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THE company running Pitreavie Playing Fields has gone into administration just over two years after opening its £1.5 million complex at the site.

The sports pitches and adjacent bar/cafe will continue to operate while the administrators look into the finances of Vida Sports Ltd.

Generations of West Fife schoolkids have grown up playing football at Pitreavie and teams of all ages continue to use the facility.

The firm signed a 60-year lease deal in 2001 with Fife Council to run the site, which now offers eight five-a-side football astroturf pitches, six 11-a-side grass pitches and 10 Soccer Sevens grass fields.

Safeguards were put into the contract to protect the public's use of the facility and as a last resort, it would return to the council control.

At the time of the take-over, Vida was part of David Murray's business empire but has since been the subject of a £30 million management buy-out.

The Edinburgh-based firm has expanded rapidly since being founded in 2001 with 13 sites from Aberdeen to Southampton.

Its website is still announcing the opening of another operation in Luton this month.

That quick-growth strategy appears to have crashed spectacularly.

Grant Ward, Fife Council's west area head of community services, confirmed safeguards were in place by which the site could revert to council control if a new operator was not found.

Mr Ward, who was heavily involved in the negotiations over the deal, said he had only found out the company had gone into administration from a newspaper public notice.

"I've had no formal contact so far," said Mr Ward. "The news is disappointing but it's no slight on the Dunfermline operation because they have sites up and down the country.

"The staff will be relieved that it's administration rather than receivership and they are still in their jobs."

Mr Ward said the council's preferred option would be for the company to be taken over and the facilities to continue to operate as normal.