

**Health Professions Council  
Council – 5<sup>th</sup> July 2007**

**Fitness to Practise Reorganisation**

**Executive Summary and Recommendations**

**Introduction**

The Fitness to Practise department work plan for 2007-2008 sets out the key areas of work for the department and how we will work towards achieving this work plan. One of the key areas of work was to ensure that resources continue to be managed to their best effect. This includes reviewing the structure of the department, reducing reliance on external legal providers and reviewing the arrangements that are currently in place for witnesses.

The Executive is now asking the Council to consider the organisation of the Fitness to Practise department. The Council's scheme of delegation provides that the Council retains the responsibility for restructuring the Council's employees where the changes involved ten or more employees.

The proposed reorganisation of the Fitness to Practise department affects all employees currently working in the Fitness to Practise Directorate. All Fitness to Practise department employees have been consulted as per the timetable attached as Appendix A and have been positive about the proposed changes.

The Fitness to Practise department currently consists of seventeen full time employees who all report to the Director of Fitness to Practise. It is anticipated that the number of employees in the department will rise to twenty three at the end of the financial year. The current reporting structure will not adequately support this increase.

The proposed reorganisation of the Fitness to Practise department will consist of four teams, three case teams, one hearings team and an administration function. It is anticipated that more teams will be created as workload increases.

**Case Teams**

Members of case teams will each report to a Lead Case Manager. The Lead Case Managers will all report to the Fitness to Practise Manager.

Case teams one and two will be responsible for the following:

- Investigation of Allegations (excluding convictions) which also includes taking complaints over the telephone;
- Presentation of Registration Appeals;
- Presentation and preparation of Interim Orders;
- Presentation and preparation of Article 30 review hearings;
- Disposal of cases via consent application; and

- Vulnerable witness assessments.

Members of case teams one and two will present interim orders, review hearings and consent applications for cases that are managed by the other teams.

Case team three will be responsible for:

- Witness support management;
- Vulnerable witness assessment;
- Prosecution of offences cases;
- Registration appeal cases;
- Conviction fitness to practise cases; and
- Incorrect entry cases.

## **Hearings Team**

The Hearings Manager will report to the Director, with Hearings Officers reporting to the Hearings Manager.

The Hearings Officers will retain their current responsibilities

## **Administration**

The two Team Administrators will report to the Fitness to Practise Manager. Their role includes the preparation of bundles for review hearings. This is a task previously undertaken by our external legal providers. The Administrators will also be involved in witness support.

## **Benefits to the new structure**

- Complete management of cases;
- Effective split of functions;
- Greater flexibility to demand (including the registration of new professions);
- Increased capacity (new teams created as number of allegations increases);
- Reduced reliance on external lawyers; and
- More effective workload management.

There are no fundamental changes to the roles of existing employees. The changes are to the reporting structure in contracts and job descriptions.

## **Decision**

The Council is asked to agree the proposed reorganisation of the Fitness to Practise department as outlined in this paper.

## **Background information**

Fitness to Practise work plan 2007-2008

The department currently consists of the following employees:

- Director of Fitness to Practise
- Fitness to Practise Manager
- PA to the Director of Fitness to Practise
- 2 Team Administrators
- 4 Hearings Officers
- 2 Case Officers
- 6 Case Managers

Two further case managers have recently been appointed and will join the department shortly.

It is anticipated that the department will move to 2 floors on completion of the building works in Stannary Street.

Fitness to Practise Work plan 2007/2008 - previously seen by Council

## **Resource implications**

Subject to Council approval, it is anticipated that three Lead Case managers will be advertised for in August/September 2007 and a Hearings Manager towards the end of 2007. This will also provide the Director and Manager with increased time for other policy and operational issues.

## **Financial implications**

All positions are in the Fitness to Practise budget for 2007/2008.

Case managers will be responsible for the preparation and presentation of some Article 30 review hearings, registration appeal cases, interim orders and investigating panels. This will mean a reduced reliance on external legal providers who have historically presented Article 30 review cases and registration appeals. This has also been accounted for in the 2007/2008 budget

## **Appendices**

Consultation timetable  
Proposed new structure of the Fitness to Practise department

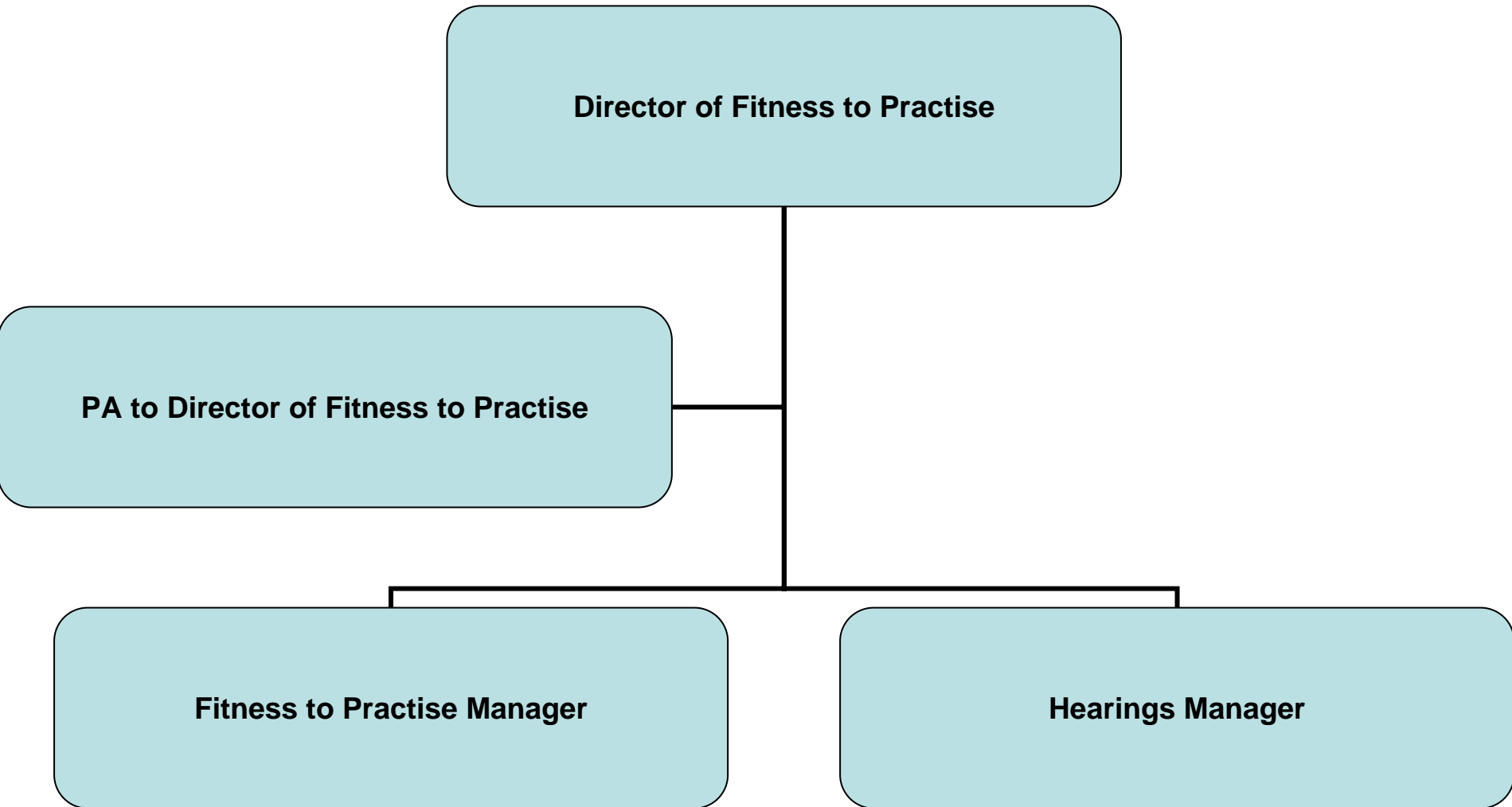
## **Date of paper**

20<sup>th</sup> June 2007

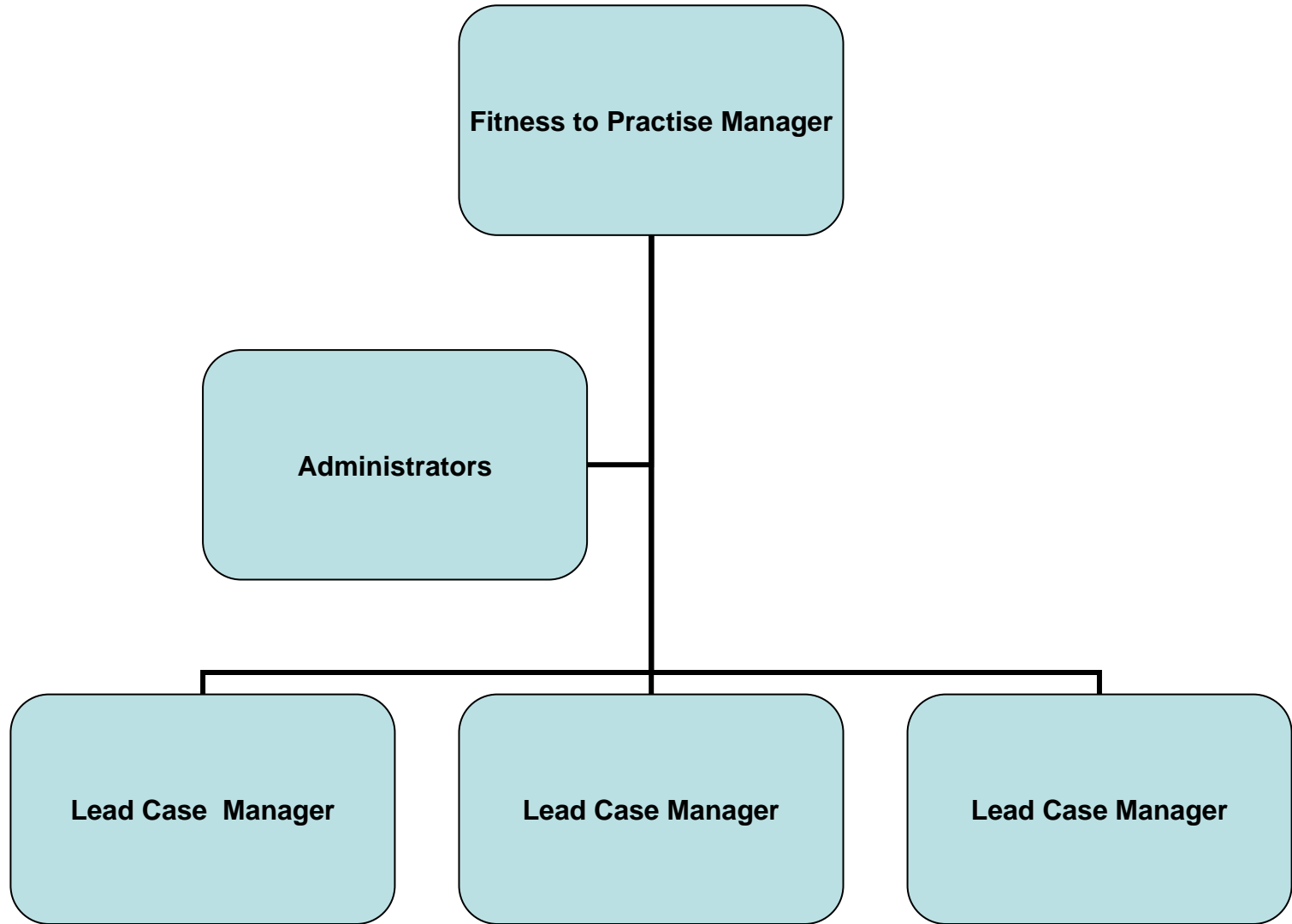
Consultation.

	Task Name	Duration	Start	Finish	28 May '07	04 Jun '07	11 Jun '07	18 Jun '07	25 Jun '07	02 Jul '07	09 Jul '07
					28/05	04/06	11/06	18/06	25/06	02/07	09/07
1	Formal consultation presentations	2 days?	Fri 01/06/07	Mon 04/06/07							
2	Opportunity for FTP employees to provide comments and raise questions to Kelly Johnson, Eve Seall or Human Resources	6 days	Mon 04/06/07	Mon 11/06/07							
3	Comments and questions considered by HPC management team and Human Resources	11 days?	Tue 12/06/07	Tue 26/06/07							
4	Individual responses to comments and questions provided by HPC management team and Human Resources	1 day?	Wed 27/06/07	Wed 27/06/07							
5	Council Approval	1 day?	Thu 05/07/07	Thu 05/07/07							
6	Individual letters issued by Human Resources detailing the finished reorganisation plans	1 day?	Mon 09/07/07	Mon 09/07/07							

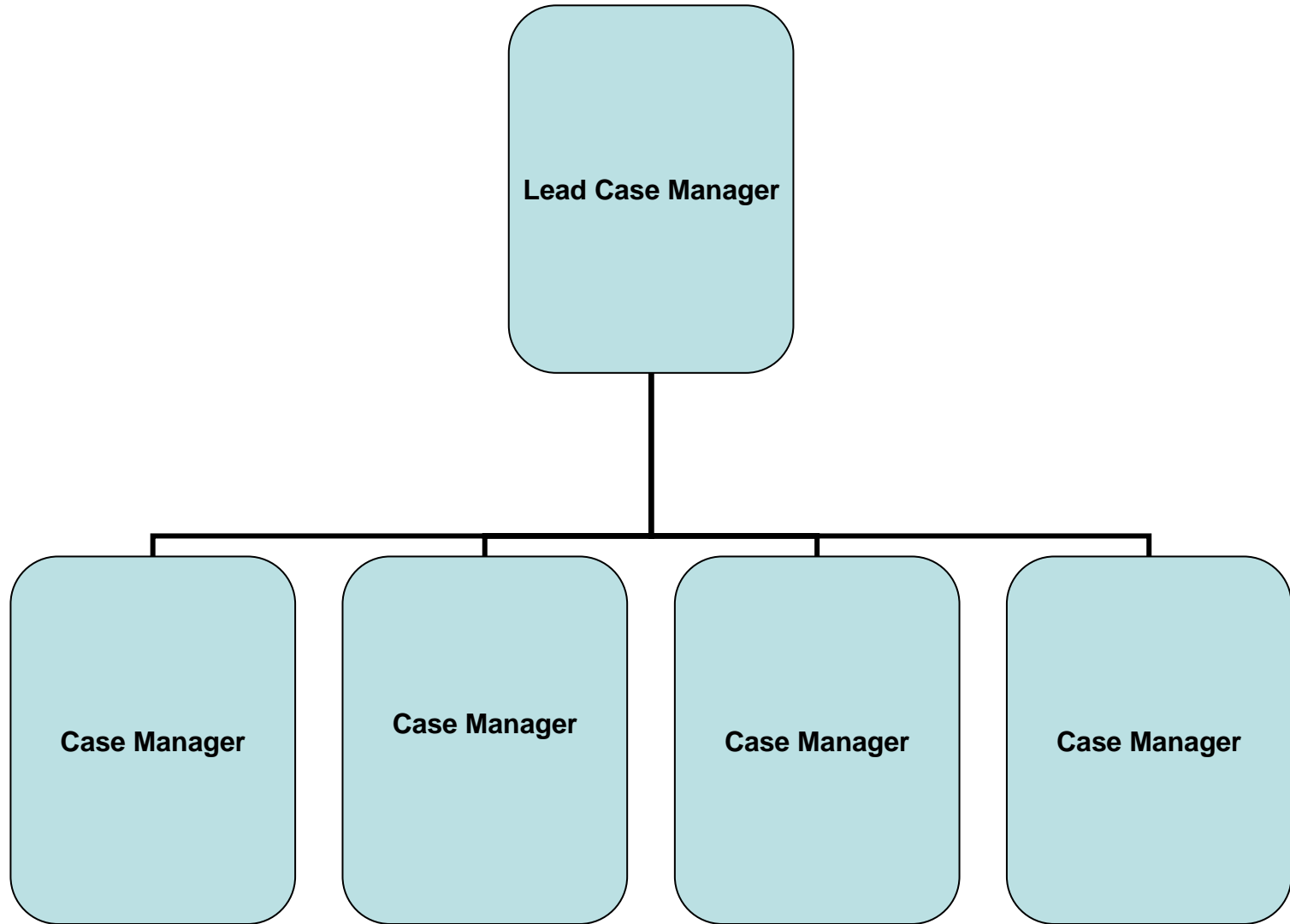
## Proposal for Department Re organisation



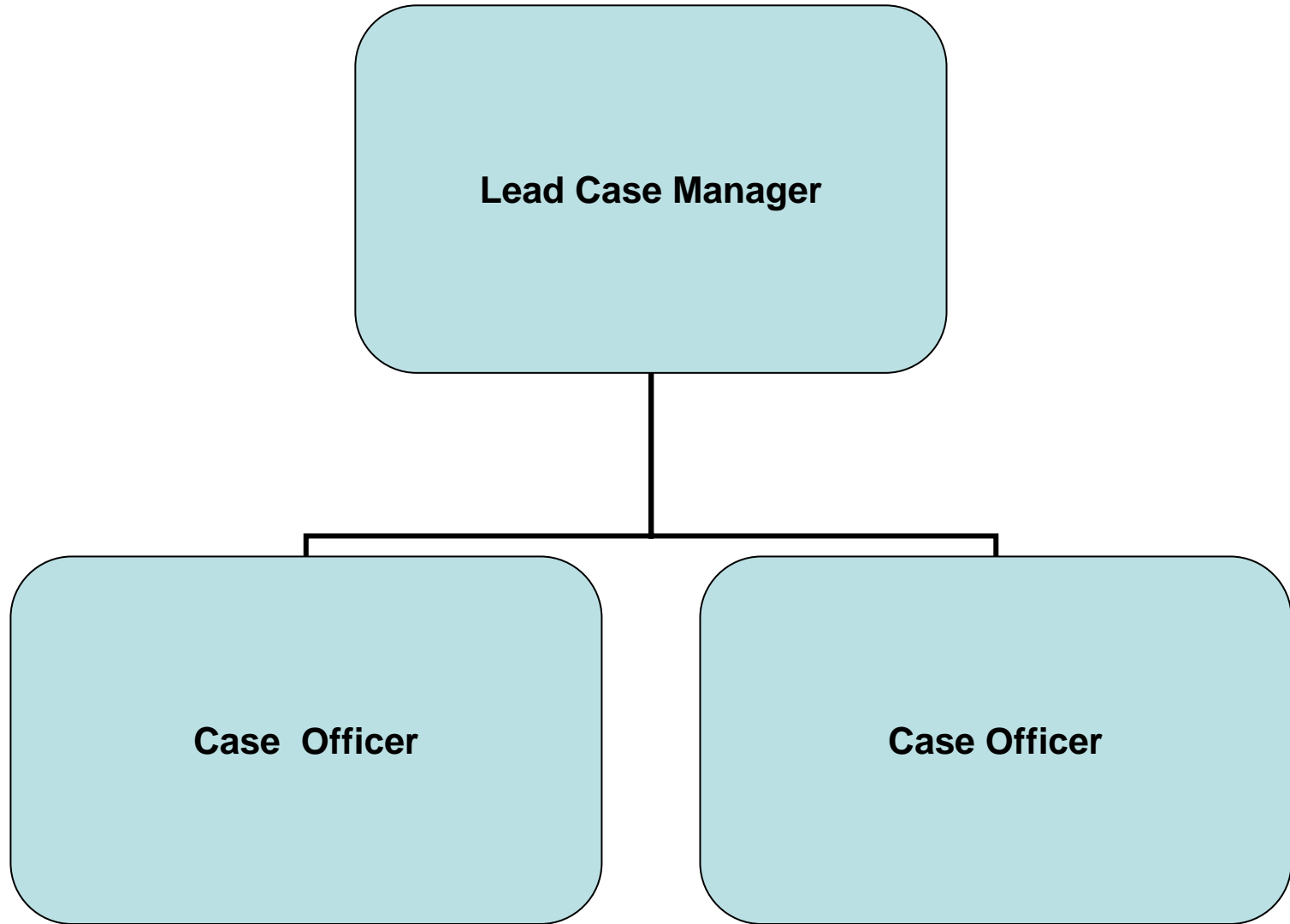
## Proposal for Department Re organisation



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