Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

Vaccines Manufacturing and Innovation Centre (VMIC)

15.   A vaccine manufacturing and innovation centre (VMIC) is being built which will be able to develop novel innovative manufacturing processes and carry out vaccine manufacturing at a variety of scales. The original funding for the centre (c.£69 million) was announced from within the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund and the current project in its original specification is scheduled to be completed and opened by late 2022.

16.   At the outbreak of Covid-19 we asked UKRI to undertake a costed study of what could be accelerated in the build of the centre to allow for an earlier opening date, what the earliest that could be and what extra capacity could be added to the original specification to better reflect the specific needs of responding to Covid-19.

17.   UKRI has since come back to confirm the centre could be open by June 2021, which whilst not necessarily ready for this strain of the virus, would significantly increase the UK's capacity to produce and manufacture vaccines in the long term.

18.   UKRI has also advised us that they can adapt the specification to allow for more 'tandem' development of vaccines, I.e. more capability to develop and manufacture multiple vaccines at the same time. It has also costed increasing the manufacturing capacity to supply at UK population levels (50 – 70 million doses) at pace (4 – 6 months). A early draft business case is Attached at Annex A.

19.   The estimated cost of this acceleration and revised specification is between £68 million and £93 million, with a central estimate of c.£79 million. UKRI will provide refined costings within three months.

20.   In scoping out the timelines and costings for this work, UKRI has been supported by colleagues at the industry taskforce, including its chair Ian McCubbin. We would be happy to set up a meeting with those colleagues to discuss this in more detail.

21.   Part of the urgency on making a decision is we understand other countries across the world are beginning to think about