



This morning the last plenary session of 2014 was held in the plenary hall of the Formentera Council. The first order of the day centred on the governing party's nominations for the oversight committee concerning the transfer of authorities from the regional government to the local island councils on matters of administrative functions and services.

Councillor of tourism Alejandra Ferrer justified the change, which blocked GUIF and PP party members from representing the Formentera Council, “given the recent voting record of these parties. This is notably the cause in the case of the PP, which recently chose to abstain from a vote that would have supported the board of tourism.”

Ferrer said that “considering the Govern's four representatives on the committee are all members of the PP, if any of our four local representatives cast an abstention or vote in favour of the Govern Balear, it will mean an automatic win for the Govern.”

Councillor Ferrer committed to ensuring that “the four representatives of the Formentera Council shall defend whatever the board of tourism decides.” The proposal moved forward, nabbing eight 'yes' votes from members of the Gent per Formentera-PSOE government coalition and three 'no' votes from the PP (two) and GUIF (one). Cristina Costa, representative of the GUIF, could not be present at the meeting due to loss of a loved one.

The second proposal of the day dealt with improving air and water connections for Formentera residents and received the unanimous support of those present at the plenary. This was also the case regarding the christening of the new Sant Francesc thoroughfare, henceforth to be called '*Carrer de sa Tanca Vella*'.

The GUIF backed the Govern on a measure to strike a deal between three offices – the regional department of tourism in Palma, l'Agència Balear de Turisme and the Formentera Council – regarding drafting a plan of action on tourism. Local PP representative José Manuel Alcaraz explained his party's rejection of the vote by saying: “The regional department of tourism has been pushing this deal for two years. It's too late now.” Councillor Ferrer countered that the

Formentera Council had previously rejected the proposal on the grounds that “[the regional government in] Mallorca demanded control over the project's coordination and administration”. The councillor underscored the fact that “the tourism model we use must be decided at a local level here in Formentera.”

Consensus was once again achieved for the final measure of the day, a motion to oversee improvements to an outlet pipe located at the Es Ca Mari desalination plant. Environmental councillor Silvia Tur explained the need for the measure, saying: “Recently-announced plans to renovate the plant made no mention of improvements to the outlet pipe. This ran counter to all prior discussion of the issue between the Abaqua company and l'Agència Balear de l'Aigua, the regional water authority.”

At the behest of PP party members, Councillor Tur explained recent changes to the 'coastline law' that envision increasing current limitations to shaded areas at beach bars. “These changes only affect shaded areas and not the space accorded to the beach bars themselves, which does not change. We think these could be positive, but the Council is going to wait for the legal report on the matter to explain just what the repercussions would be for concession-holders.”

Tur also described the measures that the Formentera public administration has taken with regard to interruptions to water service on the island and financial compensation for affected customers. The environmental councillor indicated that resident comments or complaints could be addressed at Aqualia's Sant Francesc office.

When questioned as per the budget allocation for local Christmas celebrations, Councillor Sergio Jiménez explained that “the budget for this round of holiday festivities is €40,000, which brings us back up to 2008 levels. In the wake of sobering economic factors faced by the Council, between 2008 and 2013, the budget had dropped to €25,000. When we have had financial difficulties we cut spending on this kind of funding, not education or social services.”

Finally, following enquiry by the PP, Sònia Cardona announced that the next Ràdio Illa board meeting would take place during the second week in January. José Manuel Alcaraz took exception to what he said was common practice at the public radio station of “speaking badly about the Partido Popular”.