

On April 24 the Formentera Council's president, Jaume Ferrer, and chief officer, Isidor Torres, will testify before the number-three investigating judge of Eivissa concerning alleged administrative wrongdoing in the 2013 contracting of staff to the island's fire brigade.

The hearing arose from the original 2016 ruling against the Council which turned confusion as to how much time would-be firefighters were given to obtain lorry permits into a red flag for the prosecutor about possible criminal offences.

Still in proceedings, the case has been reviewed by the high court of the Balearic Islands, which ordered the original claim of damages cut in half and supported the Council's request to have the case heard before the Supreme Court.

Justification for termination

The plaintiff requests pay for a period from 2013-2015, during which time he occupied the Council's list of reserve staff despite the fact his services were not retained. He is also party to further litigation against the Formentera Council involving compensation for work that was, again, never actually completed.

In January 2017, one year into his employment with the Council, the plaintiff declined to extend his contract. Subsequently, he sought reimbursement for damages based on the allegation that he had been wrongfully terminated, a claim which was ultimately rejected by the court.

These facts notwithstanding, the Formentera Council contracted the plaintiff once again in January 2018, citing a lack of other eligible candidates on its list of reserve staff. The plaintiff asked to end his contract on February 24, one and a half months after starting. The president and chief officer's testimonies will come two months after that termination.

'Earning without working'

The president and chief officer of the Council have both described the plaintiff as “someone who wants to receive money without working for it”. They have voiced their hopes that the related proceedings do not sully the image of the rest of Formentera's firefighters, who are, in their words, “out and out professionals whose efforts on the island are crucial”.

President Ferrer's handling of the 2013 incident was in accordance with technical reports drafted on the subject. Torres, for his part, began employment with the Council in 2015, two years after the period of time in question.