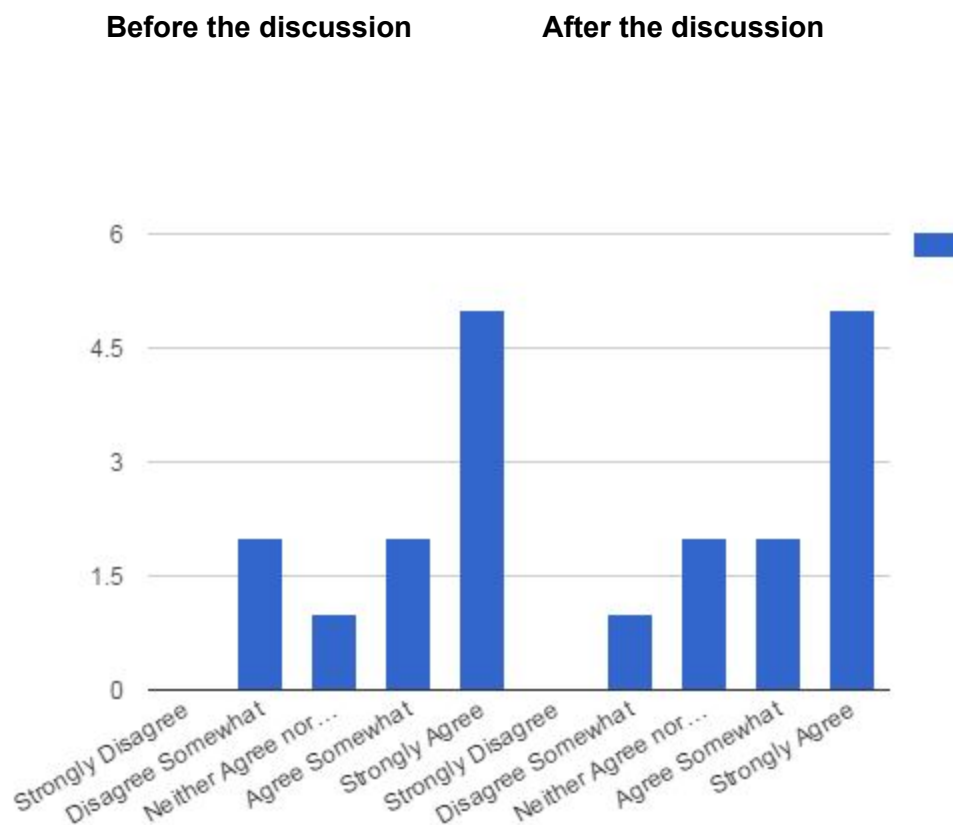


Political Thinking

Meeting No 4.1

Topic."A modern democracy, like Britain, requires a coherent policy of redistribution of wealth and income."

Participants opinions	Before discussion	75%	agreement,
	After discussion	78%	agreement.



Before the discussion there were strongly held views that a coherent policy of redistribution of wealth and income is required and moderate views to the contrary.

Those in disagreement reduced slightly as a result of the discussion.

Principal points made during the debate

By those tending to agree that **“A modern democracy like Britain requires a coherent policy of redistribution of wealth and income.”**

- Accidental good fortune should not lead to a higher wealth or income than that available to others less fortunate.
- The mark of a civilised society is that it protects and cares for all of its citizens.
- Some inequalities of wealth and income are acceptable; but gross inequalities lead to social division and potentially to strife.
- Holders of wealth have a responsibility to invest in a socially responsible way that provides jobs or otherwise supports their fellows; this sense of responsibility generally is lacking, and consequently the State has to take on this role

By those tending to **disagree** that **“A modern democracy like Britain requires a coherent policy of redistribution of wealth and income.”**

- People need incentives to work hard and better themselves,
- Achievement and success are necessary forms of inequality.
- Those who achieve in fact through their efforts provide increased well being for all.

There was agreement that the definition of a fair distribution or what an equitable distribution might be was at the core of the problem.

Suggested definitions

- The State should support only those who are handicapped or disabled or similarly unable to look after themselves for reasons outside their control.
- The State should support all its citizens to a certain minimum level
- The State should underpin the unfortunate.

As to policy there was broad support for the minimum wage to be set at a much higher level and recognition that substantial numbers living at poverty level or below were in full time employment.