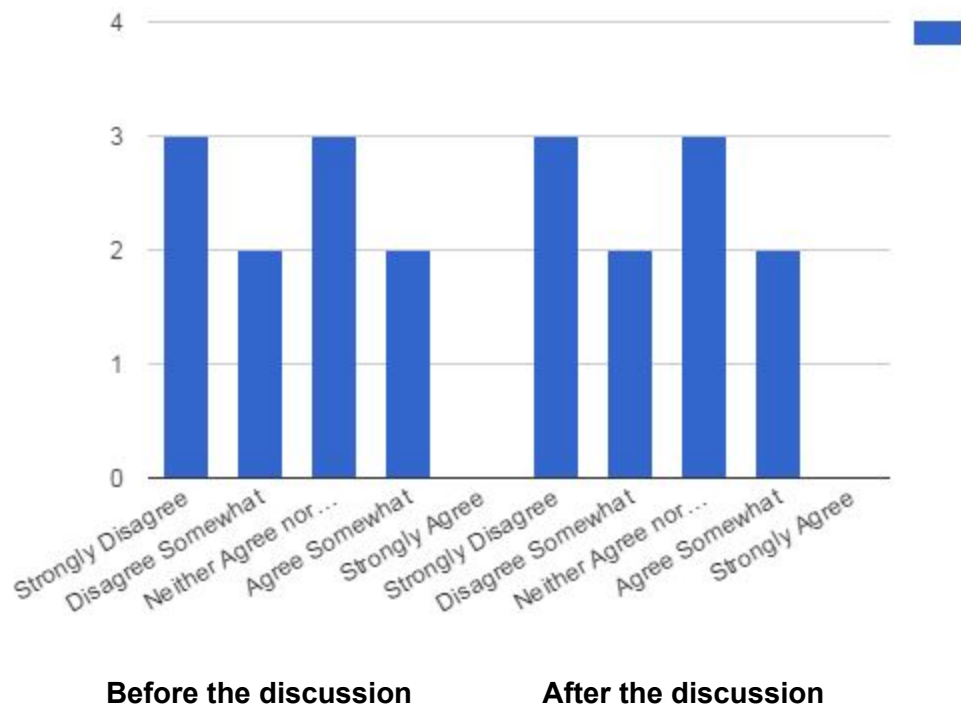


Political Thinking

Meeting No 3.1

Topic “Britain needs more Grammar Schools.”

Participants opinions	Before discussion	35%	agreement,
	After discussion	35%	agreement.



Before the discussion there were strongly held views in opposition to the expansion of Grammar Schools and relatively lukewarm opinions in favour.
Opinions did not change as result of the discussion.

Principal points made during the debate

By those tending to agree that **“Britain needs more Grammar Schools.”**

- Grammar schools provide an excellent education for those suited to them
- Clever and intelligent children need the pressure and stimulus of a grammar school.
- Grammar schools are popular with parents.

By those tending to **disagree** that **“Britain needs more Grammar Schools.”**

- Parents should know better than to cram their children for the 11 plus.
- To be called a failure at age 11 is totally wrong for any child.
- Grammar schools tend inappropriately to imitate the culture of public schools.
- Grammar schools are socially divisive.
- With the right teaching intelligent children thrive in a comprehensive environment, provide an important stimulus to those less gifted and gain in social skills.

By those concerned with education policy generally

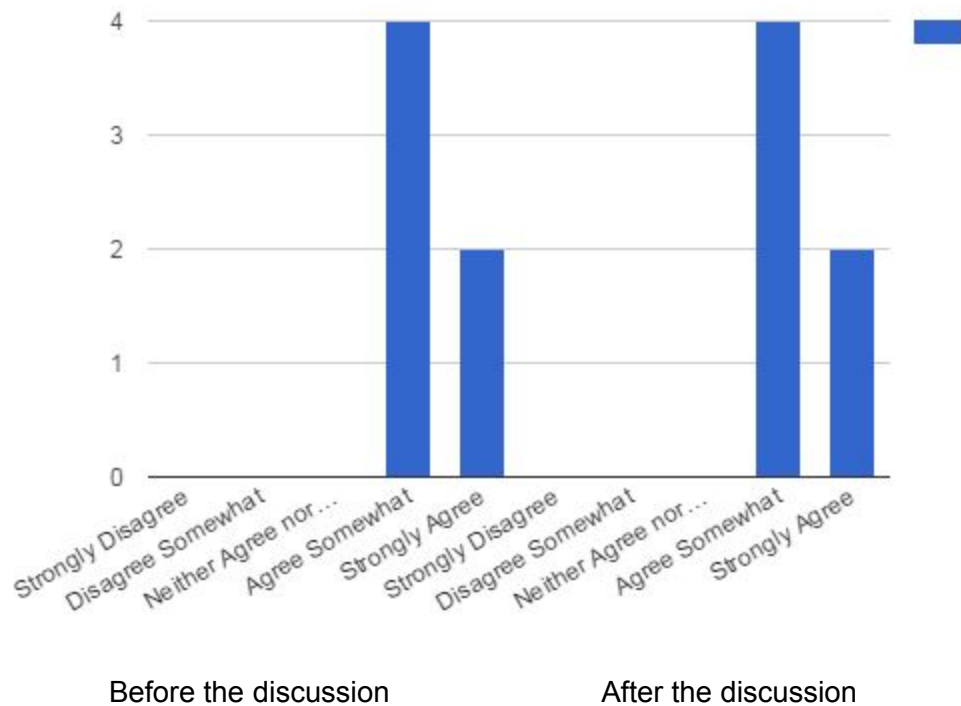
- The real problem is the lack of technical education as an alternative.
- The policy of 50% going to University was very mistaken.
- Education should be for all.
- League tables cause schools to “game the system” by excluding expected low performers
- The Curriculum is not suited to today’s needs.

Meeting No 3.2

Topic “In Britain Local Government matters.”

Participants opinions	Before discussion	83%	agreement,
	After discussion	83%	agreement

Prior to the presentation opinions were strongly in support of the proposition, and this did not change as a result of the discussion.



Principal points made during the debate

By those tending to **agree** that “In Britain Local Government matters.”

- Finance generally from central to local government has been reduced since 2010 and is expected to continue to be reduced.
- For example Chiltern District Council expect little financial support by 2020.
- The Increasing dominance of central government implies a decreasing role and absence of accountability for local government.

By those tending to **disagree** that “In Britain Local Government matters.”

- No points were made in disagreement

In discussion about Local Government generally, and more particularly referring to Chiltern District Council

- HS2 requires a large number of planning applications; if rejected by CDC these applications will go to appeal and be passed; where is local accountability?
- In respect of housing the district council is responsible for emergency housing, but has no stock of houses. Cases which require emergency housing are becoming more frequent as the poor are forced out of Central London.
- The allocation of powers and responsibilities between the several tiers of local government is at best muddled and mostly incoherent; to take the local example there is no coherence or logic in the respective responsibilities of Buckinghamshire County Council, Chiltern District Council and Amersham Town Council. One example is parking; on highway parking is the responsibility of the County Council, off highway is the responsibility of the District Council, and the immediate local council Amersham Town Council has no powers. Why this structure?