



Earlier today Consell de Formentera premiere Alejandra Ferrer, deputy premiere Ana Juan and economy and finance councillor Bartomeu Escandell gathered at the seat of local government to make public the details of the administration's 2021 budget. Total spending tops €30.6 million — a 1.9% increase compared to last year, when it accounted for €30M.

President Ferrer asserted that 2021 would mark a continuation of efforts begun last year to ensure no islander would be left behind. “We’ll continue working to give families uninterrupted access to Consell services like nurseries, the music school and fitness centre”, said Ferrer, “plus we’ll be giving tax rebates to small-business owners in need and keep strengthening the social safety net for crisis-hit islanders, such as with food vouchers and, moving forward, renter’s assistance”. Ferrer insisted that such support wouldn’t require changing Formentera’s guiding vision. “We intend to move ahead with economic stimulus driven by substantial investments in infrastructure and towns”, she said, “and we certainly won’t renege on our long-standing commitment to environmental sustainability”.

Councillor Juan, for her part, tied legislative successes in 2020 to team work between representatives of PSOE and Gent per Formentera, something she said was key to “getting spending into line with islanders’ pandemic-era needs and requests, and delivering assistance to working islanders, renters and vulnerable segments of the population”. “The 2021 budget will further work to maintain and increase such services”, she said.

## **Social safety net and help for businesses**

The economy and finance councillor underlined key features of the budget like increases in overall spending and a redirecting of resources toward keeping businesses open and supporting families and local farming. Escandell said money for the latter would approach €740,000 —a 55% increase compared to 2019— and pointed to hikes in investment and current transfers, drops in current income from the region and the urban estate tax (IBI) and a continuation of the administration’s commitment to zero bank debt.

## **Investment criteria**

Escandell gave an overview of investment criteria projected to hold steady in 2021, starting with the island’s commitment to sustainability and efforts to recover natural spaces like S’Estany des

Peix and enhance sustainable mobility and waste management.

Improvements will continue in towns as well, including phase two of upgrades in Es Pujols; work on Avinguda Miramar and on roads granting access to the Sant Ferran school and old persons' home; creation of the skate and fitness park in Sant Francesc.

Heritage preservation constitutes another important feature of the 2021 budget —plans are currently in place to refurbish the Can Ramon home and build a cultural centre at the current site of the school in Sant Ferran— as does fomenting participation with the Consell d'Entitats Participatory Spending initiative.

A standout feature of the plan is its commitment to seniors, youth and children, with the island's first old persons' home, the Sant Ferran nursery, the skate and fitness park and the children's play area in Sant Ferran all due to open.

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