



Decision makers gathered today for the local government’s January plenary session. The assembly brought cross-party support for the 2020-2021 “Island Patrimony Plan” (*Pla Insular de Patrimoni*)—a plan which includes strategies for managing Formentera’s tangible and intangible heritage.

Department chief Raquel Guasch described the document as “a roadmap for our present and future heritage strategies”. “The incorporation of many uncompleted actions from this plan’s predecessor means it’s technically a plan that stays the course”, she said, adding: “It’s a realistic one as well, because the emphasis is on initiatives and actions seen as workable. Meanwhile, what makes the plan innovative is its focus on Es Campament, listed as a cultural heritage site since 2013, and suggested strategies relative to intangible heritage—the creation of an immaterial heritage advisory committee, for instance, as well as the designation of traditional dance and homespun *redoblat* singing as ‘immaterial heritage’”.

Assembly members voted to approve not only the formation of the advisory committee but the group’s operational procedures as well. Ms Guasch pointed out that the new document calls for a special “protection plan” for one site in particular regarded as being of notable historical interest: Ses Salines nature reserve. The department chief called on other administrations and groups for help implementing the plan, and commended what she called “a true group effort” by heritage department personnel.

With “yes” votes from the governing team and the abstention of the opposition, one measure also to receive backing was brought by local education chief Susana Labrador. “This is a rejection of educational models and measures that violate children’s right to integrative learning rooted in democratic principles like equality, tolerance and respect for diversity”. Also expressed is the Formentera government’s support of school autonomy and complementary extracurricular activities that are consistent with educational criteria. The text urges the Balearic government to block political and partisan interference in schools and to keep working to move the new education bill through the legislature, while it calls on Formentera’s own government to “continue programming activities for schools that promote the values of equality, tolerance and diversity”.

Improvements to sanitation grid

Assembly members also agreed unanimously to urge the regional environment and land offices to expedite the processing of environmental permits for replacement parts and upgrades across the island's general sanitation grid. Brought by environment councillor Antonio J Sanz, the proposal puts pressure on the Balearic Agency for Water and Environmental Quality (Abaqua) to speed up public tender of the work, describing "exhaustive revision to determine weak spots on the grid, a speedy start of construction and improvements to the grid to prevent new leaks of waste water" as "imperative".

The session also secured cross-party support for two bipartisan measures from Sa Unió. The first calls for the maintenance, troubleshooting and, if necessary, replacement of prefabricated classrooms at the Sant Ferran school. The second involves Formentera's adherence to the regional government's "Electric Mobility in the Balearic Islands" management programme.

Report from Antonio J Sanz

At the conclusion of the day's session, chief of environment and inspection services Antonio J Sanz took the floor to provide what amounted to the year's first stocktaking, or *compareixença*, by a councillor on the governing team. Focusing first on efforts over the last seven months involving the vehicle roadworthiness testing site (ITV), Sanz underscored new personnel, the creation of a pool of available service inspectors, a return to normal with respect to wait times and the broader service, plus more upgrades currently in the works.

As for the environment, Sanz spoke about the substation and turbine at Es Ca Marí, meetings between neighbours and the Balearic environment ministry and short-term corrective measures like the installation of a third cable to allow for replacement of the turbine.

On waste management, Sanz offered that recent months had seen "tireless work to hammer out the details of the latest tendering of the waste management contract so that the new service accommodates current and forward expectations".

Sanz also reminded assembly members of the environment department's advancement of the proposal to ban single-use plastics in administration offices—an initiative that is currently being tendered. He also highlighted a new programme to reuse pallets at the waste processing centre, promising figures regarding organic waste collection, a newly robust pick-up service and a string of projects that have received funding from the Save Posidonia Project. In addition, the councillor described progress in the effort to regulate moorage at Estany des Peix, reported on

the latest meetings around improvements to the local sanitation grid, and held up the Formentera government's recent decision to declare climate emergency.

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Consell de Formentera