

Cherry backs away from Edinburgh Central nomination

After an apparent change in the rules by the SNP national executive, Joanna Cherry QC MP is stepping back from election to the Scottish Parliament in 2021.

[The National](#) reported today that the executive demanded that any sitting MPs would have to resign before putting themselves forward for election for the Scottish Parliament. This would cause a Westminster by-election at the same time as Scottish Parliamentary elections.



Joanna Cherry QC MP during campaigning for the Westminster election in December 2019 PHOTO ©2020 The Edinburgh Reporter
Earlier today Ms Cherry announced this statement: “I have not had the courtesy of any official confirmation of this decision and would not normally comment on leaks of internal party matters, however private discussions by the current SNP NEC seem to regularly reach the press and I understand that the information which has been leaked is correct.

“I think that most fair-minded people will see the events of the last few days for what they are.

“Edinburgh Central SNP, the branch of which I have been a member since I joined the SNP 12 years ago, has the right to choose the candidate it wants to field in the 2021 Holyrood election. Branch democracy is an important part of our party. Members of Edinburgh Central had hoped that I would be part of a fair and open contest, but this decision makes that impossible.

“It is unprecedented in our party’s history of dual mandates to demand that a parliamentarian make themselves and their constituency staff unemployed in order to be eligible to be a candidate. It is particularly unreasonable to demand this in the middle of a pandemic. I am not prepared to do it and so unless circumstances change, I won’t be seeking nomination for Holyrood in this election.

“I have been overwhelmed by the messages of support from party members and members of the public. I believe I stood a very good chance to be selected to fight the seat where I have lived for most of my life and I want to thank everyone who has emailed, written or stopped me in the street to offer their support.

“I would like to reassure my constituents that I shall continue to represent their interests as their MP and to the grassroots members of our party, I promise that I will continue to advocate for independence, democratic reform of our party and open debate.

“As Westminster is in recess, I am about to take some time off to spend with my partner and my family and I won’t be making any further comment at this stage.”