

Breakfast to serve up legal fare for election hopefuls

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SMALL BUSINESS**

BUSINESSPEOPLE considering running for November's local government elections must be aware of the stringent laws which apply, an Adelaide law firm warns.

Kelley Jones, Lawyers, which specialises in local government legal issues, is hosting a local government election breakfast this Friday.

The firm is holding the event because of the demand for information for potential candidates and council staff in the lead-up to the election.

Kelley Jones, Lawyers founders Michael Kelley and Natasha Jones said while many people were interested in standing for council election, they were not fully cognisant of the processes and parameters which applied.

Ms Jones said first and foremost, interested candidates must have their nominations in no later than September 16.

"Once they nominate they can publish election material but if they don't follow the guidelines they could find themselves in trouble," she said.

Furthermore, any person

who nominated for election could only withdraw their candidacy before the close of nominations.

Mr Kelley said nominees could provide a candidate statement but there were a number of "trips or hazards" to be wary about.

This included not writing anything in the candidate statement which referred to a fellow nominee without their permission, or commenting on decisions or actions of the council or its members.

Ms Jones said candidates also needed to be careful about events they hosted to meet

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NATASHA JONES

constituents. "Candidates need to be mindful about the types of events they hold," she said.

"An event which offers food, drink and entertainment is defined as bribery in the legislation and could be seen as a way to bribe another person."

Even something as seemingly innocent as a sausage sizzle could land a candidate in hot water.

Local government nominees must also ensure that any criminal record they might have did not include any prison sentence – suspended or otherwise.

Mr Kelley stressed the importance of nominees fully understanding the ramifications of standing for local government.

"Sometimes, candidates are fired up by local government issues and the issues are resolved and the passion sub-

sides," he said. "They say 'I don't need to be on council.' After the close of nominations, you cannot withdraw your nomination."

Finally, any person who nominated for election must submit a campaign donations return to the council chief executive within 30 days of the election.

This was mandatory whether a person won or lost the election.

FOR INFORMATION ABOUT LOCAL GOVERNMENT NOMINATION AND ELECTIONS, VISIT THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION OF SA WEBSITE WWW.LGA.SA.GOV.AU