

Scotland dodges recession – but more work for the SNP still to do

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Scotland's economy returned to growth in the last quarter, meaning technical recession has been avoided north of the border.

The Scottish Conservatives welcomed the 0.8 per cent increase in growth, but warned there was more for the SNP to do to ensure sustained improvement.

In the previous quarter the economy shrank, meaning a repeat performance this time around would have plunged Scotland into recession for the first time since the global downturn.

Instead, a marked improvement in production of 3.1 per cent helped move the figures in the right direction, although on an annual basis Scotland still lags behind the rest of the UK.

Scottish Conservative shadow economy secretary Dean Lockhart said:

“The return to growth in the Scottish economy after declining in the last quarter of 2016 is a positive change in direction.

“However, the SNP cannot escape the fact it dragged Scotland halfway to recession.

“Scotland continues to under-perform the UK economy on an annual basis at this vital time for growth.

“Compared to the same period last year, the Scottish economy grew by 0.7 per cent compared to two per cent for the UK economy as a whole.

“There are more than enough levers for ministers here to ensure growth north of the border remains sustained, and we're not brought to the brink of recession again.

“For example, Scotland is the highest-taxed part of the UK, and in the long-term that is going to continue to damage growth and job creation.”

For more on the figures, visit:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-40498752>

Yesterday, the Scottish Conservatives set out five things the SNP could do to boost growth:

<http://www.scottishconservatives.com/2017/07/5-measures-snp-must-adopt-as-scotland-stands-on-brink-of-recession/>