Llangoedmor Community Council	
Meeting Date:	November 2026
Report Title:	Post Box for Mail
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Paper Reference	November 2026-2
Presented By	Cllr J. Culley
For	Decision

Introduction

The council has a statutory duty to protect the privacy and personal data of its employees. At present the address shown on Council public notices and documents is the Clerk's personal address. This obviously presents the Council with privacy concerns.

The SLCC consequently advises against using the clerk's or a councillor's home address as the public correspondence or business address for a community council.

As a result of this options were considered for setting up a business address for the Council.

Consideration of Alternative forms of Postal Address

An analysis of the alternative forms of postal address were undertaken by Cllr Culley in her role as HR Committee member with responsibility for the day to day management of the Clerk.

This is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

Conclusion

Although the more expensive option the Royal Mail PO Box with delivery would seem to give the best solution in terms of privacy of Council correspondence, accessibility of service and turnaround time. It is a costly option but would be the option that facilitates the best use of the Clerk's time.

The Post Office is also the most viable option in servicing a rural location due to its presence in most areas.

Proposal

It is proposed that the Council approves the use of a Royal Mail Post Box with delivery service as the Council's business mail address.

Appendix 1

1. Alternative Services

🏢 Virtual Office / Registered Office Services

These services provide a physical street address (often in a prestigious location or town centre) rather than a PO Box number.

- How it works: Mail is delivered to a commercial business centre. Staff receive, log, and either hold the mail for collection or scan and email it to the Council Clerk.
- Pros: Provides a professional image; handles couriers (DHL, FedEx, UPS) which PO Boxes often cannot accept; completely hides personal addresses.
- Cons: Annual or monthly service fee.

🏛️ Partnership with Local Authorities

Many community and parish councils partner with higher-tier local government bodies.

- How it works: The Community Council arranges to use the address of the local County Council, District Council, or Unitary Authority borough office.
- Pros: High trust factor; often free or low-cost through inter-governmental cooperation; very secure.
- Cons: Relies on the host council's internal mail-sorting efficiency; staff must travel there to collect physical mail.

🏘️ Community Hubs & Local Venues

Utilizing existing public infrastructure within the community boundary.

- How it works: The council uses the address of a local Community Centre, Village Hall, Library, or Sports Complex where the council regularly meets.
- Pros: Keeps the address strictly local and recognizable to residents; supports community infrastructure.
- Cons: Requires a secure, locked mailbox on-site to ensure data protection compliance (GDPR) so unauthorized volunteers or staff cannot access council mail.

✉ Royal Mail "Deliver to Local Post Office" (Poste Restante / Local Collect)

An alternative Royal Mail structure that avoids a public-facing PO Box.

- How it works: Mail is addressed directly to the Council Clerk but routed to a specific, designated local Post Office branch for secure holding.
- Pros: Handled via official Royal Mail channels; highly secure.
- Cons: Requires regular physical trips to the Post Office to check for mail; might have volume limits

2. Direct Comparison of Services

Option	Privacy Level	Courier Delivery?	Local Presence
Virtual Office	🌟 High	✅ Yes	🟡 Optional (depends on provider)
Local Authority Office	🌟 High	✅ Yes	🟢 High (usually nearby hub)
Community Hall / Library	🟡 Medium	✅ Yes	🟢 High (inside the ward)
Post Office Collect	🌟 High	❌ No (Royal Mail only)	🟢 High

3. Here's an idea of pricing:

Alternatives to a Royal Mail PO Box in the UK range from free pay-as-you-go options to virtual office addresses costing around £99 to £249+ per year, and independent self-storage or physical mailboxes starting around £5 per week.

Cost Breakdown of Alternatives

- Virtual Addresses / Virtual PO Boxes:
    - Free / Pay-As-You-Go: Services like UK Postbox offer basic/free virtual address options where you only pay per item received or forwarded.
    - Basic Virtual / Registered Office Plans: Typically cost around £99 per year (e.g., Addresscore Basic tier), which provides a real street address and statutory mail scanning suitable for Companies House.
    - Pro / Business Plans: Range from £179 to £249+ per year for general business mail handling, digital scanning, and forwarding.
- **Independent Mailboxes & Self-Storage Providers:**
    - Local providers (such as self-storage or local mail centres) charge around £5 per week (roughly £260 per year) for a physical correspondence address and secure collection.

    - Providers like Mail Boxes Etc. offer physical mailbox rentals with courier package acceptance, though pricing varies by location and package scale.

- **Pay-As-You-Go (PAYG) / Local Shops:**
    - Using local shops or independent mail drops on a PAYG basis generally charges per item received or forwarded, which can quickly exceed standard PO Box fees if you receive frequent parcels. If you share what you plan to use the address for (such as registering a limited company at Companies House vs. personal privacy or receiving packages) and your estimated monthly mail volume, I can recommend the most cost-effective option for you.

4. Royal Mail PO Box Pricing (Annual & Periodic)

Royal Mail PO Box prices in the UK range from £42 per month (£347 - 416.50 per year), while digital or virtual PO Box services (such as UK Postbox) start at free to £6.00 per month plus per-item scan fees.

According to Mailcoms Royal Mail PO Box Prices, official Royal Mail physical PO Box options are structured as follows:

Service Type	Monthly*	6 Months	1 Year
PO Box Collect (Pick up from delivery office)	£42.00	£202.50	£347.00
PO Box with Delivery (Delivered to your address)	£42.00	£230.50	£416.50

(Note: Monthly figures reflect pro-rated or short-term billing equivalents depending on contract terms; application or joining fees may also apply).

5. Virtual / Digital PO Box Alternative Pricing

If a digital-first mailbox that scans your letters and allows online management is preferred:

- Basic / Pay-As-You-Go Plans: Free to set up in select locations (such as Dorset) or £5.00–£6.00 per month for London (W1A) addresses via UK Postbox.
- Scan & Forward Fees: Letter/page scans range from free (on specific tiers) to around £1.00–£1.20 per letter, with parcel receipt and forwarding billed separately by weight and size.

Points to consider

- Privacy level
- Accessibility of service
- Turn-around-time
- Cost