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- Productivity remains huge problem for economy under the SNP

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Official figures have revealed that Scotland's economic productivity has plummeted to its worst level in three years.

It comes as new statistics show unemployment north of the border also increased slightly.

And while productivity – a measure of workers' output per hour to the economy – has risen across the UK, Scotland continues to lag behind.

Today's statistics from the Scottish Government revealed that in quarter two of 2017 – the most recent for which Scottish productivity data is available – real terms output per hour here dropped by 0.6 per cent.

That's the worst since the same three months of 2014.

On a UK-wide basis, the Office for National Statistics figures released today showed productivity increased by 0.9 per cent in quarter three. The equivalent numbers for Scotland are not yet available.

Last month the Scottish Conservatives formed the Scottish Future Growth Council, which identified low productivity as one of the main problems for the Scottish economy.

**Scottish Conservative shadow economy secretary Dean Lockhart said:**

"Scotland's productivity lags behind the rest of the UK's, and that's a major problem for our economy.

"We now need to see action from the Scottish Government, and a willingness to work with its counterparts in the UK Government to come up with a strategy to fix this.

"The fact productivity has fallen to its lowest level in Scotland for three years will be a concern to companies of all sizes right across the country."