

Members of the Formentera Council (CiF) came together today to celebrate the administration's November plenary session. Unanimous approval was given to a proposal tackling housing issues and evictions electric bill breaks for low-income homes. According to Councillor Alejandra Ferrer of the department of local land management, finding year-round accommodation continues to be the one of Formentera's big quagmires despite the Palma administration's efforts, including the present construction of low-cost public housing.

The Council of Formentera has also attempted to tackle the housing question here locally, through its creation of a legal status for private citizens who rent their homes to seasonal tourists, which Councillor Ferrer points out «could inversely help by highlighting the supply of houses and apartments not for seasonal holidayers». According to Ferrer, such a system opens the door to compiling a list of homes available for year-round rental.

To tackle the problem, plenary attendants green-lighted a motion to urge the Govern Balear to open a local branch of the regional housing office IBAVI (Instituto Balear de la Vivienda). The measure includes putting pressure on both Palma and Madrid to «adopt policies that actively support residents' right to housing and help in paying astronomical electricity bills».

Improving accessibility

The attendants of the plenary also unanimously passed a proposition from Socialistes de Formentera to draft a municipal accessibility plan for local buildings. Transport councillor Rafa González detailed his department's efforts on the issue and assured the Council's commitment to ameliorating a subject «where we all know Formentera comes up short». He assured all new infrastructure in Formentera is made with accessibility in mind. Opposition parties requested the change happen progressively.

Attendants also unanimously accepted a Socialistes proposal to create a digital literacy programme for the non-tech savvy. A proposition from the Compromís amb Formentera group also secured unanimous support. The idea is to create a sports volunteer corps, which,

explained Councillor Jordi Vidal, will be overseen by the office of sport.

Smoke-free beaches

Another vote that garnered unanimous support: a proposition from Compromís to look into creating smoke-free beaches. The councillor of environment, Daisee Aguilera, said the administration «will study the legal viability of implementing smoke-free criteria either in specific areas or entire beaches». She stressed, however, that any outreach will be key to whichever course of action the Council takes: «This is especially a problem of education and that is really where we want to be making leaps and strides».

Plenary participants also approved a measure from the PP on illegal dumping. The councillor of the environment commented: «We are in the midst of forming a troupe of inspectors that can target this and other problems». Finally, the councillor of social welfare read out loud the administration's official proclamation honouring the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.