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## Dreamland inquiry to determine future of key site

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THE two-week public inquiry into the future of Dreamland began on Tuesday.

The inquiry will see the council setting out its case as to why it believes a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) is the only way forward for the famous site.

It wants to push ahead with ambitious plans to turn it into a multi-million pound heritage theme park. But the site's current owner says it has its own plans to turn it into an amusement park, putting the two sides at loggerheads.

The council believes the site is key to the town's regeneration and, along with the

Turner Contemporary, heralds its revival. It is working in partnership with the Dreamland Trust to create a heritage amusement park of historic rides, side shows and cafés.

Clive Hart, leader of Thanet council, said: "We cannot have a such an important site in Margate blighted for much longer. I believe we will prove this is a viable project that will work and that is fully funded from Government."

The public inquiry is expected to last for approximately two weeks. It takes places in the Council Chamber in Cecil Street and is open to the public. Once the inquiry concludes, a final decision is unlikely to be made until May or June of this year.



## Actress joins campaign against live exports

JOANNA Lumley is the latest celebrity to sign up to the campaign against live animal exports from Ramsgate.

According to the group Compassion in World Farming the port is the only one

in the UK to operate the trade since May last year.

The actress helped launch an advertising campaign for the group in London earlier this week.

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### SADNESS

#### Tributes paid to teacher, 49

STAFF and pupils at the Marlowe Academy are mourning the loss of drama teacher Michael Tulloch. Mr Tulloch became a leading expert on emotional intelligence; devising methods to help youngsters with challenging behaviour. He has died aged 49 after a short illness.

### STORM

#### Emergency call-outs

KENT County Council tackled seven call-outs to trees and branches blocking roads after storms battered Thanet last week. Highways officers were on standby to deal with the expected increase in calls. The council is reminding landowners that trees and bushes near roads are their responsibility.

### SPORT

#### Olympic torch bearer named

A SIXTH form student from Hartsdown College has been chosen as one of the people to carry the Olympic flame through Thanet before the summer games. Emma-Jayne Chadwick, 16, was nominated by James Gregory and the Sport4NRG team.

### BUDGET

## Council vows to keep portion of tax bills at last year's rates

THANET council's new Labour leadership says there will be no rise in next year's council tax.

A band D housholder will pay just under £210 per year for the council's part of the charge in 2012/13 if the draft budget is agreed on January 19.

The new administration says it has reversed a decision by the former Conservative cabinet to introduce £50,000

worth of cuts to events funding and floral displays. It has also reduced a rise in off street parking fees and cremation and burial charges.

Cllr Rick Everitt, cabinet member for finance, said: "Given that we only came into office on December 8 and the budget proposals had to be finalised well before Christmas, we have necessarily been limited

in the changes we could make.

"However, we have been able to reduce an inflation-busting nine per cent hike to off-street car parking fees to allow time for a genuine consultation on proposals for a new charging scheme and we have cut back Conservative plans for 8.5 per cent and 15 per cent increases to the cost of cremations and burials."

The council says it will pay for the changes with money from a Government grant which had not been allocated. The final council tax bill will depend on other authorities' decisions, including Kent County Council.

Cllr Everitt added: "Residents are suffering because of the state of the economy. We have set out to ensure the council doesn't add to their problems."