

Formentera Council president Jaume Ferrer and vice president and tax office councillor Bartomeu Escandell have unveiled the administration's 2016 budget. As Escandell explained, next year's books «stick to the budgetary route first taken in 2012» and «keep spending at roughly 22 million euros». The exact figure is 22,275,000.00€, or 1.43% than last year.

Escandell indicated: «This budget» - composed of 12 million euros from internal financing and another 9 million from sources like the Balearic community and Madrid - «allows the Formentera Council to remain financially self-reliant». During the 2016 fiscal year the administration will continue lowering taxes levied, a move affecting real estate taxes in the island's urban areas: the current rate of 0.85% will drop to 0.80%. The councillor assured that, despite the drop, adjustments to collection practises will effect an overall increase in funds raised.

**Environmental programmes**

Investment, reserved for green programmes, will be made into two projects: one, a project to oversee the management and protection of the Estany des Peix zone, and another, regulation of boat anchorage across the Formentera coastline. Each of these has a budget of 60,000 euros. An additional goal of investment is to promote sustainable transport. Vice President Escandell referred to the upcoming drafting of a mobility directive, aimed at «maximising efficiency in public transport and instating a green trails network».

Two line items on the budget are set aside for repurposing local heritage sites in order to increase their use by the community. Two-hundred thousand euros, for example, are allocated for the project to convert the lighthouse in la Mola into a cultural centre, and a similar project at Can Ramon is set to receive 30,000 euros.

**New decision-making power for Consell d'Entitats**

The 2016 budget bestows the local board of associations and business leaders with new participatory capabilities. «With this budget», pointed out Escandell, «the Consell d'Entitats is given the authority to decide where 10% (or 250,000€) of the investment budget goes». This will further increase the importance of the Consell in deciding which projects receive assistence on Formentera.

Additional public service improvements envisioned by the new budget are the construction of a municipal funeral parlour and the expansion of service at the cami Vell nursery school to include year-round classes.