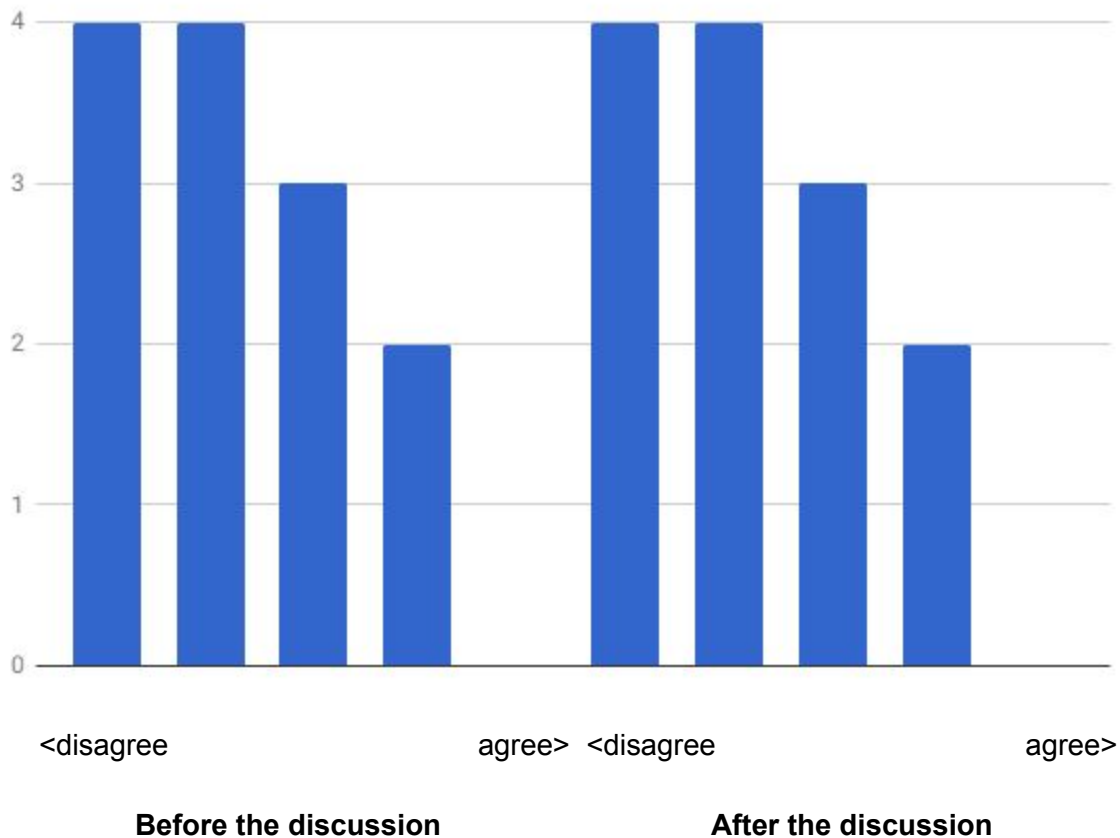


Political Thinking

Meeting No 12 20th August 2017

Topic. "It is now impossible for democratic government to be effective "

Participants' opinions	Before discussion	31%	agreement,
	After discussion	31%	agreement



Before the discussion opinion was somewhat in disagreement with the topic, with limited support for views in agreement. Vigorous animated and free-ranging discussion around the topic resulted in no changes of opinion.

Discussion

The discussion focussed on effectiveness or otherwise of government and on democratic process.

Principal points made during the debate

By those tending to **disagree** that “It is now impossible for democratic government to be effective.”

- “First past the post” is an effective voting system as its results tend to over-represent the majority and lead to a stronger government than would result in a PR system.
- India is a good example of effective democratic government despite the wide disparities and very large electorate.
- The recent UK General Election result is an example of an effective democratic process; the current weak government reflects the real and genuine doubt and uncertainty in the electorate, thus prevents major changes and so hinders “effective government.”
- The pre-war dictators Hitler and Mussolini both came to power through democratic process; and in some sense the resulting governments were effective in achieving their objectives.
- Strong government is a bad thing; democratic process should put obstacles in its way.
- All is well. Democracy is working. Things are moving ahead as they should be.

Principal points made by those tending to **agree** that “It is now impossible for democratic government to be effective.”

- Democracy in terms of near universal suffrage is relatively new in the UK; comparison with earlier forms of government is of little relevance.
- Things are no worse than normal. Democracy is not an effective form of government.
- The referendum threw a spanner in the works. Referenda are not compatible with democratic government as we know it.