



Local decision-makers began the April plenary session of the Consell de Formentera by selecting polling station attendants for the local and regional elections of 28 May 2023. The lottery was carried out with a computer programme that selected 330 people from the census. This list includes the chairpersons of the polling stations and voting officers as well as alternates. Now, the Consell de Formentera will send the list to the Central Electoral Board for ratification and, afterwards, the selected individuals will be notified.

Awarding the new waste contract

The GxF and PSOE cabinet overcame opposition abstention to award the Prezero company with the mixed contract for waste collection and transport services, street and beach cleaning, conservation and maintenance of green areas and operation of Formentera's civic amenities site. The eight-year contract, extendable for another two years, was approved for €28,233,965.12 (VAT included). Antoni Tur, environment councillor, described it as "a long-awaited and very necessary contract for Formentera. The previous contract had been extended for too long and this new one will improve the service offered to islanders and those who visit us".

The new service will allow for various improvements, including new staff; new machinery with increased electric mobility; more pickup times; new measures to prevent overfilled containers; first-rate beach cleaning with more personnel and specific machinery; extending organics collection and the deposit-return system to the entire island; a larger budget for awareness campaigns; improvements at the civic amenity site; creation of a space where objects are prepared for reuse to foment the circular economy, and more.

Rules on language

Members of the plenary also unanimously endorsed rules for language use within the Consell de Formentera. As Raquel Guasch, language policies councillor, affirmed, "these rules will allow us to continue moving forward with language policies ensuring that the Catalan language maintains ground at home, in public, in the public administration and everywhere else". Guasch pointed out that, after initial approval for the rules was secured, "we sought comments from the public, associations and administrations, some of which have served to improve some specific points of the first draft. Now, this new set of rules gives us a mechanism to help us and facilitate policies that standardise our language".

Children's city

Decision-makers came together once again to agree to begin work to renew the Child-Friendly City seal, a petition which will now be sent to UNICEF. This distinction will guarantee UNICEF's support and collaboration to continually develop, improve and innovate policies for children and adolescents in our area. Formentera first obtained the seal in 2014. As Alejandra Ferrer, vice president, put it, the goal is for children and teens to enjoy their childhood and adolescence and develop their full potential by seeing their equal rights affirmed in social environments and communities.

Civil Guard Maritime Service

In the session the GxF-PSOE cabinet and Sa Unió representatives endorsed a cross-party proposal to request that the Civil Guard's Maritime Service and Maritime Rescue (*Salvamento Marítimo*) each station one boat on Formentera. This proposal will be sent to the Ministry of Interior to reiterate the request for a Maritime Service boat based on Formentera and ask the Ministry of Development to urgently designate a Formentera-based rapid intervention boat for *Salvamento Marítimo*.

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Taxi fares

Plenary members once again came together to back a proposal from Rafael González, mobility councillor, for taxi fares in 2023. At the request of the Taxi Association of Formentera, councillors approved an economic study-supported change that will see taxi fares rise by 12.89%. The previous rate had been in place since 2019. The agreement must now be submitted to the Balearic ministry of mobility for approval. Councillor González said he hoped that rates could be updated by the start of summer.

Councillors overcame opposition abstention to pass an amendment to the fiscal ordinance regulating fees to use and provide services at municipal facilities. The change will primarily apply to an expansion of services offered at the Nautical Sports Centre (*Centre d'Esports Nàutics*).

Finally, Ana Juan, president and equality councillor, read an official proclamation approved by all the local political groups on International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia, 17 May. President Juan called to mind the Consell's recent approval of the first Sexual, Family and Gender Diversity Plan, "a pioneering strategy in the Balearic Islands and a

tool that serves to ensure equality for all communities". As Juan asserted, "we support and will keep supporting the voice of these individuals; neutral administrations side with the oppressors. This struggle is about being and loving freely, so it is all of our struggle".

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