

Attendees of today's plenary meeting of the Formentera Council have agreed unanimously on the initial draft of revisions to Ses Salines parking directive. Transport councillor Rafael González described the changes as “aimed at promoting sustainable transport within the limits of the protected zone” while still “conserving the natural surroundings”.

Among the major tweaks highlighted by the councillor is the regulated control of vehicle access to the park—from 10 May to 30 September for Illetes and 1 June to September for Es Cavall den Borràs—“a change intended to bypass parking difficulties in those areas”, declared the councillor.

Another policy shift trumpeted by González: “Four-by-four vehicles will no longer be allowed access to the park, given concerns about the damage they inflict on the surrounding environment and traffic safety”. Said the head of transport: “We've decided to regulate four-by-four entry into the park because it's the spot on the island where the traffic situation is the prickliest”. He added: “The Council is working with rental agencies so that these [four-by-fours] can be gradually phased out”, saying the vehicles known popularly as quads aren't compatible with the sustainable transport the Council is seeking to promote.

Regulating bus access

Moreover, the Council has moved to regulate bus access to Ses Salines in light of buildup during the most popular travel times. On regular service routes, one bus may enter the park per half-hour and at no additional cost. As for service-by-request routes, the one-bus-per-half-hour quota still applies, but drivers must pay between €0.80 and €1.20 for a parking space (depending on the season). Between 12 noon and 5 p.m., access is forbidden flat out.

As for heavy-load vehicles, typically carrying merchandise to area restaurants, “access will be restricted during the busiest hours of tourist transit”, according to the councillor. Transport vans and lorries will be able to access the area until eleven in the morning and after five—or seven—in the evening, depending on the time of year. Councillor González pointed out that

other changes included updating the removal protocol for illegally parked vehicles. He indicated the revisions had generally been welcomed even by opposition members of the Council, which explained their support for the measure.

Parking in la Savina

Plenary attendees also voted unanimously to ratify the accord for a government commission that will oversee payment rebates on parking in la Savina. Explained González, “we've made some adjustments to reduce the administrative workload and streamline the process for Formentera residents requesting or renewing their parking pass”.

***Escoleta* nursery schools**

All representatives at the plenary voted to support a proposed revision of the Council's interior directive on public nursery schools (*escoletes*) as well as the tax ordinance to finance them. In that regard, education councillor Susana Labrador highlighted increased enrolment at the schools in recent years. “Formentera's nurseries now accommodate 130 children aged zero to three, compared to just 38 in years past”, pointed out Labrador. She said that expansion proves the Council's dedication to providing the much-needed service to local families and, moreover, heralded a greatly-reduced 2015-16 waitlist (it comprised three toddlers) Labrador said was thanks to the opening of the nursery school located at the football pitch”.

Councillor of sport reports on recent action

Jordi Vidal, councillor and head of the office of sport, provided an account of his office's activity over the past year. During the report back, Vidal received positive valuations from all the municipal groups that participated. Among the different actions from this past year he highlighted the creation of Formentera's athletics school, the programme to promote sportsmanlike values, the expansion of opening hours at the fitness centre/swimming pool to include Saturdays and the new funding model for local sports clubs. He also declared: “Formentera is working with other branches of the public administration to create a space to offer nautical sports services”.