EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council has requested that a report be tabled on the Heavy Vehicle Inspection Station that was closed at Brewarrina Shire Council’s Works Depot as from the 5 May 2010.

History

- February 2008 the RTA wrote to Council advising Council of required changes to the HVIS which monitors the roadworthiness of all heavy and public passenger vehicles within NSW. This was due to the changing dimensions of the road transport fleet. The RTA advised that many of the current inspection sites posed OH&S concerns to the RTA and these sites would require upgrading or if not feasible then they would close.

- March 2008 the RTA (through Sinclair Knight Merz) forwarded Council an Invitation for Expression of Interest for the provision of a Leased Heavy Vehicle Inspection Site at Brewarrina.

- Council letter (no date) was sent to RTA from the Group Manager Engineering requesting technical support for the upgrade to the existing pit.

- July 2008 RTA replied to a Council letter (not on file) granting sufficient time to gain the appropriate funding and to have any required construction works carried out.

- Invitation for Expression of Interest for the provision of a Leased Heavy Vehicle Inspection Site at Brewarrina to be lodged by 17 December 2008.

- December 2008, RTA Leased HVIS Expression of Interest Form was completed. There is no indication on the form if it was sent or not.

- May 2010, RTA advises Council the current leased facility at Brewarrina does not address the critical elements of a safe workplace, lacks the essential facilities and can not accommodate inspection equipment. As from the 5 May, 2010 no further HVIS inspections will be carried out at Brewarrina.

From the above correspondence, Council has not committed to the upgrade of the pit which has given little options for the RTA to close the facility.

Discussions between Council and the RTA Vehicle Regulation Manager, Western Region has indicated that Council can undertake the required works to the existing
facility as per their specifications and make application to the RTA to reinstate the facility as a registered HVIS inspection site. The RTA will not guarantee that the facility will be approved if an application was lodged.

Currently Bourke Shire Council operates a HVIS for the local area of Bourke and Brewarrina. Bourke Shire Council constructed this facility in October 2009 at a cost of over $200,000 to accommodate for the Heavy Vehicle Inspections and to fulfil the requirements of the RTA in regards to the initial letter in February 2008. The RTA would not look favourably on Brewarrina Shire Council opening a facility in competition to Bourke Shire Council who have based their business case on the closure here.

Council can continue to pursue this issue in lobbying the RTA to reinstate the Heavy Vehicle Inspection Station at Brewarrina. To achieve an outcome for Brewarrina, Council would need to budget for the upgrade of the existing facility, complete these works to the specifications as outlined by the RTA and anticipate a positive response from the RTA in regards to reopening this facility. The latter from the RTA as from discussions held between both parties, have very little chance of a satisfactory outcome for Brewarrina.

The General Manager wrote to Premier O’Farrell on 26 March 2011, with a copy to Minister Humphries, in relation to this matter.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS
Nil

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS
Nil

RECOMMENDATION:

That:

1. Council advises the concerned residents of Brewarrina, that;
   a. the reopening of the Heavy Vehicle Inspection Station has very minimal support from the RTA.
   b. the residents follow this through their State Local Member.

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Glenda Tasker
General Manager