

Man admits sending offensive messages to Edinburgh MP

A man who sent offensive messages to Edinburgh South West MP, Joanna Cherry, pleaded guilty at Edinburgh Sheriff Court on Friday.

Grant Karte, apparently an SNP member from Bannockburn, admitted sending the Twitter messages on 1 February.

Joanna Cherry QC MP said after Karte's appearance in court: "A man appeared in court today and pled guilty to an offence under Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003, by sending me messages that were grossly offensive and of an indecent, obscene, and menacing character. The offence happened on 1st February 2021. The man's name is Grant Karte. Sentence has been deferred until 16 April. I would like to thank the police for their assistance.

"Some of the threats which Mr Karte made to me were of a sexual nature. A recent survey of parliamentarians showed that while politicians of both sexes receive abuse and threats, it is largely female politicians who receive threats of sexual violence. I believe that this is a problem which requires to be acknowledged.

"At the time of the offence Mr Karte was a member of a branch of the SNP where there have been a significant number of complaints about abuse of women by younger men. Had these complaints of abuse, and the targeting of me and other women on social media been addressed, it is likely that this behaviour would not have escalated to the scale of threats of

sexual violence.

“Finally, I believe that the untrue allegations of transphobia made against me, some of which were repeated by senior politicians who ought to know better, put a target on my back. Therefore, I hope that everyone involved learns from this episode. Women must be allowed to discuss women’s rights, and to acknowledge that sex matters, without being labelled bigots or abused and threatened. Sex is a biological reality which we cannot ignore and if we do ignore it, we distort reality in a way that can only make women more vulnerable.”