tender, and begin construction. The two-line school is a way to respond to a very real public need, given the demographic growth witnessed here on Formentera in recent years.

Formentera's political groups also put forward a variety of different measures at the plenary. The Partido Popular presented a measure regarding the sailing and windsurf schools which was invalidated after receiving only five votes for (PP and GUIF) compared to seven votes against (GxF and PSOE). Another measure that received a similar vote (three 'yay' votes by the PP, two abstentions by the GUIF and seven 'nay' votes by GxF and PSOE) was also struck down. The measure proposed acceptance of the tenth transitory disposition of land use and development laws. The Council's governing team does not share the local PP's opinion that total amnesty should be granted to the illegal building projects on our island, siding instead with the proposal to incorporate the ordinance contained within the island's subsidiary regulations, these based on the initial subsidiary regulations.

A final proposition – put forth by the GUIF and calling for the removal of uralite (asbestos) from Council buildings – was unanimously approved.

The GUIF – or Grup Independent de Formentera – also formulated three different questions (responded to straight away) regarding the Council's anticipated action before problems surrounding island livestock, stray dogs and the end date for construction of Formentera's industrial park.

The final portion of the plenary session was led by councilor of the Environment, Industry and Energy Sílvia Tur, who reported on the projects carried out by her offices so far this year.

As an emergency motion, a unanimously-approved proposal made by the Council's governing team called for pushing the Regional Ministry of the Environment of the Govern Balear to prohibit 'party boats' along the Formentera coastline. Our island's coast is the subject a variety of LIC environmental protection regimes (LICs, or lugares de interés comunitario, are sites of particular importance located within the autonomous community) which allow for the regulation and express prohibition of such 'party boat' activities, so harmful to the environment and the image maintained by our island.