

Today decision-makers with plenary representation on the Consell de Formentera unanimously agreed to give residents of the island a full rebate and, for other riders, cover 70% of costs, for all current seasonal passes and multi-journey bus tickets for the period between 1 September 2022 and 31 December 2022. Rafael González, councillor of mobility, explained that on 16 September the Consell de Formentera would also issue a new call for grants for conventional and electric bicycles for local residents. In the councillor's words, the measures "are complementary and ensure that all islanders, whether living in towns or remote locations, benefit from mobility assistance."

The proposal, which was tabled with another as part of a compromise with Sa Unió representatives, envisions paying for 100% subsidies with own funds of up to 50% and supplementary funds from the state and region (30% and 20%, respectively). The 70% rebates will be financed with own funds of up to 20% and the above split.

Free registration at escoletes

Cross-party support was additionally delivered to a compromise proposal to fully subsidise the yearly €70 tuition fee for children in local nurseries (*escoletes*) in 2022-2023. The Consell will also cut the price of 9.00am-to-1.00pm childcare, September to June, for years one and two during the 2022-2023 school year. The ordinance maintains current rebates and exemptions and includes a 30% rebate for single-parent families, like the one already in place for large families. Vanessa Parellada, councillor of youth, presented the proposal and stressed the Consell's "long-standing commitment to early-childhood education, as evidenced by its zero waiting list and the enormous budgetary effort to invest in this service".

She signalled that "the times ahead will be challenging for Formentera families and public administrations alike" and said the aid would serve to alleviate the economic burden borne by families. Parellada emphasised the importance of "promoting educational policies at every level of government to achieve free, universal early-childhood education".

Regulations on childcare providers

Plenary members handed cross-party support to a statute setting authorisation criteria for childcare centres serving children ages zero to three and not part of the education office. Rafael

Ramírez, councillor of social welfare, stressed that "this regulation marks a step forward in the quality of assistance, protection and support for Formentera kids and is a guarantee for families and children".

Fifty new permits for holiday rentals

Unanimous backing was also secured for a proposal on the distribution of 50 holiday home rental permits, including the conditions and criteria of access. As Law 3/2022, containing urgent measures for sustainability and circularity in the Balearic Islands, came into force, so too did the temporary suspension of new holiday home rental permits and, with it, an exception: 50 additional permits for Formentera. Alejandra Ferrer, vice-president and councillor of tourism, described the proposal as "exclusively limited to tourist stays in homes". The 50-permit exception was negotiated during the comment period in a bid to offer solutions to families and small businesses which have already made certain investments. Priority will be given to parties whose investments and works projects meet sustainability and environmental criteria included in the Municipal Quality Plan. According to Ferrer, the exception will also apply to investments and projects meeting criteria set out in tourism regulations, statutes which were negotiated during the consultation period for Balearic legislation on sustainable and circular tourism.

Interested parties will have ten days from publication of the resolution to make appropriate requests.

Petitioning the coastal authority to refurbish wooden walkways

Lastly, assembly members endorsed a proposal from all political groups asking the authority charged with protecting coastal areas in the Balearic Islands (*Demarcación de Costas en Illes Balears, DCIB*) to urgently refurbish wooden walkways, information panels and other similar structures in parts of the island belonging to the Public Maritime Terrestrial Domain. According to the proposal, the structures' current state of deterioration "means accidents are more likely and constitutes a public health risk". Decision-makers also pressed DCIB to instal solar panel-equipped pergolas to provide electric vehicle charging points near beaches.

Progress report from Antoni Tur

The plenary session ended with a report from Antoni Tur, councillor of environment and inspections. Tur offered a review of work within his departments and highlighted progress during his first year as councillor, pointing to the tender of beach services ("with 200 applications received so far and the award process now under way, improvements on the previous period of operation are plain to see", he said) and the regulation of Estany des Peix (a project 20 years in the making that "strikes a balance between traditional anchoring techniques used by

recreational boaters and environmental sustainability, while addressing a long-standing plea of Formentera residents").

Regarding the service contract for waste collection, the councillor cast the previous contract, which dates from 2007, as "insufficient". He also insisted that this year the new service, which has been "tailored to the current and future needs of islanders, with maximum efficiency and sustainability", will be put to tender. The councillor underscored progress this term in energy policies "that will allow us to cut consumption and improve Formentera's energy efficiency"; described inspections, which also "need to be reinforced" with an additional staff member, and trumpeted a waiting list of zero at the roadworthiness test site. Finally, the councillor praised "our entire team", asserting, "I want to publicly recognise and applaud [them] for their work and involvement, past and present".

26 August 2022
Communications Office
Consell de Formentera