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Nicola Sturgeon must end her silence over allegations of financial impropriety involving a senior SNP candidate – and spell out what she knew of the growing scandal.

The Scottish Conservatives are calling on the First Minister to come clean today after it emerged that the party's candidate for Ochil and South Perthshire, Tasmina Ahmed-Sheikh, is facing an official probe by the Law Society of Scotland.

It has been reported that the SNP knew about the probe by the Law Society before it was revealed in the press last week.

It also emerged that the SNP ignored a request for information on the allegations last week, and only replied once the deadline for nomination papers for candidates had passed.

By that point, Mrs Ahmed-Sheikh had been confirmed as the SNP candidate for Ochil and South Perthshire.

Scottish Conservative MSP Murdo Fraser said:

“This whole episode stinks.

“It's quite clear that the SNP should withdraw all support from Mrs Ahmed-Sheikh in this election.

“However, there are now growing questions over the way Nicola Sturgeon handled this matter.

“Was the First Minister told about the investigation facing Mrs Ahmed-Sheikh? If so, why did she allow her to carry on as a candidate?

“And why did the SNP try to hide the facts of this matter last week when there was still time to replace Mrs Ahmed-Sheikh with another candidate?

“Everything here points to an official SNP cover-up going straight to Nicola Sturgeon's door. She thought she could brush this affair under the carpet.

“The SNP must now come clean. A failure to do so will demonstrate once again

that they are trying to take the voters of Scotland for a ride.”