On behalf of the local cabinet, Consell de Formentera president Alejandra Ferrer addressed a letter to the associations of the Consell d'Entitats to applaud their solidarity and generosity: after submitting projects to the island's Pressupostos Participatius (Participatory Spending) initiative, member groups accepted a proposal from the cabinet to "invest the initiative's 2020 budget of €325,000 in assistance for individuals and businesses, part of a bid to soften the economic blow of the crisis on Formentera families and leave no one behind".

As individuals and from positions within local groups, islanders are offering to help any way they can. Take the parents' group at Mestre Lluís Andreu primary school, which contacted the Formentera Department of Citizen Participation to suggest that the 2020 Pressupostos Participatius budget be freed up for investment in social causes. The department connected with the other groups that had submitted ideas for this year's round of the initiative, and according to President Ferrer, the response was unanimous: today, the priority is those most in need.

Pressupostos Participatius invites Formentera-based groups to not only participate in administering local public spending, but at the same time, learn about the workings of government and management of public money. Similar to the local government's own budgetary retooling, the proposed change unfolds against a backdrop of transforming priorities, and speaks both to the maturity of the Consell d'Entitats and to the humanity and solidarity of Formentera's associations. "We're enormously proud of you", said Ferrer.

The money—€325,000 previously earmarked for 2020 Pressupostos Participatius—will be allocated for assistance. Projects that won the Consell d'Entitats' support in previous years remain on track for execution as soon as the current situation permits.

Other budgetary changes

Many individuals, families and businesses on Formentera are already feeling the grave economic consequences of the health crisis. The central and regional governments alike have implemented various measures, including a Guaranteed Social Income (Renda Social Garantida), renter's assistance and programmes to help businesses and freelancers obtain liquidity.

The Consell is working hard to keep islanders informed about available assistance and to

process applications, simultaneously taking steps to extend how far its own resources go to help at-risk families. All branches of the island's administration are now engaged in work on a package of measures to ease the pressure of fees and levies assessed at the local level. A budgetary retooling is in the works that will free up a maximum amount of available resources for much needed assistance.

Go-ahead recently came from Madrid so that the Consell could divert €200,000 of its 2019 surplus to social assistance. The local government has asked for permission to use the whole surplus to that end.

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Department of Communications
Consell de Formentera