**SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELL-BEING (WALES) ACT 2014**

**HANDOUT**

## Adult Protection and Support Orders (APSOs)

## Authorised officer process

Working Together to Safeguard People: Volume 4 – Adult Protection and Support Orders states that:

*1.8 An ‘authorised officer’ will undergo a specialist training programme and be required to keep their skills up to date.*

Authorised officers need specific capabilities to undertake the role:

*1.9 An ‘authorised officer’ should possess the following skill and attributes:*

* *the ability to prepare and present, with legal assistance, an APSO application clearly and confidently to a justice of the peace;*
* *an understanding of the legal framework within which APSOs operate including the implications of the Human Rights Act 1998, Equality Act 2010 and the need to respect diversity;*
* *the ability to assess any risk to the person suspected of being an adult at risk prior to making the application and, if an APSO is made, once it has been executed;*
* *a high level of understanding of the context of abuse, abusive situations and neglect;*
* *an ability to identify coercive control and its effects on adults at risk;*
* *a clear understanding of the provisions of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 in relation to assessments of capacity, best interests assessment and the role of the Independent Mental Capacity Advocate;*
* *effective communication skills and the ability to identify any special communication needs that the person suspected of being at risk may have and how their ability to communicate their wishes may be enhanced;*
* *an ability to be assertive and exercise control in difficult and challenging situations;*
* *an ability and willingness to challenge their own agency and other agencies when necessary; and*
* *an awareness of when an advocate is required and how to support the adult to secure an advocate.*

APSO guidance states that:

*1.10 The above list of skills and attributes will form the basis of the training and assessment of ‘authorised officers’.*

Authorised officers are nominated by their local authority. It is the local authority who confirms their authorisation following training that has been approved by the Care Council for Wales. The training module with an assessment will be available soon on the Care Council for Wales’s [Learning Zone](http://mandysgu.cgcymru.org.uk/?lang=en).

The training module enables authorised officers to:

* Gain knowledge
* Consider their behaviour
* Start to practise skills.

Authorised officers will need to put their learning into context and to develop their practice.

The process for becoming an authorised officer is set out below:

Before undertaking the training, nominated authorised officers should complete the **Activity: Preparation and learning needs analysis**. This enables them to identify their current level of capabilities, their strengths and areas to develop.

At the end of the module authorised officers will complete the Activity: Follow-up learning needs analysis and action plan to identify what they have learned, how they will use this, and what further learning and development they need. The action plan contains:

* Actions they will take to implement learning in practice
* Support they will need to do this
* Outcomes they will expect to see
* A timeframe for achieving these outcomes.

Local authorities will review the learning needs analysis and action plan with authorised officers and, if satisfied that they can carry out the role, will add their names to the national list.

At least once a year, authorised officers should repeat the learning needs analysis and review the action plan as part of their appraisal process.

Local authority nominates authorised officer (AO)

AO completes learning needs analysis (LNA)

AO completes training (which has been verified by Care Council for Wales as covering essentials)

Following training AO completes LNA and writes an action plan

AO takes certificate, completed LNA and action plan to local authority

Local authority ensures the individual is put onto the central AO list

Local authority and AO discuss the AO role at annual appraisal, and review the LNA