



Today's plenary session of the Formentera Island Council saw approval for an array of different issues. First among these was the initial revision of the Regulatory Fiscal Ordinance regarding taxes on administrative services for tourism, the first step in regulating the provision of local tourist accommodation. Another issue at the plenary was the administration's declaration of alignment with Aliança Mar Blava's objection to petrol prospecting. Also on the agenda was the reporting of a sentence at the request of the UTE-Giref, and a liquidation of the Council's general budget for the year of 2012.

First, the secretary of the Council reported on a number of issues, including the sentence on PO 339/2012, brought by the UTE-Giref company. The ruling stood in accordance with the 2010 budget, rejecting the claim which had been brought against it. Also, a declaration was presented for the Decree [of 08/07/2013] regarding approval of the liquidation of the Council's general budget for 2012. It is a clear demonstration of the budgetary balance maintained by the Council that the 2012 fiscal year ended in positive figures and a remainder of more than one million euros. The Council is under the obligation to apply these funds towards lowering its debt, whose current elevation can be attributed to the debts that the Govern Balear holds with the island of Formentera. Also presented at the day's plenary session were the Decrees [of 03/07/2013] on the incorporation of credit remainders and on a favourable sentence for the Council regarding the legal case to determine ownership of two Es Pujols buildings. The Es Pujols sentence supports the town planning regulations maintained by the Council.

As for resolutions discussed at the plenary session, the first order of the day – definitive approval for a one-off revision of Formentera town planning regulations – was approved by absolute majority (with abstention by the Partido Popular and one nay vote by the Grup Independent de Formentera). Formentera town planning regulations having been in application for nearly three years, this move brought approval for a one-off revision intended to bring practises in line with current regulations.

In the interest of improving portions of town planning regulations, it is accepted practise to periodically revise the text of different articles. This serves to maintain a set of regulations that is “evolving” and “dynamic” and that can adapt to the realities of town planning and local legislation in each moment.

The second point, approved by absolute majority excepting a nay vote by the GUIF and abstention by the PP, regarded definitive approval for a detailed study of the Sant Francesc street Carrer de sa Ferreria. The third point of general interest dealt with an expansion of the low-voltage electricity grid at Punta de sa Creu, also approved by absolute majority despite one nay vote from the GUIF. This proposal responded to the necessity to provide electricity to four single-family homes.

Also approved by absolute majority (with abstention by the two groups of the opposition), was the proposal of initial approval for a revision of the Regulatory Fiscal Ordinance regarding taxes on administrative services for tourism. While approval is awaited for the regulations on tourist stays in resident housing, one item that did receive approval was the revision of the tax on administrative services for tourism. The revision at hand affects the taxes associated with registering a house for tourist rental.

Last on the list of resolutions that appeared on the day's agenda items was the proposal regarding a regulatory ordinance – and an accompanying administrative register – for civil ceremonies presided over by the Formentera Council for the welcoming of a new child into a family. The proposal, approved by absolute majority notwithstanding abstention by the GUIF and a nay vote by the PP, came by public request, prompted by residents who wished to include and regulate the possibility of welcoming a new child into their family, and have this act recognised at the civil level.

Finally, local Council government approved a unanimous declaration to support the aforementioned Aliança Mar Blava in its stance against petrol prospecting.

This July the alliance was formed to unite public institutions and other citizens' collectives in a clear rejection of petroleum prospecting activity in the Gulf of Valencia. The Formentera plenary session has adopted a position against such prospecting and agreed to begin legal proceedings to prevent its realisation, be these proceedings administrative or judicial.

The start of such prospecting activity is anticipated for the current year and could suppose a devastating impact on the underwater communities of flora and fauna that live on the Pitiüsa coastline, especially considering that the majority of these species are within protected areas and classified as species of 'priority interest' both by the European Habitats Directive as well as by the UNESCO Heritage of Humanity – Declaration of Natural Assets.