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WATER INDUSTRY CHIEF RETIRES AFTER THREE DECADES SERVICE

The Managing Director of Thames Water Utilities, John Sexton, is to retire after 29 years of service with the company.

Mr Sexton (56) has led the company's 2005-2010 Price Review discussions with Ofwat. His successor, who will have responsibility for delivering the record investment programme agreed with the regulator, will be Werner Boettcher.

Mr Boettcher (49) is also responsible for RWE Thames Water's unregulated business in the UK and the company's holding in Berlinwasser. Born in Duisburg, Germany, he started his career in banking before concentrating on the utility sector with RWE. He lives in Richmond, Surrey with his family and has been a Board Member of RWE Thames Water since 2001.

John Sexton joined the former Thames Water Authority in 1976 from Severn Trent Water Authority, having begun his career at the Department for the Environment. Appointed MD of Thames Water Utilities in 2002, he was previously Environmental and Technology Director.

A highly respected figure in the water industry, Mr Sexton has held a wide-ranging number of advisory posts, including the chairmanship of the UK Water Industry Research Limited (UKWIR). He is also a serving Council Member of the charity WaterAid.

Bill Alexander, CEO of RWE Thames Water and Chairman of Thames Water Utilities, said: "John is one of the industry's true stalwarts. We wish him a long and happy retirement.

"We particularly appreciate John's pivotal role steering us through the recently- concluded Price Review, where he was focused on delivering an outcome which enables us to address some hugely important challenges for the benefit of both the environment and our 13 million customers across London and the Thames Valley.

"His contribution throughout his time with the company has been immense, but we will perhaps remember him most for his technical expertise and his effectiveness as an ambassador for both the company and the industry."

Werner Boettcher will be assisted in his role as MD of Thames Water Utilities by the recently promoted Chief Operating Officer, Jerry England, and the company's External Affairs Director, Richard Aylard, whose remit includes Regulation, Environment and Corporate Responsibility.