



Today decision-makers gathered for the February plenary assembly, where they handed approval to a number of proposals, including rules for anchoring at S'Estany des Peix, the 2022-2023 Strategic Plan on Subsidies and 'cultural-interest site' status for En Botigues windmill (Molí d'en Botigues).

S'Estany des Peix anchorage rules

The Gent per Formentera (GxF) and Socialist cabinet overcame resistance from opposition group Sa Unió to grant initial approval to anchoring rules and the legal rubric for mooring fixtures at S'Estany des Peix. Antoni Tur, Councillor of Environment, called approval of the rules "an important step towards the endgame of recovering and preserving this environmentally endangered natural area". Councillors created a ranking system prioritising traditional watercraft and set up discounts for distinct groups, with Tur asserting that the aim of the rules was "to keep moorings and activities that are steeped in historical tradition side by side". He cast the project as "cutting-edge" and the subject of "broad popular request".

Strategic Plan on Subsidies

The GxF-PSOE cabinet overcame abstention from the opposition to endorse the Strategic Plan on Subsidies for 2022. Bartomeu Escandell, Councillor of Economy and Finance, said the €2,025,200 budget reserved for the subsidies plan showed the administration had "the political will and economic mettle to support Formentera's associations", which he thanked for their work and support.

Escandell said subsidies fell into categories like social action, culture, education and heritage, sports, agriculture, livestock, fishing and hunting, mobility, environment, trade, housing, and tourism. The plan also includes new allocations for livestock, tourism promotion and the fight to tackle climate change. Escandell offered that "these subsidies are an attempt to address the demands of our various groups and their enormous efforts".

Molí d'en Botigues, new cultural-interest site

Assembly members also moved unanimously to designate the Molí d'en Botigues windmill in La Mola a cultural-interest monument (*Bé d'Interès Cultural, BIC*). Raquel Guasch, Councillor of Heritage, emphasised "the legacy of this windmill", and called it "a noteworthy 19th-century element requiring the maximum level of protection". The councillor cast the landmark designation as "another step towards our goal of affording protected status to Formentera's windmills".

Metred parking

The cabinet once again overcame opposition abstention to grant final approval to a modification of the ordinance which regulates metred parking rates in Es Pujols, Sant Ferran, Sant Francesc and La Savina.

Rafael González, Councillor of Mobility, pointed out that the modification partially accounted for a petition to ensure that Formentera residents who drive vehicles used previously by car-hire companies were eligible for discounts. Islanders who pay Formentera's vehicle circulation tax receive a full tax break and may park in blue and green zone spaces at no charge; now Formentera residents who drive vehicles operated previously as rentals will benefit from an 85% reduction of the same tax.

The cabinet overcame the opposition's abstention to back initial approval of the modified ordinance regulating metred parking. Councillor González charged that the change targetted parking problems that occurred in the centre of La Savina in July and August 2021.

"The centre of La Savina was saturated with rental vehicles that were not in fact being rented. The current change makes it illegal to park a rental vehicle without a visible document proving it is rented. Last summer in La Savina, Formentera Local Police issued 150 fines for unrented rental vehicles parked in metred spots. The modification, which was communicated to and agreed with the La Savina Association of Neighbours and car rental companies, empowers law enforcement and blue zone parking attendants to sanction violators of this rule.

Three proposals from Sa Unió representatives were also unanimously approved. The first calls on the Consell de Formentera to urgently convene a meeting of the Audiovisual Management Body (*Ens de Gestió Audiovisual, EGA*) and to regularly comply with protocol for gatherings as set out in the EGA charter. The second urges local and regional government to evaluate the effectiveness of measures to curb local numbers of the pine processionary caterpillar and to study new and possibly more effective approaches. The third motion urges the Balearic Agency of Water and Environmental Quality (Agència Balear de l'Aigua, ABAQUA) to expand maintenance and oversee appropriate infrastructure upgrades in Formentera's sewage network, particularly near Ses Salines Natural Reserve.

Department report from the Councillor of Infrastructure, Primary Sector and Interior

Josep Marí, Councillor of Infrastructure, Primary Sector and Interior, offered a review of efforts in his departments. He hailed progress strengthening the primary sector, agriculture, livestock, fishing and hunting – a priority that he asserted had been in place since creation of the Consell de Formentera. He described the Formentera Farmers Co-operative (Cooperativa del Camp, CCF) as "the backbone and driver of the recovery of local agriculture and livestock".

On fishing, the councillor offered, "Our policy is to protect Formentera's sea and artisan fishermen". He asserted that the Fishermen's Guild served to "protect our fishing professionals" and insisted that that group would have "new facilities to do its work within the year".

On interior affairs, the councillor highlighted a long-standing effort to ensure that emergency and law enforcement forces on the island were "local and sufficiently staffed". He insisted that in recent years, the Consell de Formentera has presided over a resolute push for competitive examinations to increase the number of police staff. "New selection processes will mean we can reach our goal of consolidating the workforce", he added. The councillor spoke about the island's lifeguards and fire department and offered special thanks to the Civil Protection volunteers corps.

On infrastructure, Councillor Marí said that over €1 million in investments during the last three legislative terms meant Formentera had "moved forward and made substantial improvements in almost all the towns on our island".

He underscored initiatives near Sant Francesc's socio-health hub, where work on the old person's home and access roads is under way and nearing completion, and in Es Ca Marí, where plans are in place to install a sewage system.

Official proclamation International Women's Day, 8 March

Finally, Ana Juan, President of the Consell and Councillor of Equality, presented a proclamation for International Women's Day, 8 March, in which she asserted, "We must recognise that gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but also one of the essential foundations for building a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world". She pointed out that "without gender equality today, a sustainable and egalitarian future will remain out of reach".

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