

Report title: SWISCo Annual Report 2025/2026

Report to:	Overview & Scrutiny Board
Date:	8 July 2026
Lead Cabinet Member:	Councillor Billings
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Wards affected:	All Wards

1. Summary of Report:

- 1.1 This report introduces the SWISCo Annual Report for 2025/26, providing an overview of operational performance, financial progress and organisational development during the year.
- 1.2 The report highlights SWISCo’s contribution to the delivery of Torbay Council’s Corporate Plan priorities, particularly in relation to maintaining a clean, safe and attractive environment, supporting local communities and contributing to sustainable economic growth

2. Recommendations and Proposed Decision:

- 2.1 That Overview & Scrutiny Board notes the content of the SWISCo Business Report 2025/26 demonstrating SWISCo’s continued role as a key delivery partner for place-based services across Torbay.
- 2.2 That Overview & Scrutiny Board makes appropriate recommendations to the Cabinet in support of the continued development of SWISCo’s delivery of efficient, integrated and outcome-focused place services on behalf of the Council.

3. Reasons for Recommendations/Proposed Decision:

- 3.1 SWISCo delivers a broad range of essential frontline place services on behalf of Torbay Council. These services are highly visible to residents, businesses and visitors and are central to the Council’s ambitions for Pride in Place, safe and welcoming town centres, environmental quality and community confidence.

4. Background and Context:

- 4.1 SWISCo is a company wholly owned and controlled by Torbay Council and delivers a wide range of essential frontline services across Torbay. It was established to provide operational delivery for key place-based services and now forms a central part of the Council's delivery model for maintaining and improving the local environment.
- 4.2 The 2025/26 Business Report sets out progress against SWISCo's business plan objectives and provides an annual summary of performance, organisational development and areas for future focus. The overall picture is one of continued operational stability and improvement, with strong performance across several core services.
- 4.3 Recycling and waste collections were completed on time in 97.0% of cases overall, compared with 96.7% in 2024/25. Waste collection performance improved from 97.3% to 98.3%, while recycling collection performance was 95.7%, slightly below the previous year but affected by seasonal pressures, particularly in December and January. Fly-tipping remains a high-demand area, with more than 1,500 reports received during the year. Around 150 cases required investigation by the Enforcement Team and 1,285 incidents were successfully dealt with.
- 4.4 The report highlights continued progress in workforce stability and culture. Sickness absence remained below the 4% target at 3.78%, and agency staff usage reduced from 10.27% in 2024/25 to 9.54% in 2025/26, remaining below the 15% target. SWISCo has continued to invest in recruitment, training, welfare, staff engagement and mental health support, including 11 trained Mental Health First Aiders and access to external specialist support through Red Poppy. The organisation has also continued to support work experience and placement opportunities, including for individuals with additional needs.
- 4.5 Health and safety arrangements have continued to mature. The Incident Review Panel is now embedded as a well-attended Management Forum, with actions recorded, circulated and reviewed. New systems are being developed for inspection records, health and safety dashboards have been refreshed, and SWISCo data is being benchmarked against Health and Safety Executive industry statistics and reported regularly through to SWISCo's Board and to the Council's Shareholder Panel.
- 4.6 External income has continued to grow, with income excluding materials rising from £2.06 million in 2023/24 to a forecast £2.34 million in 2025/26, and total external revenue including materials increasing from £3.18 million to £3.49 million over the same period. The Business Waste service expanded beyond Torbay, including scheduled collections for Newton Abbot Racecourse, and commercial recycling and waste services continued to develop.

- 4.7 Recycling and waste service development remained a key area of progress. The garden waste service added 1,150 subscriptions during the year, food recycling collections were expanded to a further 4,000 flats, and food waste tonnage increased by 7%. Recycling education continued through work with 12 schools, and significant improvements were made at the waste transfer station and recycling centre to reduce fire risk, including a dedicated fire detection and suppression system monitored 24 hours a day.
- 4.8 The report also summarises areas of focus, including fleet renewal, alternative fuel options where operationally suitable and best value, improved telematics, investment in HGV safety features, continued improvement in financial dashboards for Service Managers, and further work on environmental compliance and the critical future waste transfer station.
- 4.9 These areas are important both to the long-term resilience of SWISCo and to the Council's ability to deliver clean, safe, efficient and sustainable place services.

5. Alternative Options Considered:

- 5.1 The report is not proposing options and on that basis no alternative options have been considered.

6. Contribution to Council Priorities:

- 6.1 SWISCo makes a direct and visible contribution to the Council's Community and Corporate Plan priorities, particularly Pride in Place, Community and People, Economic Growth and the Council's environmental and climate commitments.
- 6.2 For Pride in Place, SWISCo is central to maintaining and improving the quality of Torbay's lived, built and natural environment. Its work on recycling and waste collections, street cleansing, parks, grounds, highways, line marking, weed management, environmental enforcement and public realm improvements directly affects how residents, businesses and visitors experience Torbay.
- 6.3 For Community and People, SWISCo contributes through its role as one of Torbay's significant local employers and through its direct engagement with communities, volunteers and local partners.
- 6.4 For Economic Growth, SWISCo supports the visitor economy, town centres and local businesses by helping maintain the appearance, safety and functionality of the public realm. Its services support destination quality, commercial confidence and the day-to-day operation of Torbay's economy.

- 6.5 The report also supports the Council's commitment to strong governance, assurance and value for money.

7. Consultation and Engagement:

- 7.1 SWISCo Board, Directors and Cabinet.

8. Implications:

Financial Implications:

- 8.1 The report is for noting and does not create any new financial commitment for the Council. It does, however, highlight matters requiring ongoing financial oversight through budget monitoring, business planning and shareholder governance. Any future investment decisions will need to be considered through the Council's budget, capital and governance processes.

Legal Implications:

- 8.2 The report is for noting and does not create any new legal commitment or change statutory responsibilities.

Corporate Parenting/Children and Young People:

- 8.3 There are no direct negative implications for children and young people arising from noting this report. SWISCo's services support clean, safe and accessible neighbourhoods, parks and public spaces, which benefit children, young people and families across Torbay.

Contributions to tackling climate change or achieving carbon neutrality:

- 8.4 SWISCo contributes to the Council's climate and environmental objectives through recycling, waste reduction, food waste collection, reuse, environmental compliance, fleet management and maintenance of green infrastructure.
- 8.5 The report notes progress including expanded food recycling collections to flats, increased food waste tonnage, recycling education in schools and improvements at the waste transfer station and recycling centre. Fleet renewal, telematics, carbon baselining and future waste infrastructure remain important areas for continued focus.

Social Value Considerations:

- 8.6 SWISCo delivers social value through its role as a local employer, frontline service provider and partner to communities, schools, volunteers and local organisations. SWISCo's Armed Forces Covenant commitment and application for the Silver Award further demonstrate wider community benefit.

Procurement Implications:

- 8.7 The report is for noting and does not approve any procurement activity.

9. Equalities Impact Assessment:

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 18% of Torbay residents are aged under 18 years old. 55% of Torbay residents are aged between 18 to 64 years old. 27% of Torbay residents are aged 65 and older. 	No differential impact arising from this report.		
Carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the time of the 2021 census there were 14,900 unpaid carers in Torbay. 5,185 of these carers provided 50 hours or more of care. 			
Care experienced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As of January 2026, there were 277 former care experienced young people aged 18-24 in Torbay. 			
Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the 2021 Census, 23.9% of Torbay residents answered that their day-to-day activities were limited 			

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
	<p>a little or a lot by a physical or mental health condition or illness.</p>			
Gender reassignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the 2021 Census, 0.4% of Torbay's community answered that their gender identity was not the same as their sex registered at birth. 			
Marriage and civil partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Of those Torbay residents aged 16 and over at the time of 2021 Census, 44.2% of people were married or in a registered civil partnership. 			
Pregnancy and maternity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Between 2013 and 2024, the rate of live births (as a proportion of females aged 15 to 44) has been slightly but significantly higher in Torbay (average of 56.0 per 1,000) than the Southwest (53.4) and broadly in line with England (56.3). 			

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the period 2022 to 2024, rates in Torbay (44.6) have been significantly below England (50.0). 			
Race	<p>In the 2021 Census, 96.1% of Torbay residents described their ethnicity as the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.6% as Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh 0.3% as Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African 1.5% as being of Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups 96.1% as White 0.4% described their ethnicity another way. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Black, Asian and minoritised ethnic communities are more likely to live in areas of Torbay classified as being amongst the 20% most deprived areas in England. 			

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
Religion and belief	<p>The 2021 Census showed that the residents in Torbay identify their religion and/or belief as the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 48.5% are Christian • 0.4% are Buddhist • 0.2% are Hindu • 0.6% are Muslim • Less than 0.1% are Sikh • 0.1% are Jewish • 0.7% have another religion • 43.2% have no religion • 6.3% did not answer 			
Sex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 51.3% of Torbay's population are female. • 48.7% of Torbay's population are male. 			
Sexual orientation	<p>In the 2021 Census, residents described their sexuality as follows;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 89% as Straight or Heterosexual • 1.7% as Gay or Lesbian • 1.1% as Bisexual • 0.1% as Pansexual 			

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0.1% described their sexuality another way 7.4% of people didn't answer the question 			
Armed Forces Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2021, 3.8% of residents in England reported that they had previously served in the UK armed forces. In Torbay, 5.9% of the population have previously served in the UK armed forces. 			
<i>Additional considerations:</i>				
Socio-economic impacts (Including impacts on child poverty and deprivation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Torbay is ranked as the 39th most deprived upper tier local authority in England in the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2025. 			
Public Health impacts (Including impacts on the general health of the population of Torbay)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the five-year period 2020 to 2024, data shows there is a 6-year life expectancy gap between males who live in Torbay's least and most deprived 			

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	areas and, a 3-year gap for females.			
Human Rights impacts				
Child Friendly				

10. Cumulative Council Impact:

10.1 None.

11. Cumulative Community Impact:

11.1 None.

12 Monitoring and Evaluation:

12.1 SWISCo performance is monitored quarterly via the Overview and Scrutiny Board and Cabinet with the Annual report reviewed annually by the Board.

Appendices:

SWISCo Annual Report 2025/2026

Background Documents:

None