

Tide~Vision

- 2020 and beyond

Report to Tide~ AGM on Consultation Process ~ so far May 2016

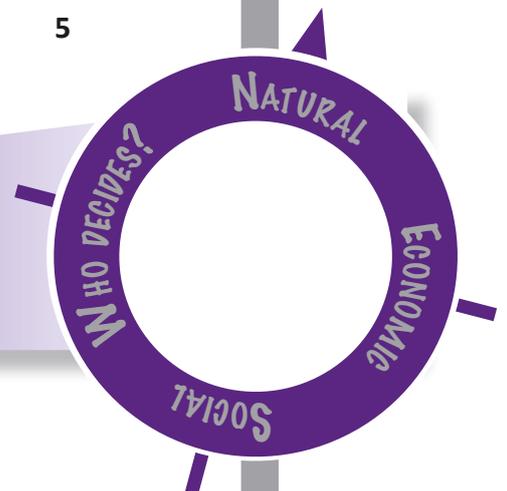
This paper offers an overview of discussions that have taken place in response to the possibility that Tide~ could wind up.

We would like to table The Proposition [page 3] at the AGM.

We would value feedback and ideas from the meeting ... particularly about the strengthening of the core Tide~ network

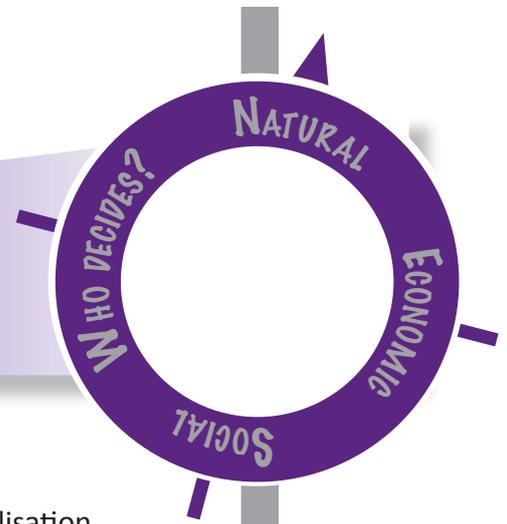
-- or email Scott Sinclair: scott.7seas.org@btinternet.com

Introduction	2
The Proposition ... and plans	3
Review of responses to consultation paper as reported to March Trustees Meeting	5



This paper is for the Tide~ 2016 AGM.

Introduction



Funding realities were pointing towards Tide~ closing down. This realisation led to much discussion ... and questions about whether there might be alternative approaches. Trustees set up a consultation.

The plan for the consultation had a very open brief. The first phase was seen as *"Initial scoping to take stock of context and seek inspiration"*.

This involved a paper designed to stimulate a conversation, mainly with those already aware of Tide~. There was a good level of response by email, followed up by some phone calls and a meeting on Saturday 30th January. The Trustees commissioned Scott Sinclair [on a voluntary basis] to do this work.

Firstly he would like to thank all those that responded for the thought they have given to it, their enthusiasm, their wit ... and sometimes their realism. But particularly their enthusiasm for finding a way for Tide~ to enter a new phase.

The feedback from those conversations led to the proposition outlined on page 3 and the setting up of a second phase enabled by a working group of Trustees to anchor the process and support Scott's work. They are:

Margaret Barnfield, Rita Chowdhury, Kevin Harrison, Jeff Serf and Balbir Sohal.

Work has now started to refine ideas, draft detailed proposals and consult on their viability ... with a view to establishing a revitalized Tide~ in the new school year.

The consultation to date has focused on those close to Tide~ and its work. Given this, elements of consensus about strengths and priorities are not surprising. Even those who expressed doubts about Tide's future had similar views about strengths and priorities.

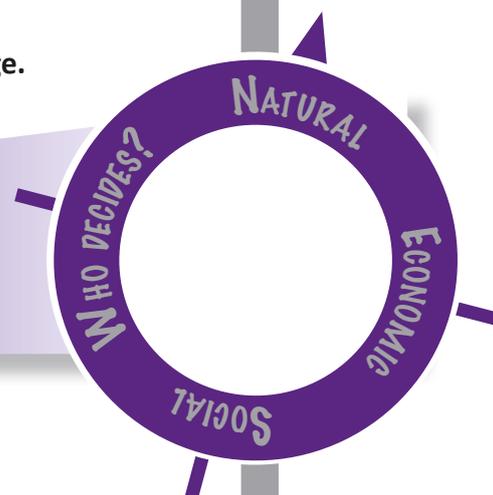
It is recognized that many voluntary sector organisations are in the same situation as Tide~ ... and that much has been achieved, not least a major EU project, to sustain Tide~ since the Centre in Millennium Point was closed.

Clearly Tide~ has been through some difficult times. In that sense there is no good news from this report but any revival has, if it is to motivate support, to offer a positive perspective and optimism about Tide's prospects.

The potential for a strengthened confident network is, it is proposed, core to the sustainability of Tide~.

This Proposition brings together the key elements of the ideas that evolved from the consultation. Limited finance poses a big challenge. There is a need to make fuller use of other assets.

Proposition



The proposition is:

- 1. that** there is still a need for a Tide~ style teacher to teacher network, that provides opportunities for teacher led professional development, teacher creativity about global issues, curriculum and learning styles. This need can be met by building on Tide's experience and networking approach.
- 2. that** there is potential for Tide~ to continue. .
[There is no optimism about future DE funding but by sustaining a reputation for quality work Tide~ will be in a good position as appropriate opportunities arise.]
- 3. that** Tide~ should prioritize localized, cutting edge, in-depth work to further development education/global learning practice ... and the sharing of that work.
- 4. that** to do this there needs to be a review of Tide~ and its core functions and structures.
- 5. that** a revitalized structure will need to rethink approaches to budgeting, create new sustainable core roles, and review both capacity and partnership strategies.

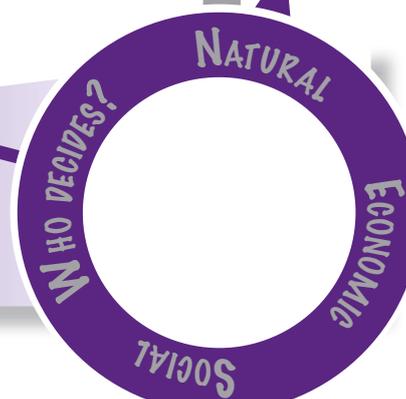
Phase 2 work has started. A small working group has been set up to build on this proposition including:

- work on strengthening Tide~ structures, developing new voluntary roles and engaging new people for example as trustees;
- work on budget approaches and how we can work without the substantive funding possible in the past;
- engaging teachers including making the most of recent Tide~ work such as the EU project - Young people on the global stage;
- work on capacity options and key ideas to focus a new programme and plan for a launch event in September 2016;
- exploring the synergy between Tide's approach and that of the Birmingham Education Partnership ... and the potential for co-operation between the two charities.

Responses to consultation

As presented to Tide~ Trustees March 2016

Review



A document was circulated that featured a series of conversation starters. [See boxes on next 3 pages] The majority of people responding addressed each of these conversation starters as well as making other comments and sharing something of their own experiences.

Even when people had reservations about the viability of Tide~ there was an enthusiasm for Tide~ style work. There is a strong consensus about focusing on the needs of teachers and enabling space for teacher to teacher creativity.

In the experience of many people the energy generated by teacher projects was at the heart of what made Tide~ possible. It was felt that this should continue to be the case. It was also noted that the outcomes of the current EU project 'Young people on the global stage' should feed into that process.

There seems to be a consensus that in its present form **"Tide~ has had its day"** and that it would be "... better to close than have a zombie Tide".

Several people draw attention to the fact that in recent years there had been too much focus on Finance. One person went so far as to suggest that the EU project had been a mistake. Given the way that DfID withdrew funding and how that led to a major restructuring, redundancies and the closing of the centre in Millennium Point, the EU funding offered a lifeline. It made it possible [with the goodwill of those involved] to maintain something of a staff capacity and achieve a significant project.

The central role of staff was only questioned by two people [both staff]. One suggested that there was a Trustees view *"that our future is dependent on the wishes of the staff."* While this may have been commendable [and pragmatic] at the time it is clearly not a sustainable approach. This is a pivotal issue that needs to be addressed. Currently there is no Director post, even the goodwill function that Cathryn Gathercole has is not replaceable. We have the opportunity for succession planning for when Cathryn leaves.

The question is succession to what? We need to explore the possibility of some of those executive functions being led by voluntary roles as part of the Trustee structure. Many suggested that key to this is the need for clarity about what Tide~ wants to do ... clarity about our priorities and then debate about how best to do it with very limited resources.

There was a strong indication that **"Tide~ is still about teachers"** ... and **"how teachers enable learners"**. At the start of the consultation this was not assumed. There were suggestions about Tide~ evolving to be more focused on young people or more of a network of development education practitioners, perhaps taking on a national or even international mandate. Another possibility was to become more of a virtual [online] network.

Tide~ has done its work. It has influenced changes in schools that are now well established. It is surprising it has lasted as long as it has. Write up and reflect. Allow others to learn from that. But it is time to wind up and move on.

A



Tide~ Vision

The strong consensus is for a network that enables a teacher to teacher approach, with teachers having the opportunity to take lead roles [and through that develop their own professional capacity] and the space for learning about issues for themselves, reflection and team work. It is also suggested that this is better generated by face to face creativity, rather than on-line. *“Things only work when people get together.”* Though it is also recognised that good use of work on-line can enhance those processes.

These ideas are therefore core drivers for the proposition in this report.

There are nevertheless notes of caution, for example, pointing out *“... that a better professional and wiser teacher is not a ‘target culture’ priority.”*

Most responses raised concerns about current trends in schools, the way data is often abused and made into a key driver and of course the impact of PISA ... as someone put it *“How do we resist and reclaim the educational narrative from the current global neo-liberal hegemony.”*

These concerns are no surprise to those close to Tide~ but there is perhaps a need to articulate such collective dispositions as part of a new strategy to engage new teachers ... so there is something for them to sign up to, and support.

Some also suggested that there is a need to challenge the dominant national assumptions about the nature of development education / global learning.

On an optimistic note Tide~ should be ready [ie exist] for when current trends are questioned. ... *“How long will this state of education last before it collapses in its own contradictions?”* Can we develop a sound Tide~? Maybe small but sound .. a Tide~ that is ready for future opportunity?

Several people reflected on the process of Tide~ projects and how that was important to what they had gained. One went as far as to say *“It was all about process”* and that that is still needed. There is perhaps a need for some work outlining the types of process that have been used ... and how they might inform future project design.

Meeting the needs of learners was seen to be a core objective that was mentioned in most responses. The focus is on teachers ... *“to enable them to enable learners”*. One response highlighted the value of cross school events that *“leave the students buzzing with excitement and ideas.”* There is clearly scope for such events as part of a new programme. Over and above their value they would also help with visibility ... and school management confidence in the programme.

“Learners are the focus but not the strategy” Perhaps more needs to be done to articulate model approaches and learner entitlement, as we see it.

There was little enthusiasm for the idea of a new association, not least because of the geographical implications. But it was recognised that we could learn from the approaches used by associations in particular their advocacy work.

Tide~ was about classroom teachers having the opportunity to take lead roles for example in curriculum development, and enabling groups to hone their thinking and express a ‘teacher voice’. Creating ‘space’ for teacher creativity should be central ... even if it is virtual space. **D**

It is odd how things swing round! Tide’s recent struggles have been about finance and the need to demonstrate delivery as defined by EU or DfID. The driver used to be more about enabling teachers to explore their ideas and try them out. We need to get back to that. **F**

Meeting the needs of learners. Why is global learning important to learners ... and their learning? How do we enable them to gain a sense of their own progression? We should be creating ‘space’ for learners to develop the agenda and challenge assumptions about development. **G**

Pedagogy and thinking about quality learning was also seen as a vital part of the Tide~ agenda but not the central motivation for strategy. The pedagogy has evolved in response to the challenges of engaging learners in complex, often controversial issues. It was also pointed out that others have taken this up and that there is a danger of it becoming prescriptive to teachers. One respondent noted that *“There are lots of people out there doing ‘new thinking’ ... much of which sounds fairly familiar!”*

There was little confidence in the long term thinking about the DfID funded global learning programme. There were also questions about the quality of what is being done. There is no evidence about the long-term aspirations of the GLP-E nor of DfID. This is important, it may offer some small funds but strategically there is little to debate.

It was agreed that development is important, indeed that it was at the core of what Tide~ is about. However it is not seen as a driver for strategy or a way of engaging teachers.

Finally the SDGs [sustainable development goals] were recognised for their significance but to make them central to a Tide~ strategy was described as *“... a way to make a safe withdrawal.”* However they could be useful for a particular project, not least because they highlight the notion of commonality, that these goals are important anywhere in the world ... including Birmingham.

A significant proportion of those consulted are in senior management positions or other roles outside the classroom, or have retired. Their experience and insights are vital to any reinvention of Tide~. However a concern, expressed by many, was the need to bring in new people, younger people, those that are classroom based and enable them to take lead roles within Tide~. A successful strategy will need to address both good use of experience and facilitating new leadership.

On another note of caution it was suggested there is a need to avoid the risk that *“we spend ages on the ‘Vision Thing’ and ignore the very practical issue of making it real.”*

There are practical matters including those to do with:

- how to relate the Tide~ agenda to the everyday popular discourse by teachers in schools;
- how to design opportunities so that the limited leadership capacity in a new Trustee structure can maximise the activity by schools, teachers and learners;
- how to sustain a sense of cutting edge initiative valuable to thinking about development education / global learning;
- how to keep to a clear focused sense of direction when all about us is the confusion and frustration of a ‘target culture’.

The January 30th meeting was stimulated by the idea of forging a partnership with the Birmingham Education Partnership [BEP]. This, I would propose, needs further investigation. It would seem to offer an exciting prospect.

What about a new association. A bit like a professional association, bringing educationalists together [from any place] who have an interest in the learning challenges presented by development issues and the need for global political literacy. **B**

What about more of a focus on pedagogy and theory, perhaps a partnership with an academic institution to enable networking and the exchange of ideas between academics [from any place]? New thinking [that has academic acknowledgement] is vital if Tide~ is to challenge dominant assumptions. **C**

The DFID Global Learning Programme is well funded and has taken on many key ideas. We should endorse this and have confidence that it will support development education for years to come. **H**

Refocus on development ... and the need for DE. There is a need to make current work on development issues more accessible, and improve the connections between development education & development studies. **I**

The Sustainable Development Goals are ‘for everyone’ ... they map out a comprehensive agenda that links, for example, issues of development and the environment. They are, if used well, challenging for us in the UK too. Tide~ should make this an opportunity to feature commonality and the need for a political literacy dynamic in DE. **E**