



Case Study: Improving Capital Accounting with Asset Manager

Central Bedfordshire Council

Summary

Year-end capital accounting for local authorities is subject to numerous pressures, requiring figures that can be accessed and evidenced quickly and stand up to audit. Central Bedfordshire Council was managing this through a complex, manual spreadsheet-based approach that can be difficult to maintain and had the potential to pose a higher risk as requirements and queries increased.

Central Bedfordshire switched to Infoshare+ Asset Manager to support its capital accounting and lease management. The Finance team now has a more repeatable year-end process, quicker access to answers when queries come in, and greater confidence that balances can be verified down to individual assets.

The Challenge

Local authority capital accounting is a complex process that needs to stand up to audit scrutiny, relying on the ability to evidence values and movements down to the asset level.

Like many organisations, Central Bedfordshire Council had been managing this through spreadsheets that can quickly become large and unwieldy. Over time, that created practical issues: the model became harder to maintain, even harder to evidence, and posed a risk of inaccuracies. This all meant that the team couldn't verify the accuracy of their asset data with confidence.

The scale of the register added to the challenge: the council has more than 10,000 housing assets alone, plus thousands more across other asset classes. The Finance team needed an approach that could work reliably at scale, particularly during year-end when queries from auditors and colleagues come in quickly.

At the same time, lease accounting requirements were creating additional pressure. The team needed a structured way to identify leases and manage the transition workload alongside core capital accounting and disclosure reporting.

“Capital accounting is complex, but Asset Manager helps to demystify how we go about deriving figures. For example, producing property, plant and equipment notes used to be substantially more challenging than we find now. Asset Manager is robust and prevents unwanted changes to valuations or overwriting of information, which gives us far more confidence.”

- Anthony Dodrige, Principal Accountant
Central Bedfordshire Council



The Solution

Central Bedfordshire addressed its challenges by adopting Infoshare+ Asset Manager, focusing on its Capital Accounting and Lease Management modules as an alternative to the previous manual system, managing capital accounting in a more streamlined, automated way.

Originally developed by CIPFA and now part of Infoshare+, Asset Manager has a long heritage in local government finance, and for Central Bedfordshire, the immediate appeal was a practical one: a solution designed completely around the specifics of local authority accounting.

“We were using a large, unwieldy spreadsheet - with all the complications that brings. With Asset Manager, you enter the revaluations and they're done. It does it for you and you get the outputs you need to derive the journals from. If there's a query on an asset, it's really quick and easy to find that asset. The ease of making calculations and getting information out of it make Asset Manager invaluable”

- Jayne Hunt, Technical Accountant, Central Bedfordshire Council

Central Bedfordshire took a careful approach to implementation, adopting a short period of parallel running to check outputs against their existing spreadsheet and investing time to populate the database properly. Training days brought the Finance team up to speed, with recorded sessions available for refreshing knowledge.

Asset Manager is hosted in the cloud for Central Bedfordshire, with daily backups, unobtrusive updates, and full system audit trails, significantly reducing the operational risk of losing work.

What Changed in Practice?

For Central Bedfordshire's Finance team, the biggest shift is that complex, high-risk calculations are now handled through consistent system logic, with outputs that support accurate journals, working papers, and year-end disclosures.

In practice, this means:

- **Revaluations and impairments are easier to manage.** The team enters revaluation information and uses system outputs to derive the journals needed for the accounts.
- **Local authority-specific treatments are easier to substantiate.** Reserves and statutory adjustments can be evidenced down to individual assets, which is harder to do confidently using manual models.
- **Year-end roll-forward is much easier and more repeatable.** Depreciation on opening balances is available at the push of a button, without the need for manual recalculation.
- **Disclosure reporting is quicker to produce and easier to evidence.** The council uses reports to support the Property, Plant and Equipment note, and other disclosure areas such as intangibles and assets held for sale.
- **Answers are faster during audit and close-down.** For queries about specific assets, it is quick to generate reports and review figures.

For lease accounting, the Lease Management module provides a quick, structured IFRS 16 compliant method for identifying leases, setting them up, and managing transition work without relying on separate tracking spreadsheets.



The Results



More confidence in balances and auditability, including the ability to substantiate key splits down to individual assets.



Reduced spreadsheet risk, with fewer manual steps and less exposure to formula and classification errors.



Faster responses to queries during year-end close and audit, because asset-level information is easier to locate and evidence.



Greater operational resilience, with cloud hosting and daily backups reducing the risk of losing work in progress.



A viable, affordable path to automation, without needing to adopt a broader corporate asset module that does not fit local authority requirements.



Stronger stewardship of public assets, including a large housing stock, supported by clearer evidence and more reliable reporting.



More capacity for assurance and decision support, because the team spends less time maintaining spreadsheets and more time reviewing and explaining the numbers.

Looking Ahead

This collaboration with Central Bedfordshire Council shows the value of combining a structured, audit-ready approach to capital accounting with a product shaped directly by the people using it. Central Bedfordshire now has a year-end process that is easier to put together, evidence, and defend.

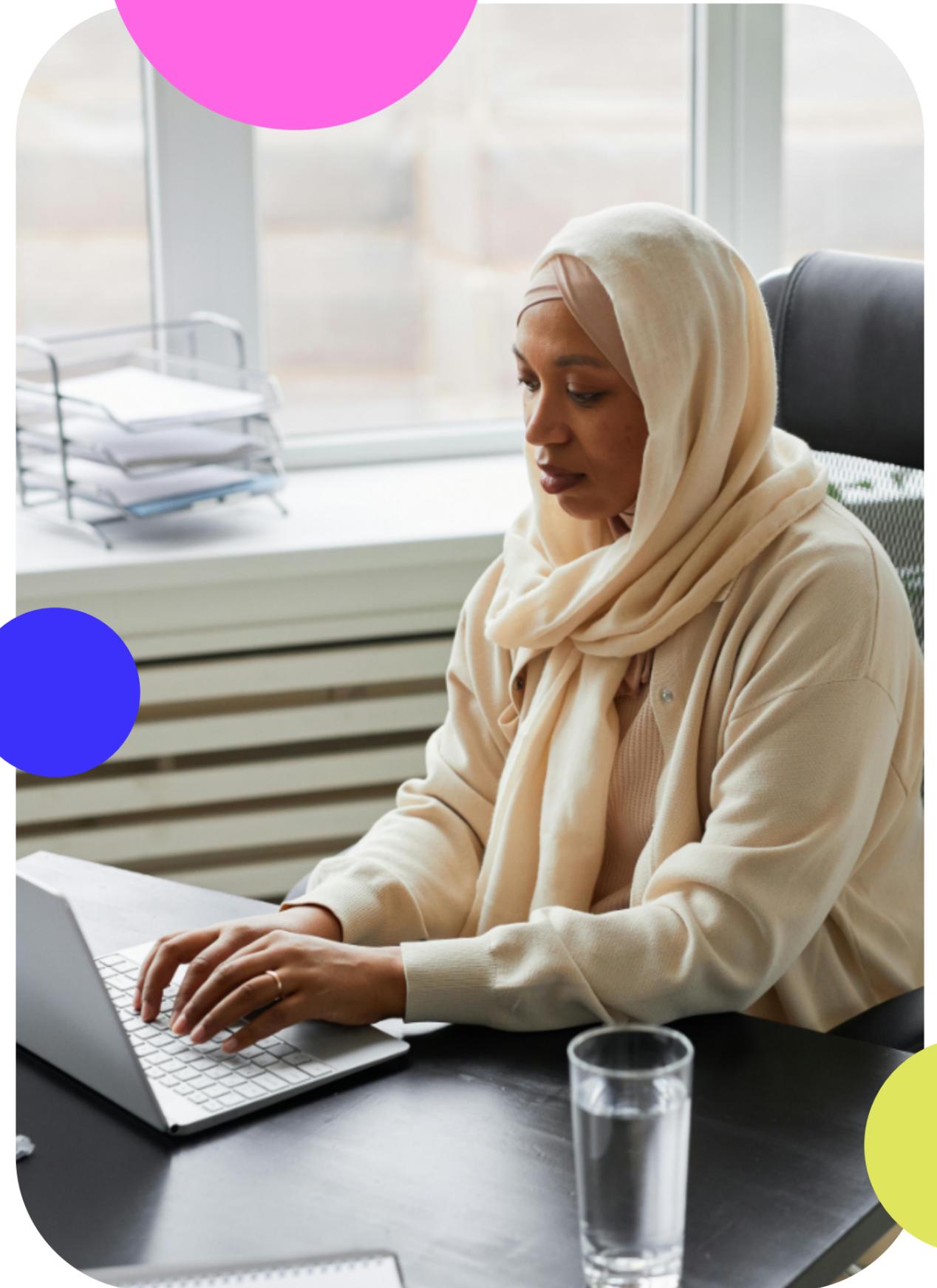
“We put strong data management at the centre of what we do. We build our product roadmap in close partnership with councils - our focus is on reflecting how they work in practice, not how we think they should work. We use council input to prioritise improvements that support the day-to-day work of finance teams, strengthening governance in ways that genuinely fit council operations.”

– Stuart Muckley, Asset Manager Product Lead, Infoshare+



“Asset Manager has been around for the better part of 25 years, so it felt like the reliable choice. Over the long term, it’s been a sound investment and the cost is affordable - We’re a hard-to-please audience, and we find Asset Manager very helpful.”

– Anthony Dodrige, Principal Accountant
Central Bedfordshire Council





Infoshare+ is a UK data and software company aiming to make local public services seamless and connected with the communities they serve. We believe digital should be a shared environment, supporting consistency, efficiency, and better outcomes for all. With our platform of innovative digital solutions, we're a trusted partner to hundreds of public sector organisations across social housing, local government, and social care.

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